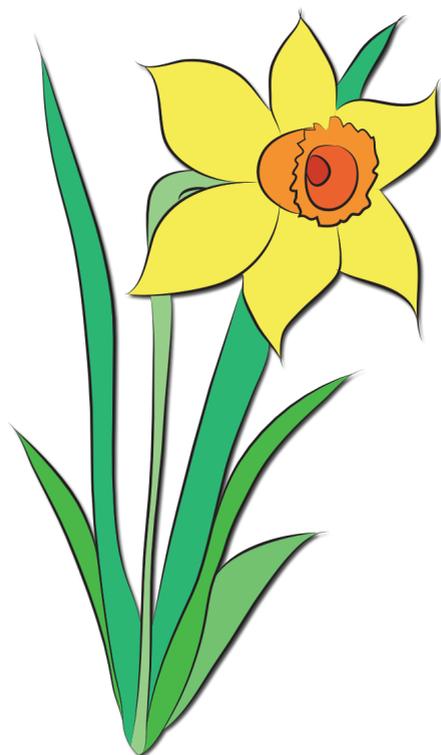


**ASHBURY
COMPTON LONGCOT
FERNHAM**

**NEWSLETTER APRIL
2018**



Thought for the month

You may find this an odd thing to say, but – for a week in March – we turned Longcot Church into a prayer space. Of course, churches are always prayer spaces, but this was a week devised to help primary school children learn more about Christian prayer.

With the help of four gazebos and a parachute, we made spaces for them to think about the world (a large map); special people (made with pipe cleaners); forgiveness (fizzy tablets dissolving in a container of water); hope (tissue paper flowers blossoming on water); and contemplation (“please” prayers on post-it notes attached to a huge bubble tube). We also introduced them to the joys of bell ringing. Many, many thanks to everyone from our schools and churches whose help and patience made prayer space such a success – we couldn’t have done it without you.

With some 350 children visiting the prayer space over the course of the week, it was (of course!) exhausting for the helpers but it was wonderful to see how the children engaged with the different ideas and ways of praying. You could tell by the expressions on their faces as they watched the flowers blossom and the bubbles rise; by the concentration which went into making a pipe cleaner person; or by the way they talked about far away people and places. Some of them also wanted to pray for penguins, snow leopards and sea creatures. At the end of each session we asked the children what they’d liked or disliked: if you come into Longcot Church over the next couple of weeks, you can read their comments. It’s fascinating.

School timetables and waiting coach drivers meant that no group of children had more than five or six minutes in each space, yet it was amazing how much they managed to achieve and it reminded me how much we can achieve in just a few minutes if we want to. We can learn a lot from our children! We could spend five minutes a day in prayer or meditation; we could light a candle, phone a friend, or just stop and admire the beauty of God’s creation. Even in the midst of our busy lives, we can find peace.

Our prayer this month is for Easter Day

God of glory,

by the raising of your Son you have broken the chains of death and hell:
fill your Church with faith and hope;
for a new day has dawned and the way to life stands open
in our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen

Wishing you a happy and blessed Easter

Norma

Views expressed in "Thought for the month" are those of the contributors

Shrivenham and Ashbury Benefice Services in April

Sunday 1st April

Easter Sunday

9.00am	Holy Communion	Compton
9.00am	Holy Communion (BCP)	Watchfield
9.00am	Communion by extension	Fernham
9.30am	Holy Communion	Longcot
10.15am	Parish Communion	Shrivenham
11.00am	Holy Communion	Ashbury

Sunday 8th April

9.00am	Holy Communion (BCP)	Watchfield
9.00am	Morning Worship	Fernham
9.30am	Holy Communion (BCP)	Longcot
10.15am	Parish Communion	Shrivenham
11.00am	Holy Communion	Ashbury

Sunday 15th April

7.45am	Holy Communion (BCP)	Shrivenham
9.00am	Matins	Watchfield
9.00am	Matins	Compton
9.00am	Holy Communion	Fernham
10.15am	Parish Communion	Shrivenham
11.00am	Café Church	Ashbury
6.00pm	Evening Worship	Longcot

Sunday 22nd April

9.00am	Holy Communion (BCP)	Watchfield
9.30am	Family Communion with Baptism	Longcot
10.15am	Parish Communion	Shrivenham
11.00am	Holy Communion	Ashbury
6.00pm	Evening Worship	Fernham

Sunday 29th April

11.00am	Benefice Service	Ashbury
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The Ashbury prayer cycle for April will be: 1st Chapel Lane, 8th Church Lane, 15th College Farm Lane, 22nd Ashdown Estate, 29th High Street.

Ashbury Evangelical Free Church

April meetings

Sunday 8th at 10.15 a.m. Communion service

Wednesday 4th at 2.15pm. tea & chat. Everyone is welcome!!

Ashbury News

(See Ashbury also under Benefice News)

Anne Bell Anne died in her sleep on Saturday, 24th February, after almost two years in Rosebank Care Home in Bampton. She was 82. Her funeral will be held in South Oxfordshire Crematorium at 11am on Tuesday, 3rd April. [Anne will also be remembered by long time readers of this newsletter as the editor for well over twenty years in the days when it was hand-typed.]

Eunice Gigg, Family and friends gathered at St Mary's on 21st March to celebrate the long life and steadfast faith of Eunice, who died on 19th January, the day after her 94th birthday.

At Café Church on Sunday 15th April, at 11am Christopher Prentice will be speaking on the Church of England in Baghdad and Rome.

Ashbury Community Club - dates for your diary.

March 29th. Woodworking demonstration by Charles Ash: Village Hall. 2.30pm

April 24th. Lunch at The Rose & Crown

May 31st. Garden Tour & Cream Tea at Friars Court, Clanfield

You are welcome to join us on any or all of these Thursday events.

Details from **Jackie Baker tel. 01793 710358**

VILLAGE QUIZ - Saturday 28 April 7.30 pm in the Village Hall

The return of the popular Village Quiz! Roger and Jackie Baker will be posing the questions, and residents of Ashbury, Kingstone Winslow and Idstone are invited to get together a team of neighbours (up to six in a team). A fun evening, with prizes for the winning team, plus a light supper, all for £6! There will also be a bar and raffle. To enter your team please contact Margaret Smith (710800 or mbsmith5@hotmail.co.uk). If you don't have enough neighbours to make up a team, there will be an opportunity to join a scratch team, but prior booking is essential. Who will win this time - Kingstone Winslow, Chapel Lane, Idstone Road, Wixes Piece or another team?!

Flowers in church in memory of loved ones

Would you like to put flowers in church in memory of a loved one on a particular date? We are just about to draw up the rota of flower arrangers for the next year (starting in April) and we wondered if anyone would like to mark an anniversary by placing some flowers on the chancel steps in church. This doesn't necessarily have to be a floral arrangement, it could be a vase of cut flowers or a pot plant. There will be a note of the person being remembered. If you would like to do this please get in touch with either Sue Reade (710208) or Maggie Simons (710801). (If you enjoy arranging flowers you may like to go on our rota to do an arrangement about 3 or 4 times a year, do get in touch and we can give you more details).

It is surprising how many visitors we get to our beautiful church and we are very grateful to our volunteers who keep it clean and welcoming. If anyone else could spare an hour or so every couple of months to dust and sweep we would love to hear from you.

News from the Fete Committee

The new bench purchased, with money raised from last year's fete will be installed in the next few weeks on the village green space.

This year's fete will be held on Saturday 30th June 2018.

Sign up sheets for helping on the day, buying a pitch for a stall, or car boot, are in the village shop.

GO Active GOLD

Senior Keep Fit in Ashbury Village Hall - Started Thursday 8 March for ten weeks 11.30am - 12.30pm Cost £5 The ten week course will run through to 10th May. You are welcome to join in any week. This course is supported by our District Council.

Red Cross First Aid Course

Due to demand we have organised another first aid course on Saturday 5th May from 2.00 - 4.00pm in Ashbury Village Hall. This is open to anyone who wants to know what they can do to help someone in an emergency and includes how you use the defibrillator. Numbers have to be limited so please let me know if you would like to attend.

Maggie Simons 710801

Longcot and Fernham News

Longcot Churches working together -Chapel News

SUN. 1st 3pm -There will be NO SERVICE in the chapel this Easter Sunday but we wish everyone a very happy and blessed Easter.

FRI. 27th 3pm Everyone is welcome to join us for afternoon tea in the Chapel. There is no charge but we welcome donations to our chosen charity of the month. If transport would help or you'd just like to know more please contact Stella on 01793 782584.

A HUGE THANK YOU to everyone who has contributed to the collection at T Time Fellowship meetings over the last few months. We have just purchased two gifts from Send a Cow - Educate a child and a beehive.

Benefice News

Breakfast Groups

Men's breakfast: will be provided as usual at **8am on Saturday 7 April** in the village hall. Everyone is welcome, and the English breakfast is free – we just ask for a donation if you can. Please call Norma on 710055 for more information or (ideally!) to say you are coming so we can be sure to have enough food.

Breakfast Bible Study: meets next at **8am on Saturday 28 April**. Again, all are welcome to chat about anything and everything over a cup of coffee and a simple breakfast. Please call Norma on 710055 for more information.

Annual parish meetings – all welcome

Ashbury: Wednesday 11 April

Longcot with Fernham: Thursday 26 April

Easter Day is 1 April

Communion Services will be held as usual in:

Compton Beauchamp	9am
St John's Fernham (Communion by Extension)	9am
Longcot	9.30 am
Ashbury	11am

NB: instead of a children's activity in Ashbury on Good Friday morning, there will be a craft afternoon on Thursday 12 April from 2-4pm in the village hall

Norma

Country Matters

March certainly came in like a lion. With difficulty I prised out a solid 5/6 inches of ice out a wheel barrow in order to clear a snowdrift from an entrance door. Temperatures were down to -11C. The quantity of snow was not great but the drifts were. You have to go back to 1981 for the coldest night in my memory which was officially recorded -26C at Brize Norton. As a result evergreen holm oaks then lost all their leaves the next summer and took 2/3 years to properly recover. Writing now in the second week of

March it is wet and spring planting is going to be late. Some drying March winds would be welcome.

We have a big acreage of spring malting barley planned, also 100 acres of naked oats to plant. Naked because when thrashed the husk or hull surrounding the kernel comes away to leave a smooth slippery grain. These spring oats are lower yielding than barley or conventional oats but are in demand for bird seed, pet and specialist animal feed and as a nutritious high fibre, gluten free, high protein, low starch breakfast cereal. There is also some use in cosmetics. I have only grown oats a few times. Winter oats either grew so tall they went flat or suffered severely from frost damage but that was over thirty years ago. I grew spring naked oats once 20 years ago but their slipperiness caused problems for us in the Blanch drier. Now we have tower vertical cascade Svegma drier and hope there will be no problem.

There is no better sight than the flash of electric blue, as a kingfisher flies across water. Before the snow I saw one down in the Vale for the first time on the pond I created at the bottom of featherbed lane below Idstone. It then perched facing me to exhibit its striking orange breast. Previously there have been sightings near the Bishopstone pond and I once viewed a kingfisher nest created in a bank opposite the Lower Mill at Kingston Winslow.

Richard Green

Benefice Clergy

Vicar	Rev Richard Hancock	01793 780183
NSM	Revd Norma Fergusson (Except Monday and Friday)	01793 710055

Newsletter entries for May 2018. Submit your entries for May by **20th April** to: M. Turner Claremont, Ashbury SN6 8LN. marionturner@me.com 01793 710302

For more of “what’s on” and local information see the Ashbury Village Website www.ashbury.org.uk and the [community page on Facebook](#).