

**ASHBURY
COMPTON LONGCOT
FERNHAM**

**NEWSLETTER MAY
2018**

**Christian Aid Week
13-19 May**

Definition: Aid 1. Help, succour, relief. 1475 (O.E.D.)

Thought for the month

I have recently finished reading “In a Free State” by VS Naipaul, which a critic described as being about the experiences of all of us, however rooted we think we may be. In the book, the author raises the question of what home and belonging mean, and whether we can truly feel safe and accepted wherever we are. VS Naipaul is well qualified to write on this, having been born in Trinidad of Indian ancestry and moving to England at the age of 18. At the time of writing this is highly pertinent, with the very real dilemmas being posed in respect of people who entered the UK at a similar or much younger age, the so-called Windrush generation, and have had their whole sense of belonging and entitlement thrown into question. I thought too of the refugee children I worked with until late 2017 when we lived in Luxembourg, a tiny fraction of a continuing stream of displaced peoples, forced to leave their homes and often exploited by those from whom they sought help.

Closer to home, writing this on a beautiful spring day it is easy to forget in the recent extreme cold and snow the plight of the homeless, and those who have a home but no money to heat it. In my current work I come across heartbreaking cases of child protection, where home is not a safe or happy place. Having just celebrated Easter, we were reminded by the events leading up to his crucifixion that Jesus was isolated, rejected and far from safe.

So where is the good news? On Easter Sunday we celebrated Jesus’ resurrection. Around us today there are countless teachers, carers, health workers, emergency service providers, church workers, who serve their communities tirelessly and sacrificially but rarely make the headlines. And each one of us can choose to risk those “random acts of kindness”, which make our world a better place.

It just takes small steps: having bought my copy of VS Naipaul from an Oxfam bookshop it will eventually find its way into our wonderful telephone kiosk library in Kingston Winslow for others to read. We can give to Christian Aid during May, or indeed at any time! And as we go about our day we can choose to smile, say hello, and, as it says in Galatians 6 verse 9 “not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.”

Isobel Weller

Views expressed in “Thought for the month” are those of the contributors

Shrivenham and Ashbury Benefice Services in May

Sunday 6th May

7.45am	Holy Communion (BCP)	
9.00am	Holy Communion (BCP)	Compton
9.00am	Matins	Watchfield
9.00am	Holy Communion (BCP)	Fernham
9.30am	Holy Communion	Longcot
10.15am	Family Service with Baptism	Shrivenham
11.00am	Morning Prayer	Ashbury
3.00pm	Joint Service	Longcot Chapel
5.00pm	Choral Evensong and Flower Festival	Longcot
6.30pm	Compline and Benediction	Shrivenham

Thursday 10th May

7.00pm Holy Communion followed
by drinks at the King & Queen

Ascension Day

Longcot

Sunday 13th May

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

Sunday 20th May

Pentecost

10.30am	Benefice Service St James	Bourton
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Sunday 27th May

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

The Ashbury prayer cycle for May will be: 6th Idstone Road, 13th Idstone, 20th Kingstone Winslow, 27th Malthouse.

Ashbury Evangelical Free Church

May meetings

Sunday 13th at 10.15 a.m. Communion service

Wednesday 9th and 23rd at 2.15pm. tea & chat. Everyone is welcome!! t.b.c.

Ashbury News

(See Ashbury also under Benefice News)

Eunice Gigg

Ray and the family wish to express their thanks and appreciation for all the kind thoughts, prayers and messages of sympathy received and for all who came to the thanksgiving and burial service for Eunice on 21st March. For the Revd Norma Fergusson and James and the helpers; the love and support given has been a great source of strength and encouragement at this time. "Thank you so much." Your generous donations, which amounted to £517.10 and will be divided as follows between Ashbury School £216.05 and Children in Need £301.05, are much appreciated.

Annual 'Beat the Bounds' Walk - May 12th 8:30am starting from the Rose & Crown.

Meet on Saturday May 12th 8.30 am in front of the pub. Following an Ashbury tradition that is over 500 years old, on May the 12th we'll be having our annual 'Beat the Bounds' walk. Historically used to confirm the boundaries of the parish, we take a more relaxed view these days and don't quite do the entire boundary. Everyone is welcome, including children and dogs, and although the entire walk is about 12 miles you can come for as little or as much of the walk as you like. More info on the website at <http://www.ashbury.org.uk/leisure/welcomeevents/beat-the-bounds-walk/> or call **Steve Treadwell on 710369**. Come and explore the parish with lovely views of the vale and downs that you will only ever experience on foot.

The Knitting Group

After a wee break, the knitting group is holding a meeting at the Rose and Crown on 2nd May at 6-8pm. Anyone interested in knitting or crochet, or just a natter about it, do please join us; all welcome. **Marina Tombs**.

Advance notice of the Ashbury Fete and Village Show 30 June 2018

Not long now till Ashbury's second annual village fete and village show. Helpers are needed for the stalls (especially the bottle and cake stalls) and games, which it is hoped will include a tug of war, and, of course, we also need you to come along on the day. Watch out for our posters and further information.

The **children's show** will be held on same day as the village fete; application forms will be available from the village shop and categories will include the tallest sunflower. Further details are available from Julia Blake

World War 1 kneelers

If you haven't yet seen the kneelers or contributed a stitch or two, please come along to the Village Shop at 6 pm on 16 May to have a look – and have a go. They already look wonderful; thank you so much to everyone who has been part of the project so far.

Longcot and Fernham News

Longcot Flower Festival 19-27 May in St Mary's Church, Longcot. The church will be open 10 – 4 each day except Saturday 26th May.

A Village Wedding – We hope you will call in to our 10th Longcot Flower Festival and enjoy the wedding flowers. We are delighted to be decorating the church for a real village wedding on 26th, when the church will be closed to visitors.

Again we are supporting village artists open for Oxfordshire Artweeks. For art exhibition locations and times see details under Emma Ablitt, Pat Elmore, and Sharon Rich at www.artweeks.org

Contact: Shirley Dalton-Morris: hirsley-village@mybtinternet.com

Longcot Churches working together -Chapel News

SUN. 6th 3pm -Everyone is welcome to our monthly united service and to stay for tea and biscuits afterwards.

FRI. 25th 3pm Afternoon tea will be available in the Chapel until 4.30pm and we'd love to welcome you. 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.

Benefice News

Breakfast groups

Men's breakfast in Ashbury Village Hall 5 May at 8am

Breakfast bible study 26 May at 8am

All welcome; contact Norma & Richard on 01793 710055 for more details

Longcot Village Trust – fundraising update

easyfundraising is the newest and probably simplest way to raise money for Longcot Village Trust which is currently **raising funds to create a community space in St Mary's, Longcot.**

Shop with any of over 3,300 well-known retailers via the easyfundraising website and a percentage of what you spend is passed to Longcot Village Trust at no additional cost to you. Retailers include Amazon, M&S, Vodafone, eBay, Tesco, Viking and many more. Please register to support us today - <https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/panel/>.

New Bereavement starts in Shrivenham on 8 May

Have you experienced bereavement? Do you want somewhere you can speak freely and find support and new ideas to help you in your grief?

We will help you understand and cope with the effects of this grief, and look at ways to promote healing of the wounds that you are feeling within a small, safe, supportive group of people. This is an inclusive group for anyone, with or without a faith.

PLACE: St Andrew's Church Vestry

TIME:10.45—12.30, Tuesday May 8th for 6 weeks

CONTACT: Norma at rev.n.fergusson@btinternet.com or Rose-Anne at roseanne.o@outlook.com

Special services for May

20 May (Pentecost) Benefice service in Bourton – 10.30

31 May A service for Corpus Christi?

further details in the church newsletters

Annual Church Meetings

We have just completed the annual church meetings for Ashbury, Longcot & Fernham and Compton Beauchamp and would like to thank publicly

all those who hold formal roles of responsibility within the PCCs as churchwardens, secretaries or treasurers
everyone who keeps our churches so beautiful by cleaning them, flower arranging, maintaining the churchyards
those who set up for services and really do make people feel welcome when they arrive
people who make coffee after services
the bell ringers
everyone who reads the lessons, leads the prayers and assists with Holy Communion
the people who quietly get on with the things which need doing
everyone who leads worship
everyone who prays for us and our villages

We would also like to thank everyone who helps with this magazine; there will be a tea for distributors in Longcot church at 3pm on Tuesday 22 May, followed by a short service of evening prayer for those who wish to stay.

Potholes

To report potholes on line, use the Oxfordshire County Council website – street maintenance -

www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/potholes

Norma

Update on Music in Country Churches concerts on 18/19 May in St Mary's Bampton, at 7.30pm. We are expecting the Lord-Lieutenant of Oxfordshire to attend on Saturday night. The telephone booking number is 01485 535071

<http://www.musicincountrychurches.com/programmes/bampton.pdf> St John's Fernham will receive a grant of £500 towards its window restoration.

Country Matters

By the time this is read I do hope we will all be basking in warm sunshine. Last month I hoped for some drying winds and they are yet to materialise so forgive me if I bang on about on about March and the first half of April. We all know it's been a wretched, extended and a continually wet and snowy spell. In my 60 years of experience I cannot recall its equal. We may have

more rain before but never have we not planted a seed before the middle of April. Late planting like this has been termed “cuckoo barley” to hopefully coincide with the bird’s arrival here. It was also rather associated with backward, inefficient practices. So there we are: all guilty this time! But it will turn as it always has in England and I did hear a returning chiff chaff yesterday on April 10th.

What are the consequences? Gardeners and farmers are all behind. Traditionally potatoes were planted on Good Friday. I have yet to plant my garden earlies. On the farm unless we have a very helpful growing season we are facing lower yields and on heavy wet land I expect some crops will not get planted this year. We have just returned from a few days holiday in mid Wales where over several years we have been walking along Offa’s dyke, roughly going due north. It runs from Chepstow to Chester, a distance of 172 miles and was a monumental project dating back to 750 AD. Staying in a remote farmhouse with friends near Clun, the farmer said he had a dreadful time with his sheep. These hills are covered with sheep. March is a popular lambing month and there have been frightful losses from snow and wet despite careful shepherding. At home on Russley downs we take in sheep from a farmer near Tewkesbury on agistment to clear up excess grass. Two dogs ran wild to worry and kill several and two had to be shot. These sheep have now gone home but I know he is under massive pressure because of flooding. Driving home from Wales there were great swaths of water along the Wye and the Severn

Richard Green

Benefice Clergy

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

Newsletter entries for June 2018. Submit your entries for June by **18th May** 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](#).