

DEPARTURES & ARRIVALS

Our local Headteacher, Kim Wilcox, has announced her retirement at the end of this academic year. The Governing Body will be seeking to appoint a new headteacher to begin in September. Our heartfelt thanks go to Kim for all she had brought to Western Downland (CofE) Primary School and our wider communities in the past 12 years.

The Bishop of Salisbury, The Right Reverend Nicholas Holtam, has announced his retirement later this summer after 10 years leading the churches of this diocese. The process of appointing his successor is underway. Details of how people may contribute to a retirement gift will be circulated in due course.

Courier Editor. Midge and Douglas Connell are planning to move from Damerham to Weybridge to be near their sons and families. After seven very happy years in this community they will be sad to leave. A new Editor for The Courier is, therefore, sought. It is a fun job piecing it all together; in its current form it can all be simply executed on Microsoft Word and takes just a few hours every two months. If you are interested, please contact Midge and she can give you more information..

FELLOWSHIP & FUNDRAISING

Thank You to all who have given support in so many ways to their local church in the past 12 months, and to all who've supported their local communities. You are all community heroes! At this particular moment we would like to thank those who baked and bought cakes for Snowdrop Weekend, or who donated to the

Damerham Snowdrop Appeal :-

https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/snowdropappealdamerham?utm_medium=email&utm_source=ExactTarget&utm_campaign=20210221. Together they have so far raised around £1,700 for St. George's Church.

Rockbourne's Mothering Sunday Stall. A huge thank you to all those who brought and bought cakes in aid of St Andrew's which raised £600.

Rockbourne Church Tower Appeal has so far thankfully raised a large percentage of the estimated cost of vital repairs. Again, there is still time to give. Please contact the Churchwarden, Patrick Thompson, if you think you can help (see *Contact Details in this edition*). We'd love to be silent on financial matters, but the truth is that most financial costs for our historic churches and churchyards have not stopped during this pandemic, whilst much financial income has dried up in the same period.

Martin Nominated Charity. The Church Council for All Saints' invites proposals for the Nominated Charity for 2021. The deadline for nominations is All Saints' Annual Church Meeting (see Dates for the Diary).

FROM THE REGISTERS

Funerals

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| St George, Damerham | 24th February | Edith Quinell (Internment of Ashes) |
| St Andrew, Rockbourne | 10th February | Roy Sollars (at Salisbury Crematorium) |

NB. For general enquiries please contact, in the first instance, the Benefice Team Administrator for the four parishes of Western Downland, Harriet Roe. Tel. (01725) 519220. Email: harriet_tazzi@hotmail.com

For all pastoral enquiries including baptisms, marriages, funerals and other related matters, please contact the Rector, Rev'd Les Player, The Rectory, Mill End, Damerham, SP6 3HU (01725) 518642.

For information concerning individual parishes including matters of a general nature, please contact the Churchwarden: -

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|------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Damerham | John Godber (01425 650044) | Cathy Godber (01425 650044) |
| Martin | Fran Eardley (01725) 519423 | |
| Rockbourne | Patrick Thompson (01725) 518246 | |
| Whitsbury | Chris Harper (01725) 518324 | Chris Cobb-Smith (01725) 518313 |

Please send contributions for the next Courier to the Editor, Midge Connell meconnell53@gmail.com. The deadline is 7th May 2021.

News and Views from the Church of England
in Damerham, Martin, Rockbourne and Whitsbury

THE COURIER

APRIL – MAY 2021

A Newsletter for the Communities of the Western Downland

A Word from the Rector



Easter is about Resurrection; a miracle of transformation truly grasped in the mind and life of a single human being in first century Judaea; a transformation which has changed billions of lives over the past 2,000 years.

It would be disingenuous to suggest that the life-changing impact of the Christian story has been purely positive. For too many within and beyond the Church, the experience has been negative. It has involved suffering at the hands of the religious institution, or of groups and individuals belonging to it who have so misunderstood or abused their position as to sow seeds of hatred and ignorance, bigotry and violence, abuse and division. Of course the same is true of many other religious traditions, and of governments and societies of all kinds; it's a sad human condition. But the heart of the Easter Story is not one of violence and abuse, except that accepted by an innocent Jesus, nor of hatred and rejection, except that endured by Jesus on the Cross. The Easter Story is the wonderful revelation of unmerited love and freely-offered grace; of peace and hope and a new beginning.

Christians should never hide from the failures of the Church to live up to Christ's example, but neither should they retreat from his example. Our world is wounded through conflict, injustice and inequity, through poverty and disease, and through a general failure to recognise our obligations towards one another and wider creation. As we walk the road to recovery out of this pandemic, whether as a Christian, as a member of another faith tradition, or as someone of no particular religious conviction, let's choose to reflect something of the quality of life modelled in Jesus, who laid down his life that others might step into a more abundant experience of life. The Jesus Christians believe in lived and died and rose again to set us free from the guilt and despair that can weigh us down, and from the rejection and ill-use of others; to bring the heart of God close; a heart not of stone, but of compassion and healing and unfailing love. In that spirit and in our emergence from the tomb of this pandemic and its consequences I wish you all a hopeful Easter resurrection.

Rev'd Les Player

ROAD MAP TO RECOVERY



Western Downland Churches re-opened for public worship on Sunday 28th March with a single weekly act of worship (by rotation). If you wish to attend, please note that Covid-secure requirements remain in place. All church buildings have also re-opened for access to individuals for private prayer and space to reflect. Subject to government data, **from 12th April** the number of those who can attend a marriage or interment of ashes increases to 15. Funerals can be attended by up to 30 (*subject to local conditions*). **From 17th May** the number of those who can attend a marriage or interment of ashes rises to 30 (*subject to local conditions*). Online services continue via Zoom.

CHRISTIAN AID WEEK 10TH – 16TH MAY 2021

You will find details of how to support Christian Aid Week on their webpages at christianaid.org.

DATES FOR THE DIARY

ANNUAL PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS

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| 19th April | St. Leonard's Whitsbury | 7.00pm |
| 20th April | St George's Damerham | 7.30pm |
| 26th April | St. Andrew's Rockbourne | 7.15pm |
| 27th April | All Saints' Martin | 7.00pm |

Please note: in each Parish the local PCC gathers for a pre-Meeting at an earlier start time. All meetings are online.

YOUR CHURCH NEEDS YOU!

Due to continuing Government restrictions, Annual Meetings this year will be online. All members of the church electoral roll who meet the qualifying criteria can vote and stand for office. If you would like to attend an Annual Meeting or join the Church electoral roll, please speak to a churchwarden, the Rector or a member of your local PCC. There are vacancies for church officers in a number of our parishes, including Martin, Rockbourne and Whitsbury, and for representatives in all four parishes.

ST GEORGE'S DAY

Due to a reduced schedule of physical services, St. George's Day will be marked in our on-line service on Sunday 18th April.

THY KINGDOM COME

Each morning from Thursday 13th to Sunday 23rd May there will be a short opportunity to come together online to pray for God's world and for our own part in bringing God's grace and compassion closer to people's experience. Do join us, details can be obtained from the Rector.

GROWING & LEARNING

'Faith Room' meets on Zoom on the following Thursdays at 2.00pm:- 15th, 29th, April; 13th 27th May. Contact Les Player (01725) 518642 for Zoom details. When groups can meet physically for fellowship and learning, details will be published locally.

DAMERHAM & DISTRICT HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY PLANT SALE SATURDAY 22ND MAY

At last, an event that allows us to gather outside and brings together the villages of the Benefice and beyond. This popular event will be held at Reads Farmhouse, Martin. Besides offering a supply of local plants from local gardeners there will be homemade cakes for sale and teas and cakes supplied on sale in aid of All Saints and Blandford Hall. It will be a relaxing afternoon spent in a delightful location.



SERVICES DURING APRIL & MAY: EASTER TO PENTECOST

Once again, a number of our annual services, from **Easter to Rogation** (the Blessing of Crops & Animals) and **Ascension to Pentecost**, will be marked chiefly with online events this Spring.

You are warmly invited to join us. Contact the Rector, your local churchwarden, or Harriet Roe for joining details.

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| 1st April 7.00pm | Maunday Thursday On Zoom |
| 2nd April 10.30am | Good Friday: The Way of the Cross On Zoom |
| 4th April 9.00am 10.30am | Easter Day All Saints, Martin Simplified Easter Communion On Zoom Easter Day Holy Worship & Short Communion co-hosted by Rockbourne |
| 11th April 10.30am | 2nd Sunday of Easter On Zoom Benefice Communion co-hosted by Whitsbury |
| 18th April 9.00am 10.30am | 3rd Sunday of Easter St Andrew's Rockbourne Simplified Parish Communion On Zoom All Age Worship: St George. co-hosted by Damerham |
| 25th April 9.00am 10.30am | 4th Sunday of Easter St George's Damerham Simplified Parish Communion On Zoom Highlighting St Mark the Evangelist co-hosted by Martin |



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| 2nd May 9.00am | St Leonard's, Whitsbury Morning Prayer (contemporary) & Shortened Holy Communion (1662) |
| 10.30am | On Zoom Morning Prayer co-hosted by Rockbourne |

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| 9th May 9.00am 10.30am | 5th Sunday of Easter All Saints, Martin Simplified Parish Communion On Zoom A Rogation Blessing of Animals & Crops co-hosted by Damerham |
| 16th May 9.30am 10.30am | 6th Sunday of Easter St Andrew's Rockbourne Simplified Morning Prayer & Shortened Communion On Zoom A Celebration of the blessings that online opportunities have provided co-hosted by the Benefice |
| 23rd May 9.30am 10.30am | Pentecost Sunday St George's Damerham Simplified Morning Prayer & Shortened Communion On Zoom Celebrating God's gifts on Pentecost Sunday co-hosted by Whitsbury |
| 30th May 9.30am 10.30am | Trinity Sunday St Leonard's Whitsbury Parish Communion (contemporary) On Zoom Trinity Sunday co-hosted by the Benefice |
| 6th June 9.30am 10.30am | 1st Sunday after Trinity All Saints', Martin Parish Communion On Zoom Commemorating the D-Day Landings co-hosted by Rockbourne |