

THE CHURCH RETURNING TO BEFORE THE PANDEMIC IN 2022

You can always find a digital copy of our latest Courier, as well as contact details, resources and information on our benefice website westerndownlandchurches.org. We now also circulate the Courier digitally; if you would like a digital copy, please contact the Editor. Our parish churches are slowly returning to normal after COVID – infection rates are falling, and people are again experiencing the key events such as weddings and baptisms which have been limited in the last two years of the pandemic. In July, we have been able to offer the choice of common cup and dipped wafers during parish communion. Although COVID is lessening, the church is attended by the elderly and vulnerable so one should still try to minimise risk. One can still wear an optional face covering in gatherings and maintain a social distance of at least one metre between you and those not from your household. We would also urge you not to attend if you feel unwell. We will continue to offer opportunities to join services via livestream (for the vulnerable) for the foreseeable future. Thank you.

AU REVOIR! – Parting is bitter-sweet. Fran and Rev'd Rob Eardley made their home amongst the people of these communities and congregations over the past 16 years but are now moving on to pastures new; the opportunity to spend more time with family, and the chance to discover new adventures. We wish them well in their journey but are so grateful for their time amongst us.

CREAM TEAS – Cream Teas by the River at Damerham Village Hall each Sunday afternoon in August. This will be happening from 2.30 pm – 4.30pm each Sunday.

FROM THE REGISTERS

Baptism

All Saints, Martin	22 nd May	Willow Batten
	17 th July	Lorelai de Pass

Marriages

St Andrew, Rockbourne	12 th May	Mr & Mrs Peter Stark
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Funerals

St George, Damerham	26 th May	Jennifer Bodman (interment of Ashes)
	23 rd June	Peter 'Bunny' Rabbets

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: -

Damerham	John Godber (01425) 650044 and Cathy Godber (01425) 650044)
Martin	Alistair Groom (01725) 519204 and Lizzie Fernie 01725 519542
Rockbourne	Patrick Thompson (01725) 518246
Whitsbury	Chris Harper (01725) 518324 and Chris Cobb-Smith (01725) 518313

Please send contributions for the next Courier to the Editor Arron Shutt (arron@ashutt.myzen.co.uk). The deadline is 12th September 2022.

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

THE COURIER

AUGUST – SEPTEMBER 2022

A Newsletter for the Communities of the Western Downland

A Word from the Rector



Traditional Devon Cream Tea

Photo: Wikipedia

Many moments in life seem significant at the time, but gradually fade from view amongst the flow of newer, fresher memories, and blend into the general but imprecise story of our lives. Yet, for whatever reason, some seemingly small memories take root and touch us across the distance of time. As I write this article in the middle of the extreme weather event which is record-breaking July temperatures, I find myself taken back to the long hot summer of 1976 and still-vivid memories of central Wales, where my father was decorating a small hotel and where, as a family we spent several balmy weeks over the summer holidays in a small basement flat thrown in to sweeten the deal. Though only 11 at the time I vividly remember the withered yellow grass of the public park with its bandstand (still there; I checked on Google) the iron balustrades of the shopping parades (also still there), the depleted Welsh reservoirs and the £5 note we found one day and tried - unsuccessfully - to hand in to a police officer. He clearly felt that investigating a lost £5 note was not the best use of his time and said we should keep it. What luxury we had buying ice lollies and Mr Whippy ice creams, and enjoying extra holiday pocket money, all because of our unanticipated windfall; it was the gift that kept on giving (£5 then was worth approaching £40 today). Now that same £5 note would buy one ice cream cone and a chocolate flake with - perhaps - a little change left over. I don't think it was the money which caused this event to stick in the mind; I was never very good with money (ask my wife!). Rather, I suspect it was the exceptional nature of it all; a seemingly endless summer, a foreign and exotic location (foreign and exotic to my eleven year old eyes anyway), a new, if temporary home, and the wonder of a financial windfall to bless us. I wonder what events enliven your memories, drawing the past up close for you? Perhaps you will paint your own lasting memories this summer, with its celebration of royal longevity and dedication, its political highs (and lows), its health challenges, cost of living challenges, and geo-political challenges, and perhaps (Women's World Cup still to be decided) its sporting successes. But I suspect it will be the small personal dramas which outlast the sweeping drama of history, as we personalise history, weaving the great events into the background of the tapestry of our unique lives; into the story of us; of me. That's how it is for me in terms of faith. Yes, I have the great drama of the Christian narrative painted in bold colours to enliven the imagination and challenge the intellect, but it's the little stories which continue to fascinate and draw me again and again: the woman of ill repute who became an unlikely rescuer in the first pages of the Book of Joshua, Jesus taking infants up into his arms and blessing them as if that was as vital as his Sunday preaching and miracle working, and the moments I have spent with so many of you, laughing, weeping, praying, serving and being served.

Rev'd Les Player

HARVEST THANKSGIVING 2022 – Look out for details of your Harvest Thanksgiving Festival Services & Events in this edition and in the next! Dried and tinned goods, deodorants, shampoo and other suitable items, alongside more traditional items (but with a good 'shelf life' please!) can be brought to your local Harvest Thanksgiving Service (see this and next issue for service details) and will be distributed locally where possible amongst older members of our communities, or donated to the Ringwood & Fordingbridge Food Bank.

CHURCHYARD MAINTENANCE – Volunteers wanted for a working party in St Andrew's churchyard on the 3rd of September at 2pm. Tea provided. Bring secateurs and a strimmer if you have one. Further information from suethompson22@outlook.com or (01725) 518246.

FANFARE FOR UKRAINE

A brass band concert is being held to assist Ukraine on Saturday 10th September 3.00 - 5.00 p.m. Rockstead Manor, Whitsbury Cross, Fordingbridge, SP6 3PW, courtesy of Mr. and Mrs. N. Smith. Ringwood & Burley Brass Band invite you to join them for Afternoon Tea and a rich palette of musical delights. (Feel free to bring your own picnic - if tea and cake doesn't fit the bill). Tickets for the event are £10 and proceeds will go to charities supporting Ukraine in Crisis. Tickets are available from 1st August from Lloyd Rayner (07886) 767479 or Gill Scott (01725) 518497.

DATES FOR THE DIARY

- 7th August 2.30 p.m. – 4.30 p.m.** Cream Teas by the River
- 14th August 2.30 p.m. – 4.30 p.m.** Damerham Village Hall
- 21st August 2.30 p.m. – 4.30 p.m.** (Indoors if wet)
- 28th August 2.30 p.m. – 4.30 p.m.**
- 21st September 9.00 p.m.** Deanery Synod (Provisional Date)
- 18th October 7.00 p.m.** Martin PCC, The Old Rectory, East Martin.
- 25th October 6.30 p.m.** Whitsbury PCC, Whitsbury Village Hall, Whitsbury.
- 1st November 10.15 a.m.** Rockbourne PCC, Town End Gate, Rockbourne.
- 1st November 7.00 p.m.** Damerham PCC, Damerham Village Hall.
- 12th October 7.30 p.m.** Western Downland Branch Royal British Legion Annual Meeting, Damerham Village Hall.

FORTHCOMING CHURCH EVENTS

Visit of Bishop Elijah - Bishop Elijah from Cuiebet Diocese in South Sudan will be travelling to the UK for the Lambeth Conference. He will be visiting the Chalke Deanery from 8th to the 12th August. He will be visiting the village of Martin with his wife to visit Futurefarms on the morning of Wednesday of the 10th of August and will be staying for a light lunch. Anyone who is interested in meeting Bishop Elijah and his wife is welcome to share the lunch and the visit to Futurefarms. For further details contact Fran – (01725) 519432.

Repairs to the Tower – The conclusion of the service of Morning Prayer at St Andrews, Rockbourne on the 4th of September at 11am will include a dedication to the completed repairs of the tower at St Andrews led by the Rector Les Player.

ALL SAINTS PCC NOMINATED CHARITY 2022 – This year the All Saints Church PCC has selected to raise funds to assist Martin Club in the repair of its roof. You can find out how to donate to this good cause by contacting the church wardens Alistair Groom (01725) 519204 and Lizzie Fernie (01725) 519542. Or you can pick up an envelope for this purpose (available in Church from Harvest onwards) and return it with your gift in the collection plate in any main church service in the benefice (up to 31st of December).

***** **SERVICES DURING DURING AUGUST & SEPTEMBER** *****

As mentioned previously - we are continuing Sunday services based largely in our parish Churches subject to COVID measures. *Physical services may be subject to alteration or cancellation at short notice. Some of these services will continue in our online (Zoom) services. We are livestreaming some physical services on Zoom denoted by three asterisks (***)*. These will be recorded and uploaded onto the Western Downland Churches YouTube channel so that those who cannot attend physical services can either watch live or the recorded programme later.

- 7th August**
9.30a.m. 8th Sunday after Trinity
11.00a.m. Martin – Parish Communion (CW1)
Rockbourne - Morning Prayer (Contemporary Language)***
- 14th August**
9.30a.m. 9th Sunday after Trinity
11.00a.m. Whitsbury - Holy Communion (1662)
Damerham - Parish Worship***
- 21st August**
9.30a.m. 10th Sunday after Trinity
11.00a.m. Rockbourne - Parish Communion
Martin - All Age Worship: Holidays & Holy Days***
- 28th August**
9.30a.m. 11th Sunday after Trinity
11.00a.m. Damerham - Parish Communion
Whitsbury – Parish Worship***
(Contemporary Language)



An early morning view of St Leonard's Churchyard, Whitsbury pre-service in summer. (Photo: Arron Shutt)

- 4th September**
9.30a.m. 12th Sunday after Trinity
11.00a.m. Damerham - Parish Communion***
Rockbourne – Morning Prayer (Contemporary Language)
- 11th September**
9.30a.m. 13th Sunday after Trinity
11.00a.m. Whitsbury – Parish Communion
(Contemporary Language)
Martin - All Age Worship: Lost & Found***

- 18th September**
9.30a.m. 14th Sunday after Trinity
11.00a.m. Rockbourne– Sung Eucharist
Whitsbury - Parish Worship***
- 25th September**
9.30a.m. 15th Sunday after Trinity
5.00 p.m. Damerham – Harvest Thanksgiving
Martin - Harvest Thanksgiving***
- 2nd October**
9.30a.m. 16th Sunday after Trinity
11.00a.m. Martin – Parish Communion
Whitsbury - Harvest Thanksgiving***
- 9th October**
9.30a.m. 17th Sunday after Trinity
11.00a.m. Damerham – Parish Communion
Rockbourne - Harvest Thanksgiving***