

WISHING YOU A HAPPY EASTER!

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. Arron has solved the technical issues with the Courier mailing list so subscribers should now be receiving digital copies. We continue 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. 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.

ST GEORGE'S, DAMERHAM SNOWDROP WEEKEND – In February we had our popular Snowdrop Weekend. We would like to thank everyone who helped out, donated Cakes or just came to see the snowdrops and stayed for tea and cake over the weekend. Due to the efforts of everyone who attended from far and wide (including Scotland and South Africa) - we made an amazing £2406.35. This will help put St. George's on a sound financial footing for 2023 by paying some large bills including the Church insurance.

HUMBLE LUNCH - The Humble Lunch raised a much needed £133.50 for the Medical Link in the Sudan. Many thanks go to all the people who donated.

CORONATION EVENTS ACROSS THE BENEFICE – Many details of local social events celebrating Coronation of King Charles III were not available when The Courier went to press, so these will be announced locally in the coming weeks to residents once they have been finalised.

The Damerham Village Hall Committee would like to invite you to bring your own picnic together with your chairs or a mat to celebrate the King's Coronation. A small number of tables and chairs will be available for those unable to sit on a picnic mat/camping chair. The picnic is to be held in the grounds of the hall on Sunday 7th May from 1.00p.m. to 3.00p.m. Tea and coffee will be served from the hall and toilet facilities will be available. If the weather is inclement, the event will move into the main hall. See you there!

FROM THE REGISTERS

Baptisms

St Andrew's Rockbourne 19th March Poppy Snowball

Marriages

St George's Damerham 22nd February Peter Williamson & Gabriella

Funerals

St George's Damerham	6 th February	Christopher Stanford
All Saints, Martin	17 th March	Santiago Monzon-Rivero
St Leonard's Whitsbury	13 th March	Cynthia Muriel Hodgeson (Interment of Ashes)
	20 th March	Juliana Sutton
	26 th March	David England (Interment of Ashes)

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 30th April 2023.

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

THE COURIER

APRIL – MAY 2023

A Newsletter for the Communities of the Western Downland

A Word from the Rector



Early Morning at St. Leonard's Church, Whitsbury

Photo: Arron Shutt

New life is just beginning to break through as I write this article, but by the time you read it spring will be in full swing. The buds I see just beginning to burst on tree limbs, and the green shoots peaking from the dark soil of flower pots will before too long blossom and flourish. For now they're still wrapped in the grip of winter, beset by cold and frost. So too, Easter is a bursting forth of new life out of the midst of a winter of sorrow and suffering on the Cross. The vibrancy of the former is magnified by the harshness of the latter. As I write this I mark the exact date of my licensing as Rector twenty years ago.

I've witnessed many winters in these communities; not just twenty seasonal winters; part of the cycle of life, but winters of global disaster and conflict, pandemic, famine and drought, as well as the winter of the decline and closure of community activities, groups and places of worship and the individual winters of relationship breakdown, unanticipated tragedy, long-term illness and bereavement. Yet I've also seen the spring of new beginnings, joyful celebration, good foundations laid and life-long service, of imagination sparking into new initiatives, and people reaching beyond themselves to offer compassion, comfort, generosity, practical support and prayer.

I've witnessed irrepressible love and life shining out of some of the most difficult of circumstances; the darkest experiences. These are echoes of that bursting from a tomb on a Jerusalem hillside which is reborn in our imagination each Easter to redeem and confound, transform and inspire and signal that beyond the winters of our lives lies the dawning glory of an eternal spring. May hope be a light for you in your winters and may God bless us all through those acts of simple love and kindness which are born of God and which we can choose to extend to one another as first glimpses of that surpassing age which is yet to come.

Rev'd Les Player

YOUR RINGING TEAM NEEDS YOU!

Many of us love to hear the bells ringing out across our communities and would hate to think that they might fall silent. But it seems that modern busyness is threatening this ancient art. We'd love you to join our happy, but shrinking (not in a literal sense; they're mostly still a normal height) band of bellringers. Bellringing is an ancient tradition dating back to medieval times since when bells have been rung to warn of impending danger, to welcome, celebrate and announce. Bell teams traditionally enjoyed good numbers, with up to dozen or more in a team in good times. Now we have just 3 or 4 local regulars across our combined team for Damerham and Martin. We'd love to see more, both there and across our four churches where bells are rung for services, marriages, significant national moments. It's a great way to keep active, there's some remuneration for ringing at a wedding, and there's great fun in learning a new skill with others, sharing in good company and enjoying the occasional sweetie or drink (not whilst ringing). People can start from teenage years upwards and can ring well into their 70s. Bells are for life, not just for Christmas... or even a Coronation. Help us keep this wonderful tradition going. Contact Ros Jones on 01725 518437

MARTIN VILLAGE FLOWER FESTIVAL – All Saint's Church, Martin – Sunday 28th and Monday 29th May. Open 12.00p.m. – 5.00p.m. each day. Homemade cakes/refreshments will be available in the Blandford Hall from 2pm to 5pm on both days. Funds raised will go to "Hope for Tomorrow" supporting our local mobile cancer treatment van.

DATES FOR THE DIARY

- 18th April 2023 7.30p.m.** Damerham Annual Meeting
(PCC meets at 7.00p.m.) Damerham Village Hall.
- 24th April 2023 7.15p.m.** Rockbourne Annual Meeting,
(PCC meets at 6.30p.m.) Rockbourne Village Hall.
- 25th April 2023 7.30p.m.** Martin Annual Meeting,
(PCC meets at 7.00p.m.) All Saint's Church Martin
- 16th May 2023 7.00p.m.** Whitsbury Annual Meeting,
(PCC meets at 6.30p.m.) Whitsbury Village Hall.

TUESDAY REFLECTION AND PRAYER

We meet each Tuesday at 9.30a.m. using a simple structure, offering a 25-minute space for reflection and prayer, based around the daily scripture reading, a little liturgy and a brief thought.

To join us click here:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87190762729>
Meeting ID: 871 9076 2729 Passcode: 325626

FORTHCOMING CHURCH EVENTS

GARDEN SPRING TIDY - St Andrew's Church, Rockbourne will be organising a working party to trim/tidy the churchyard in the first half of May. Refreshments will be provided for the labourers. If you could spare an hour or so, please contact Sue Thompson on 518246 or email on suethompson22@outlook.com

YOUR CHURCH NEEDS YOU! – Elections will take place in our parishes in April and early May for church council posts. Check the next Courier or your church or village noticeboard in for details of vacancies and dates for meetings. To find out more about how you can participate or if you would like to join the Church electoral roll - Please speak to a member of your Church Council or the Rector. All members of the church electoral roll who meet the qualifying criteria can vote and stand for office. Vacancies exist.

ALL SAINTS PCC NOMINATED CHARITY 2023

We are looking for proposals for charities which All Saints might promote during the latter part of 2023 (beginning at Harvest). If you have any suggestions, please pass them to the Rector or a Churchwarden at Martin (contact numbers on the Courier), by the date of the Annual Church Meeting on the 25th April, together with a brief description of the charity. A local connection (for example, someone who has experienced the benefits of the charity, or is closely involved with a charity - say through a relative) is valued but not essential.

***** SERVICES DURING APRIL & MAY *****

Post COVID - We are continuing Sunday services based largely in our parish Churches. 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.**

- 2nd April** **Palm Sunday - Holy Week Begins**
9.30a.m. Martin – All Age Worship***
11.00am Rockbourne – Choral Matins
- Thursday 6th April Maundy Thursday**
11.00a.m. Salisbury Cathedral - Maundy Thursday
Communion & Blessing of Oils
7.00p.m. Whitsbury - A Sharing in the Lord's Supper on Maundy Thursday***
- Friday 7th April Good Friday**
10.30a.m. Rockbourne - The Way of the Cross; Music, Readings & Prayers for Good Friday
2.00-3.00p.m. Damerham - An Hour at the Cross
- 9th April Easter Day - Alleluia! Christ is Risen!**
9.30a.m. Damerham - Family Communion
9.30a.m. Martin- Family Communion***
11.00a.m. Whitsbury - Family Communion
11.00a.m. Rockbourne - Holy Worship for Easter Day
- 16th April Low Sunday (2nd Sunday of Easter)**
9.30a.m. Rockbourne – Parish Communion
11.00am Martin – Parish Worship***



A view of Spring in a pot (Photo: Arron Shutt)

- 23rd April St George's Day (3rd Sunday of Easter)**
9.30a.m. Whitsbury - Holy Communion (1662)
11.00a.m. Damerham - Patronal Festival of St George***
- 30th April 4th Sunday of Easter**
9.30a.m. Martin – Parish Communion***
11.00a.m. Rockbourne - Morning Prayer
- 7th May Coronation Weekend – 5th Sunday after Easter**
9.30a.m. Damerham - Coronation Weekend Benefice Communion & Prayers for H M the King
11.00a.m. Whitsbury - All Age Worship: The Servant King: The Coronation of King Charles III***

- 14th May 6th Sunday after Easter**
9.30a.m. Damerham – (Venue to be confirmed) Rogation Service & Animal Blessing
11.00a.m. All Saints, Martin to the Old Rectory Rogation Service & Animal Blessing
- Thursday 18th May**
9.00a.m. Whitsbury Churchyard - Ascension Day Communion & Bacon Breakfast
- 21st May Sunday after the Ascension**
9.30a.m. Whitsbury – Holy Communion (1662)
11.00am Damerham – Parish Worship***
- 28th May Pentecost Sunday: Come, Holy Spirit!**
9.30a.m. Rockbourne – Celtic Style Communion
11.00a.m. Martin – Celtic Style Worship***
- 4th June Trinity Sunday**
9.30a.m. Martin – Parish Communion***
11.00am Rockbourne – Choral Matins
- 11th June Sunday after Trinity**
9.30a.m. Whitsbury – Holy Communion (1662)
11.00am Damerham – Parish Worship***