

FROM EASTER THROUGH TO SUMMER!

You can find contact details/information on our website <https://www.achurchnearyou.com/benefice/34-370BX/>. We also circulate the Courier digitally; if you would like a digital copy, please contact the Editor. 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. One can still wear an optional face covering in gatherings and maintain a social distance from others at services. 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 – Thank you all for all your wonderful support for our recent Snowdrop Weekend at St George's Church. A fantastic sum (in excess of £2,500) was raised which will help St George's Church to meet its financial commitments.

HUMBLE LUNCH 2024 - A BIG Thank You to all those who supported the Lenten Lunches in Rockbourne and the Race Night in Rockbourne Village Hall, to help raise funds for St Andrew's Church. If you would like to make a personal donation, please contact the Rockbourne Churchwarden, Mr Patrick Thompson on (01725) 518246.

BIG CHURCH SPRING CLEAN – After the successful Spring cleaning of both St. George's Church Damerham and All Saint's Church Martin – Please bring your dusters and join a Spring clean at St Andrew's, Rockbourne, on Saturday 18 May at 2.00p.m. Tea and cake will be served.

THE SALISBURY ORGANIST AT ST GEORGE'S CHURCH – For those people who are interested in on-line coverage of our churches – In February Ben Maton (The Salisbury Organist) did a YouTube vLog at St George's Church, Damerham highlighting the church organ and historic features in the church. Well worth a watch at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z6IGHTM9TcM>

ASCENSION DAY SERVICE AND BACON BREAKFAST - will be held in Martin on Thursday 9th May at Read's Farmhouse in Martin, beginning at 9a.m. (outdoors weather permitting). All are welcome.

FROM THE REGISTERS

Funerals

St George's, Damerham	14 th March	Bob Smith (at Salisbury Crematorium)
St Andrew's Rockbourne	15 th February	Harriet Grasby (Interment of Ashes)
All Saints, Martin	5 th March	Liz Hart (Interment of Ashes)

NB. 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 2024.

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

THE COURIER

APRIL – MAY 2024

A Newsletter for the Communities of the Western Downland

A Word from the Rector



Normandy Landings of Allied Troops onto Omaha Beach

Photo: Wikipedia, Public Domain

We're gearing up for the 6th of June commemorations of the 80th anniversary of D-Day. I was recently reflecting on the part my family played in that watershed event and in the wider conflict of the Second World War. My father landed at Normandy shortly after D-Day and fought in France, Belgium and the Netherlands. My wife's grandfather landed at Arromanches. My Grandfather (my mother's father, who had fought on the Western Front in World War One) built landing craft. My aunt was a WAAF, whilst her sister stood watch at night on the local church roof watching out for Luftwaffe incendiary bombs. My other grandfather was an ARP warden. It reminds me that victory in that great endeavour required everyone to play their part, each in their unique way. Those at the spearhead of the invasion were supported by countless others behind the scenes, without whom the landings and the liberation of an occupied Europe would have failed.

Pentecost Sunday too is a reminder that we all have a part to play, in the Church as in the world. Those like myself, who serve in a very visible way are doomed to fail without those countless others who make the work of sharing the love of Christ possible. In truth these days we're becoming all too few, with reduced numbers on many Sundays in most of churches throughout the land and older people doing jobs once done by people a generation younger. Some churches today are becoming festival churches, open for services only a few times a year, and fewer clergy are being appointed to posts, each one covering more parishes. We can resign ourselves to this reality, or we can recognise that we all have gifts to offer, and that each one of us can make a difference, not only inside the Church, but in its constant mission to reach outward, beyond itself to bring comfort, hope and joy to others.

I've served these parishes for 21 years. I know many of you by name, many more of you by face. You're my friends as well as my congregations and parishioners. My heart is with you and I care deeply for you, because Christ loves you. I believe, truly believe that he liberated not just one nation or even a whole continent, but life itself. Because of Christ I can count a person with a different language, a different skin colour, a different gender my sister, my brother. Because of Jesus I can stand in solidarity with rich and poor, with free and enslaved and rejoice in shared bonds of love and care. Because of him the world has changed for ever and - despite the failures of hypocrites, the self-righteous, and others within and beyond the Church - for the better.


I'd like our churches to continue telling that story in imaginative and liberating ways, in acts of justice and compassion for generations to come. But I can't do it alone. I need you; we need each other. This is the lesson of Normandy and it's the lesson of Pentecost too.

Rev'd Les Player

<p>YOUR CHURCH NEEDS YOU! - Elections will take place in our parishes in the early spring (see Dates for the Diary) for church council posts. Check your church or village noticeboard in late March for details of vacancies and dates for meetings. To find out more about how you can participate (including qualifying criteria) 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 do exist.</p>	<p align="center">DATES FOR THE DIARY</p> <p>9th April 2024 7.30p.m. St George's Annual Parochial Meeting, Damerham Village Hall. (PCC meeting before at 7.00p.m.)</p> <p>16th April 2024 7.30p.m. All Saint's Annual Parochial Committee Meeting, All Saints Church, Martin. (PCC meeting before at 7.00p.m.)</p> <p>23rd April 2024 7.30a.m. St Andrew's Annual Parochial Committee Meeting, Rockbourne Village Hall, Rockbourne. (PCC meeting before at 6.45p.m.)</p> <p>29th April 2024 7.00p.m. St Leonard's Annual Parochial Meeting, Whitsbury Village Hall, Whitsbury. (PCC meeting before at 6.30p.m.)</p>	<p align="center">FORTHCOMING CHURCH EVENTS</p> <p>Rogation and Animal Blessing Services -This year we have three Rogation & Animal Blessing services - an opportunity to participate in the blessing of the crops and of pets and other animals and a celebration of rural life: the first will be at Tenantry Farm, Rockbourne on Sunday 28th April beginning at 9.30a.m. The other two will be on Sunday 12th May in Damerham beside the Village Hall (indoors if wet) at 9.30a.m. and in Martin, beginning at All Saints Church and walking a short distance across the fields to Fern Cottage, East Martin (beginning at 11.00a.m.). You are very welcome to join us and to bring your well-behaved pets for a blessing (or pets can bring their well-behaved humans!).</p> <p>Thy Kingdom Come - An opportunity to pray that the message of hope at the heart of the Christian story may be shared more widely takes place each year under the title Thy Kingdom Come. This year, as well as within our Sunday services between Ascension Day and Pentecost Sunday and on Ascension Day, there will be two other opportunities to come together to pray; online in our online Tuesday Prayers (Tuesday 14th May), and in person on the morning of Thursday 16th May at All Saints Church, beginning at 9.30a.m. These two sessions will each be 30 minutes.</p> <p>Pentecost Sunday (also known as Whitsunday) is on Sunday 19th May and we shall be marking this special day in our services and would love you to join us to celebrate the birthday of the Church.</p>
<p>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: To join us: https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87190762729 Meeting ID: 871 9076 2729 Passcode: 325626</p>	<p>ALL SAINTS PCC NOMINATED CHARITY 2024 - We were delighted to support Hostage International in 2023, raising some £500 (including Gift Aid) for the charity. If you would like to propose a charity or charitable good cause for our All Saints Martin's Nominated Charity 2024 please provide the organisation's name and some BRIEF information to a member of the PCC before the Annual Meeting, or come in person to propose it. The PCC will consider all candidates and make a final selection at its summer meeting.</p>	
<p align="center">HOMEGROUPS ARE RESTARTING</p> <p>For those people who are interested in a deeper understanding of the gospel and strengthening their relationship with Christ, Homegroups are running if you wish to learn more about the mysteries of faith.</p> <p>These are being held at Glendale at Rockbourne on the 4th of April at 7.00p.m. and fortnightly afterwards from this date. For further details please contact Nigel Cumming on (01725) 518248.</p>		

***** **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 (*) in the service listing below.**

<p>Thursday 28th March: Maundy Thursday 11.00a.m. Salisbury Cathedral – Maundy Thursday Communion and Blessing of Oils 7.00p.m. Whitsbury - A Sharing in the Lord's Supper on Maundy Thursday***</p> <p>29th March Good Friday 10.30a.m. Rockbourne - The Way of the Cross; Music, Readings & Prayers for Good Friday 2.00p.m.-3.00p.m.. Martin - An Hour at the Cross</p> <p>31st March 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 and Shortened Communion</p>	 <p align="center">St George's Damerham Church Spring Clean (Photo: Arron Shutt)</p>	<p>5th May 9.30a.m. 6th Sunday of Easter 11.00a.m. Martin – Parish Communion*** Rockbourne – Choral Matins</p> <p>Thursday 9th May Ascension Day 9.00a.m. Read's Farmhouse, Martin - Ascension Day Communion & Bacon Breakfast</p> <p>12th May 9.30a.m. 7th Sunday of Easter – Sunday after Ascension Damerham – Rogation Service & Animal Blessing (with shortened Communion)***</p> <p>11.00a.m. Martin - Rogation Service & Animal Blessing</p> <p>19th May Pentecost - (Whitsunday) - Come Holy Spirit 9.30a.m. Whitsbury – Holy Communion (1662) 11.00a.m. Rockbourne – Parish Worship – Celebrating Pentecost***</p>
<p>7th April Low Sunday 11.00a.m. Damerham – Parish Worship***</p> <p>14th April 3rd Sunday of Easter 9.30a.m. Whitsbury - Holy Communion (1662) 11.00a.m. Martin – Parish Worship***</p>	<p>21st April 9.30a.m. 4th Sunday of Easter 11.00a.m. Martin – Parish Communion Damerham – Patronal Festival of St. George***</p> <p>28th April 9.30a.m. 5th Sunday of Easter Tenantry Farm – Rogation Service & Animal Blessing (with shortened Communion) 11.00a.m. Whitsbury – Parish Worship***</p>	<p>26th May 9.30a.m. 6th Sunday of Easter 11.00a.m. Martin – Parish Communion</p> <p>2nd June 9.30a.m. 1st Sunday after Trinity 11.00a.m. Martin – Parish Communion*** Rockbourne – Choral Matins</p>