

FROM LENT THROUGH EASTER 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. Since January 1st, we have returned to the common cup during parish communion. We will continue to offer opportunities to join services via livestream (for the vulnerable) for the foreseeable future.

ST GEORGE'S, DAMERHAM SNOWDROP WEEKEND – Although it seems quite a while back in February - Our Snowdrop Weekend at St George's Church was well supported by visitors and volunteers. Following the event we raised £3166.65 which will help St George's Church to meet its financial commitments. Many thanks to all who attended and helped out to make the event a success.

HUMBLE LUNCH 2025 - A BIG Thank You to all who supported the Ash Wednesday Humble Lunch which raised over £150 to help provide, amongst other things, educational and medical support to communities in Sudan and South Sudan. Thanks also to all those supporting our Lenten Lunches in Rockbourne, in aid of St Andrew's Church. If you would like to make a personal donation to support St Andrew's, please contact Mr Patrick Thompson (see contact details below for phone number) who can provide details of how best to do so.

BIG CHURCH SPRING CLEAN – Spring is here and at this time of year we have events to clean our churches. St. George's Church Damerham has had its spring clean event – Many thanks to everyone who turned up as the church looks great! All Saints Church, Martin has their spring clean event on the 12th of April 12.00a.m to 4.00p.m. Please contact Lizzie Fernie or Isabel King for more information. For St. Andrew's Church in Rockbourne, their spring clean event is on Saturday 24th of May from 10.00a.m. At all these events, refreshments will be offered. Don't forget to bring some cleaning materials!

CONGRATULATIONS – To the Rev'd Angus Mayhew and his wife Jules, former residents of Martin - as Angus has been licensed as Rector of the Knowlton Circle Benefice of six churches, including Cranborne, We wish him well in his ministry in supporting the local community throughout the benefice.

ASCENSION DAY SERVICE AND BACON BREAKFAST – This year will be held on Thursday 29th May at 9.00a.m. at Glendale (the home of Rory Smith) in Rockbourne. This will be an outdoor event (weather permitting). All are welcome to one of the key moments in the Christian year - The ascension of Jesus to be with his heavenly Father, which paves the way together with Pentecost for the broadening of faith beyond any single culture, race or nation, to become a message of hope for all people.

FROM THE REGISTERS

Funerals

St Andrew's Rockbourne	29 th January	Michael Meredith
All Saints, Martin	20 th February	Fred Symes (Interment of Ashes) Bill Symes (Interment of Ashes)
	3 rd March	Marian Pearce

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 2025.

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

THE COURIER

APRIL – MAY 2025

A Newsletter for the Communities of the Western Downland

A Word from the Rector



The Last Supper Restored - Leonardo Da Vinci

Photo: Wikipedia, Public Domain

We may well feel that we are living in unprecedented times. It certainly feels like that to me sometimes. But in fact societies have always known upheavals, through disease, conflict, civil disorder, or other sudden crises. Of course there is a global aspect to today's crises because our societies are so closely entwined - though at the moment that closeness is being deliberately and wantonly unpicked by some - and because of our ability to have instant news, leading many of us to feel overloaded and overwhelmed by the news of events which seem to tear at the very edifice of our hard-won and cherished views of good society and good government. In reality, societies have always gone through periods of upheaval; some of them severe. VE Day 80, which we will mark in May reminds us of just one of them. Such earth-shattering upheavals were familiar to the earliest disciples of Jesus whose world imploded when he was suddenly, within hours seized, tried and executed. Stunned by the speed of events, the disciples appear to have been completely overwhelmed, driven into hiding behind locked doors (the case it appears for most of the disciples), into denial (like the disciple Peter), into spiralling anguish (like the several Marys, including Jesus' mother), into numbed disbelief (like the two disciples on the road to Emmaus) and into unbelief (like the disciple Thomas). Yet Christians have come to know that what seems most dark, most hopeless, most destructive can miraculously be transformed.

Of course some reading this will remain unconvinced, seeing the Christian story as a crutch to lean on, as a fable for children or as malicious religious propaganda. Yet I ask myself, what possible earthly benefit did holding to this narrative provide to those first disciples, or to the generations of Christians who came after them who were persecuted, hounded from their homes and countries, denied rights and in many cases killed. What possible purpose today for Christians who place themselves in war zones, in homeless shelters, in refugee camps, to stand with and to aid the suffering and the voiceless. There may be great cathedrals and in some cases extensive financial reserves in the Church, but actually for the majority of Christians, their faith is a sacrificial one; sacrificial in time, in energy, in finance, in care.

And I ask myself, where would we be without such Christian compassion, which offers a powerful alternative to the self-promotion, greed and cruelty so often enacted upon the world? A Christian compassion entirely and unequivocally rooted in the self-giving love and life of Jesus, who had no home of his own on earth, no wealth in his pocket, no status in his society beyond being respected as a teacher, and no army at his back. And yet he changed the face of the whole world without access to smart phones, instant news and global connectedness. It makes you think. **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 style="text-align: center;">DATES FOR THE DIARY</p> <p>2nd April 2025 7.30p.m. (7.00p.m. for PCC members) St Andrew's Annual Parochial Committee Meeting, Rockbourne Village Hall, Rockbourne. (PCC meeting before at 6.45p.m.)</p> <p>7th April 2025 7.00p.m. (6.30p.m. for PCC members) St Leonard's Annual Parochial Meeting, Whitsbury Village Hall, Whitsbury. (PCC meeting before at 6.30p.m.)</p> <p>29th April 2025 7.30p.m. (7.00p.m. for PCC members) All Saints Annual Parochial Committee Meeting, All Saints Church, Martin. (PCC meeting before at 7.00p.m.)</p> <p>30th April 2025 7.30p.m. (7.00p.m. for PCC members) St George's Annual Parochial Meeting, Damerham Village Hall. (PCC meeting before at 7.00p.m.)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">FORTHCOMING CHURCH EVENTS</p> <p>Rogation and Animal Blessing Services - This year our Rogation & Animal Blessings are in Damerham at 11.00a.m. on Sunday 11th May at St George's Church. All Saints Church, Martin have their Rogation service on Sunday 18th May at 11.00a.m. The Rogation in Martin involves a short pilgrimage walk from the Church to Read's Farmhouse - an opportunity to participate in the blessing of crops, and of pets and other animals and a celebration of rural life. 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>Holy Week - Details of all our services from Palm Sunday to Good Friday and Easter Day are contained in our List of Services.</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 on Ascension Day itself, and at our Sunday services between Ascension and Pentecost, there will be opportunities to mark this season in our online Tuesday Prayers on Tuesday 3rd June), and in person on the morning of Thursday 5th June at St. George's Church, beginning at 9.30a.m. These two opportunities will each be around 25 minutes long.</p> <p>Legacy Funding - Many people consider the causes and concerns which have been important to them in life and include these in a will. Please consider making a provision in your will to your local parish church and help maintain their structure for generations to come.</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 style="text-align: center;">ALL SAINTS PCC NOMINATED CHARITY 2025</p> <p>A reminder that if you would like to propose a charity or charitable good cause for our 2025 All Saints Martin Nominated Charity please give a brief outline of your candidate charity or good cause to a member of the PCC before the Annual Meeting in All Saints on Tuesday 29th April, or come in person to propose it. The Church Council will consider candidate charities and make a selection at its summer meeting.</p>	
<p>MARTIN VILLAGE FÊTE - Martin is having a Village Fête this year on Sunday the 21st of June on the Martin Recreation Ground from 12.30p.m. to 4.00p.m. There will be Live Music, a Fun Dog Show, Games, Stalls, Face Painting, BBQ, Bar, Refreshments and more! The event is cash only (so don't forget to bring some) and all proceeds will be to good causes and charities. Parking will be limited up Townsend Lane, so please be respectful if parking elsewhere in Martin Village. For information email MartinVillageFete@gmail.com.</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>6th April 9.30a.m. 11.00a.m. 5th Sunday of Lent (Passiontide begins) Damerham - Parish Communion (CW1)*** Rockbourne - Choral Matins</p> <p>13th April 9.30a.m. 11.00a.m. Palm Sunday Whitsbury - Holy Communion (1662) Martin - All Age Worship***</p> <p>Thursday 17th April : Maundy Thursday 11.00a.m. Salisbury Cathedral - Maundy Thursday Communion and Blessing of Oils 7.00p.m. Whitsbury - A Gathering Around the Lord's Table</p> <p>Friday 18th April 10.30a.m. 10.45a.m. 2.00p.m.-3.00p.m. Good Friday Rockbourne - The Way of the Cross; Music, Readings & Prayers for Good Friday Silent Walk of Witness & United Service (Churches Together) in Fordingbridge Damerham - An Hour at the Cross</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">The nature of the UK's relationship with India A talk by Sir Richard Stagg Thursday, 1st May, at 7.00p.m. at Damerham Village Hall</p> <p>Tickets may be purchased (£10 per person) in advance (email Paul Nicholls paul@pcnicholls.co.uk) or at the door, but it is advisable to reserve them so as not to be disappointed. A glass of wine and nibbles will be provided, for which a donation would be gratefully received. Additional parking will be on the Damerham Sports Field.</p> <p>Sir Richard Stagg was British High Commissioner to Delhi (2007-2011) and subsequently ambassador to Afghanistan, then Chairman of Rothschild (India) (2015-2022). He is now Warden of Winchester College.</p> <p>All proceeds and donations from his talk will be divided between St George's Church, Damerham and The Baas Educational Trust.</p> <p>20th April 9.30a.m. 9.30a.m. 11.00a.m. 11.00a.m. Easter Day - Alleluia! Christ is Risen! Damerham - Family Communion (CW1) Martin - Easter Celebration Whitsbury - Family Communion (CW1)*** Rockbourne - Holy Worship on Easter Day</p>	<p>27th April 11.00a.m. 2nd Sunday of Easter - Low Sunday Damerham - Parish Communion***</p> <p>4th May 9.30a.m. 11.00a.m. 3rd Sunday of Easter - VE Day Martin - Parish Communion*** Rockbourne - Choral Matins</p> <p>11th May 9.30a.m. 11.00a.m. 4th Sunday of Easter Whitsbury - Holy Communion (1662) Damerham - Rogation Service & Blessing of Animals***</p> <p>18th May 9.30a.m. 11.00a.m. 5th Sunday of Easter Rockbourne - Sung Eucharist (CW1) Martin - Rogation Walk & Blessing of Animals***</p> <p>25th May 11.00a.m. 6th Sunday of Easter Whitsbury - Parish Worship***</p> <p>Thursday 29th May : Ascension Day 9.00a.m. Glendale - Ascension Communion & Bacon Breakfast</p> <p>1st June 9.30a.m. 11.00a.m. 7th Sunday of Easter - Cuiebet/South Sudan Martin - Parish Communion for Cuiebet Sunday*** Rockbourne - Choral Matins for Cuiebet Sunday</p>
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