

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

THE COURIER

OCTOBER – NOVEMBER 2023

A Newsletter for the Communities of the Western Downland

A Word from...our Guest Courier Contributor



Harvest fruit and vegetables

Photo: "Fearon Hall" community website

For many churches the months of September and October are times to celebrate the harvest, to focus on environmental issues, to reflect on God's creativity. The theme of this season of creation for 2023 is "Let Justice and Peace flow like a river". The dangers associated with climate change have been talked about for decades, but few people appreciated the speed of the change. Most people realise that now, in 2023, there is a pressing need for concerted action amongst all nations to keep global temperatures at a level that will enable this planet to survive; at least as human beings might recognise it. Underlying all this is the need for fairness, or justice for everyone on the planet.

It is well known that the more prosperous, industrialised nations have been the major sources of the toxic emissions into the atmosphere, yet many financially poorer countries are bearing the full brunt of climate change catastrophes. It is so easy to point fingers at other countries that "pollute more than us", and use this as an argument not to do anything too radical. In the meantime, some parts of the world are suffering and do not have the means to do much to rectify the situation. The planet is crying out for co-operation, for global leadership, for common sense, for justice for all. There are no easy answers whilst countries are locked in territorial wars and disputes, or internal power struggles. Energy badly needed for co-operation seems so pointlessly wasted. One might wonder what Jesus might say today to leaders of the world - but would they, would we be listening? "Let Justice roll on like a river," said the prophet Amos; "Love your neighbour as you love yourself," quoted Jesus. Who are we listening to in 2023?

In the UK church calendar, this Autumn we again give thanks for the harvest, to celebrate humanity working in harmony with the Creator. Once again, we will have thanked God for the rhythm of the seasons, as well as for the work of people who produce our food. May our thanksgivings this year include all those who are willing to share their bounty with others who have less: it could be with the local food banks; or sharing with refugees; or it might be encouraging our own leaders to be more generous, more gracious, with people who are suffering directly because of climate change. Every little helps.

It's a matter of justice. It matters to God - who loves us all.

Michael King

HARVEST THANKSGIVING 2023 – September and October are the time for our Harvest Thanksgiving Festival Services & Events throughout the benefice. It is at this time we remember those unfortunate people who might be struggling given the ongoing cost-of-living crisis to feed themselves and their families.

Please consider donations of dried and tinned goods, deodorants, shampoo and other suitable items, alongside more traditional items (but with a good 'shelf life' please!) that can be brought to your local Harvest Thanksgiving Service in each of our churches. Donations will be distributed locally where possible amongst older members of our communities or donated to the Ringwood & Fordingbridge Food Bank.

DAMERHAM AND WESTERN DOWNLAND BRANCH – ROYAL BRITISH LEGION



The Western Downland Branch of the Royal British Legion will hold its AGM at 7.30 pm on Wednesday 11th October in Damerham Village Hall. All members of the community are most welcome to join us and find out more about the work of the RBL in your local area.

The Branch fundraising Coffee Morning will take place from 10.00a.m. to 12.00 noon on Saturday 4th November. We hope that you'll come along and support us.

DATES FOR THE DIARY

1st October 2023 7.30p.m.	RBL Annual Meeting Committee Room, Damerham Village Hall
11th October 2023 7.00p.m.	Chalke Deanery Synod Broad Chalke URC Chapel /Community Shop & Café
17th October 2023 7.00p.m.	St George, Damerham PCC (Damerham Village Hall)
23rd October 2023 6.30p.m.	St Leonard, Whitsbury PCC (Whitsbury Village Hall)
24th October 2023 10.00a.m.	St Andrew, Rockbourne PCC (Townend Gate)
24th October 2023 7.00p.m.	All Saints, Martin PCC (Read's Farmhouse)

FORTHCOMING CHURCH EVENTS

ALL SAINTS PCC NOMINATED CHARITY 2023

This year the All Saints Church PCC has selected to raise funds for Hostage International. Hostage International is a unique charity delivering essential emotional and practical support to those affected by the kidnap or illegal detention of a loved one, and to hostages and detainees after their release. You can find out how to donate 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).

HOME GROUP AND PRAYERS RESTARTING

Home Group starts again after the summer break on 21 September (7.00p.m. to 9.00p.m.) when we will be continuing our study of Acts and seeing what we can learn from the first followers of Jesus. For more details contact Nigel Cumming on (01725) 518248.

It is anticipated that Tuesday Reflection & Prayer will restart again once our Rector Les returns in early October following his time of study. If you are interested, watch for news in the weekly email church update.

SERVICES DURING OCTOBER & NOVEMBER

Post COVID - We are continuing our Sunday services based largely in our parish Churches. We are livestreaming physical services on Zoom denoted by three asterisks (***). These will be recorded and uploaded onto the Western Downland Churches YouTube channel so those who cannot attend physical services can either watch live or the recorded programme later.

24th September 11.00a.m. 5.00p.m.	16th Sunday after Trinity Damerham - Harvest Thanksgiving Festival*** Martin - Harvest Thanksgiving Festival
1st October 11.00a.m.	17th Sunday after Trinity Whitsbury - Harvest Thanksgiving Festival***
8th October 9.30a.m. 11.00a.m.	18th Sunday after Trinity Damerham - Parish Communion Rockbourne - Harvest Thanksgiving Festival & Shortened Communion***
15th October 9.30a.m. 11.00a.m. 6.00p.m.	19th Sunday after Trinity – St Luke's Tide Rockbourne – Parish Communion (Contemporary Language) Martin – Parish Worship & Prayers for Healing & Wholeness*** Whitsbury – Autumn Evensong
22nd October 9.30a.m. 11.00a.m.	20th Sunday after Trinity Whitsbury – Holy Communion (1662) Damerham – Taize style Worship***



St. George's Church in a Storm (Photo: Arron Shutt)

29th October 9.30a.m. 11.00a.m.	Bible Sunday Rockbourne - Sung Eucharist Martin - Patronal Festival for All Saints***
5th November 9.30a.m. 11.00a.m.	22nd Sunday after Trinity Rockbourne – Choral Matins Whitsbury - Patronal Parish Communion (Traditional Language)***

Saturday 11th November 10.50a.m.	Armistice Commemoration Damerham Village Hall – Armistice Wreath Laying
12th November 9.30a.m. 10.50a.m.	Remembrance Sunday Martin - All Age Worship Remembrance Sunday*** Damerham - RBL Service of Remembrance
19th November 9.30a.m. 11.00a.m.	2nd Sunday before Advent Rockbourne - Sung Eucharist Martin – Parish Worship***
26th November 9.30a.m. 11.00a.m.	Christ the King Damerham – Parish Communion Whitsbury – Parish Worship***
3rd December 9.30a.m. 11.00a.m. 5.00p.m.	1st Sunday of Advent Whitsbury – Holy Communion (1662) Rockbourne – St Andrew's Patronal Festival*** Martin – Darkness to Light***
10th December 11.00a.m. 3.00p.m.	2nd Sunday of Advent Rockbourne – Sung Eucharist Whitsbury - Nativity Carol Service***

CELEBRATING THE HARVEST TIME THROUGH TO ADVENT

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 in 2023 evolves into new strains and most people will be fully vaccinated, 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.

CREAM TEAS – The Cream Teas by the River at Damerham Village Hall was well attended, and the Cream Tea Team would like to thank everyone who supported the events through August. The final total was £1373.05 which will help St. George's Church Damerham meet its future financial commitments.

A SAD LOSS TO WESTERN DOWNLAND – We recently received news of the passing of two people who were familiar figures contributing in their village churches in the past. Veronica Harrington died in July and was well known for contributing towards the village carol service at Damerham making these events that remained memorable for all who attended. The second was Elizabeth de Pass who with her husband Crispin was involved in the church choir. Both will be sadly missed.

JUMBLE SALE – There is a Jumble Sale at Damerham Village Hall on 14th October 2023 at 2.00p.m. This event will support St. George's Church, Damerham. Donations can be brought from 10.00a.m. to Damerham Village Hall. For any enquiries, please contact John or Cathy Godber on (01425) 650044.

THE RECTOR RETURNS – Our beloved Rector Les Player returns to active duty on the 8th of October 2023 following his time of study. We hope that you join us in welcoming him back at our church services as he takes us from our harvest season into Advent.

FROM THE REGISTERS

Baptisms

St Leonard's, Whitsbury	30 th July	Marnie Bowring and Scarlett Redman
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Marriages

All Saints, Martin	15 th July	Polly Jane Wingate-Saul & Thomas Francis Barnett Heffer
	18 th August	Victoria Jane Lister and Lars Holger Samuel Prah

Funerals

All Saints, Martin	25 th July	Derek Edgar Wood
	25 th August	Elizabeth De Pass - Service of Thanksgiving

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 31st October 2023.