

THE COURIER

JUNE – JULY 2019

A Newsletter for the Communities of the Western Downland

FELLOWSHIP & FUNDRAISING: –

HOW'S IT GOING? If you have not done so recently, please take a look at some of the practical steps taken in your local parish church to care for, repair, renew and improve the fabric of our churches and the management of the churchyards. Or speak with a church warden, or other PCC member, to find out what projects or plans are in the pipeline. We always appreciate your interest and support, including any financial support you can offer.

The Annual Report and Financial Statement of Accounts 2018 can be sent by email. Please contact the Church Wardens.

THANK YOU. On a personal note, Tracey and I would like to thank all those who, over recent months, have offered their love and practical support to us whilst I was off duty due to ill health. Please do continue to bear with me, as I find my feet again, and as we look for new ways to do some things. – **Les**

THANK YOU. St George's Church Fundraising group would like to thank the men who turned up very early on Easter Monday to help with the parking of cars etc. at the Car Boot Sale, also Sarah Gurr who helped us with the Bacon Rolls, we really appreciate all your help. The event was very successful and raised over £600 for the church. – **John and Cathy Godber. Church Wardens**

Advance Notice: Get ready for the ever popular '**Cream Teas by the River**' at the Village Hall in Damerham. Every Sunday in August. Bring your friends!

FROM THE REGISTERS:

Marriages	St George, Damerham 25 th May	Jennifer Ings and Stewart Bell
Funerals	St George, Damerham 5 th March	Andrew Godden
	St Andrew, Rockbourne 8 th March	Norah Shearing
	1 st April	Ailsa McLeod (at Salisbury Crematorium)
	St Leonard, Whitsbury 2 nd April	Derek Hutson
	4 th April	Henry Rice (Ashes)

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)	Cathy Godber (01425 650044)
Martin	Michael Rhodes (01725) 519715	Fran Eardley (01725) 519423
Rockbourne	Patrick Thompson (01725) 518246	
Whitsbury	Chris Harper (01725) 518324	

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Please send contributions for the next Courier to the Editor, Midge Connell meconnell53@gmail.com. The deadline is 7th July 2019. The Courier can be delivered by email, please contact the Editor.

NB. Please note the new email address for the Editor and the changed contact details for the new Church Wardens in Martin.

A WORD FROM THE RECTOR

Change is in the air

From climate change to regime change and on to new technological landscapes, it seems that tectonic plates are shifting. What seemed relatively constant is changing rapidly and almost beyond recognition. National and cultural identity, sexual and gender identity, the way we communicate and transact with one another, the way we live together are all in flux. Ways of interacting in place for hundreds, even thousands of years, are now in question, or under severe strain. The Church is not immune.

Locally as congregations we're exploring fresh ways to structure some of the organisation which supports our life together. At a national level the Church of England has had to engage - shamefully almost against its will - with change driven by revelations of institutional abuse and, equally grievous, the covering up of such abuse. How could we have fallen so far short of the standard to which we're called? It's almost beyond me, except that I'm painfully aware that, in other ways, I too fall short of God's standard, and am slow to confront the need for change. Change can be uncomfortable, because we have to set aside deeply ingrained habits and step into the provisional; not knowing where our destination lies, or if we'll get there.

Change doesn't, of itself, guarantee a better world and it isn't always for the better; it presents us with new challenges and sometimes new dilemmas. Yet Christians are obligated to embrace change. The Greek word 'metanoia', often used in the Bible, translates as 'repent' (a word little used outside the arena of faith these days). It literally means to change direction and turn onto a new path. Whether as a national Church we have the capacity to repent of our misdeeds remains to be seen, just as whether as a society we can repent of poor choices (both old and new) relating to our use of the earth's resources and our treatment of one another, remains to be seen. Because repentance is about far more than words. Practical action is required, if we're to reach the godly potential woven into the essence of our humanity and so fulfil God's requirement to care for creation and one another.

Rev'd Les Player