

## FELLOWSHIP & FUNDRAISING

**Victory in Europe.** We remember with thanksgiving and solemn remembrance the sacrifice of all those from every nation who used the weapons of truth, courage, fortitude, ingenuity, dignity, justice and compassion to bring the Second World War to an end in Europe, (and in due course in the Far East), as we mark the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of VE Day on 8<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup> May.

**Nominated Charity.** The Church Council of All Saints' Martin invites proposals for the Nominated Charity for 2020. Those that have a particular connection with Martin, perhaps because of its locality, or perhaps because of the involvement of the people connected with Martin would be especially welcome. The deadline for nominations is the All Saints' Church Annual Meeting on 5<sup>th</sup> May.

**Thank you!** To all who supported the Snowdrop Weekend at St George's despite the stormy weather and to those who supported the Humble Lunch on Ash Wednesday.



## FROM THE REGISTERS.

<b>Funerals</b>	<b>All Saints' Martin</b>		
	19 <sup>th</sup> March	Ken Atkinson	Committal at Salisbury Crematorium

**N.B. 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 Cathy Godber (01425) 650044  
Martin Michael Rhodes (01725) 519715 Fran Eardley (01725) 519423  
Rockbourne Patrick Thompson (01725) 518246  
Whitsbury Chris Harper (01725) 518324 Chris Cobb-Smith (01725) 518313

## THE COURIER

Please send contributions for the next Courier to the Editor, Midge Connell - [meconnell53@gmail.com](mailto:meconnell53@gmail.com)  
The deadline is 7<sup>th</sup> May 2020. The Courier can be delivered by email, please contact the Editor.

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

# THE COURIER

APRIL – MAY 2020

A Newsletter for the Communities of the Western Downland

## A WORD FROM THE RECTOR

### Who is my neighbour?

Today as I write this we have, as a nation, moved from the 'Containment' to the 'Delay' phase in response to the spread of Coronavirus.

Many of you will be familiar with the story of Joseph, his technicolour coat, and his vision of seven sleek and seven lean cattle. What may be less familiar is the measures Joseph took to ensure that all Egypt, and many beyond it, had access to foodstuffs through seven years of severe famine (represented by the seven lean cattle). It's a story from the mists of time which feels as if it has at least a kernel of truth. In part this is because the story of a slave made second-in-command of the most powerful nation on earth seems so implausible - who would make it up? For Joseph it was a long haul. Through tumultuous - and sometimes painful - experiences, God placed him in the right place at the right time to save, not only his own neck, but the lives of his family in Canaan, and the people of Egypt (and many other people besides, even though Egypt and the surrounding nations were not - at least in theory - God's chosen).

The story of Joseph is actually the story of divine and human intervention to safeguard lives. Jesus was once asked, 'Who is my neighbour?' He didn't answer the question directly (he rarely did). Instead he told the Parable of the Good Samaritan. The story of how one person out of three, (theoretically the least likely one of the three), refused to 'walk by on the other side' when he saw a human being in need. Instead of a stranger he saw a vulnerable neighbour and responded with sacrificial generosity and care. If, as villages in Western Downland, as neighbours and fellow citizens, we can find the courage to do the same over these coming weeks, we may give voice to a story no less powerful than that of Joseph. As we potentially face a long haul to come through Coronavirus, we can do as Joseph did - caring for and protecting our neighbours and even strangers as well as ourselves and our families, in practical ways as signs of God's grace and as a sign of simple human kindness. You can read the story of Joseph in the Book of Genesis (chapter 37, then chapter 39 onwards). After all, if you're encouraged to stay at home for one reason or another in the coming weeks, you'll likely find yourself with plenty of time on your hands in which to read!

Rev'd Les Player

**Please see the centre pages for an update on the rapidly changing situation.**