



## The Benefice of Crockham Hill and Westerham



### News from Westerham

#### Sunday 17th August, Eighth after Trinity

**10.00am, Holy Communion at Crockham Hill**

**10.30am, Holy Communion at Westerham:** in modern language with hymns. Please join us for refreshments and a chat afterwards. Everybody's welcome. **Readings:** Hebrews 11.29-12.2; Luke 12.49-56

Day	Time	What's on at St Mary's this week?
<b>Tues to Sat</b>	9.00 - 9.30am	<b>Morning Prayer</b> in the Resurrection Chapel; a short service of prayer and readings
<b>Tuesday</b>	10am - 12.00pm	<b>Coffee Time</b> at Westerham Community Hub in the JFR. Join us for tea, coffee, snacks and friendship
	7.45pm	<b>Bell ringing practice</b>
<b>Wednesday</b>	10am	<b>Midweek Communion:</b> a said service
	10am to 12pm	<b>Jigsaw Group</b> at Westerham Community Hub in the JFR. Come along for refreshments and a chat
<b>Thursday</b>		<b>No choir practice</b> —on holiday until 4 September
<b>Friday</b>		<b>Benefice Office opening later</b>

#### Sunday 24th August, Feast of St Bartholomew

**8.00am: Traditional Communion at Westerham:** a said service

**10.00am, Holy Communion at Crockham Hill**

**10.30am, Holy Communion at Westerham:** in modern language with hymns. Please join us for refreshments and a chat afterwards. Everybody's welcome.

**Readings:** Acts 5.12-16; Luke 22.24-30

Please note that the Benefice Office will be closed on Monday 25th August.

## **Benefice Update**

A year on from becoming a united benefice, things are still moving forward, although perhaps not quite at the pace that we would wish.

### **Joint Council**

The Scheme for the creation of a Joint Council has been approved by Bishop's Council. This has taken longer than we hoped but means that we can now fulfil the intention to share the development and mission of the Benefice together, as members of both churches start to meet together on a regular basis. The first meeting will be in the autumn.

The PCCs will continue to meet to consider local matters, while the Council will have a broader, benefice-wide view.

We will also need to work out a fair way attributing and, where appropriate, sharing costs such as ministers' expenses and administrative work.

We are also working on developing an online hub where PCC members, office holders, staff and church members with particular roles can share and collaborate on documents and projects.

But most importantly, we will be working to grow our shared identity as the people of God in this place of Crockham Hill and Westerham – what that means to us, and what it should mean to the people around us; how we share the Gospel and join in with God's work for His World. I hope that we will be able start this through a process of celebrating and building on our strengths, which has already been started with St Mary's PCC and will soon start with Holy Trinity PCC, too.

### **Associate Minister**

Unfortunately we still have not appointed an Associate Minister but we are advertising again, with an updated Benefice Profile. This coincides with a push from the Diocese to advertise Rochester as an attractive place in which to live and minister, so we are hopeful of an appointment in the autumn.

## **Safeguarding**

Please note that the safeguarding email address for St Mary's has changed. If for any reason you need to raise a safeguarding issue, worry or question, or discuss something that happened in the past, please email Judy using [stmsafeguarding@chwbenefice.org](mailto:stmsafeguarding@chwbenefice.org)

## **Web Presence**

As a Benefice, and as parishes, we are not making good use of the opportunities presented by the internet. We have Facebook and other social media pages that could provide attractive windows on what we do, extending our invitation way beyond our networks of friends and families, and we need to get our pages on A Church Near You up to date ([chwbenefice.org](http://chwbenefice.org)). But we need editors who can spend a little bit of time each week, advertising what's coming up at the weekend and keeping the content fresh. Are you one such person? If you already own a Facebook or other social media account, you already have the necessary skills, and much of the content, such as posters and flyers, will be provided for you as needed. Please email Alyson – [office@chwbenefice.org](mailto:office@chwbenefice.org) – or Carole – if you think you could help out.

***Rev Dave***

## **2nd Sunday in September**

Our informal worship in September is also the second week of the season of Creation, which is a cross-denominational liturgical season celebrating Creation, our place within it and our responsibility for it. This year's theme for Creationtide is 'Peace with Creation'. As we pray for the world God has placed us in, we'll be making bug hotels to provide sanctuary and food for the invertebrates who bless us by how they live yet are rapidly reducing in number as habitat is lost and chemicals destroy them.

Which means we have a good use for empty plastic bottles (or cardboard carpet tubes, which would be much better). If you use 2 litre soft drinks bottles, please donate your empties over the next few weeks. Simply leave them on the table in the coffee area. These will provide the walls for the hotels. If you have an old carpet tube (the dense cardboard tube at the centre of a roll of carpet or vinyl), it would be amazing if you could donate that! Especially if you could cut into lengths of about 10-12 inches first!! **Thank you.**

**Organ Appeal:** by the end of the summer holidays, the Working Group should have an updated cost of Phase 2 of the organ refurbishment project. A second quote has been received and Dan will be comparing the two over the summer. The draft plan envisages the work being done in the autumn of 2026, although there is much to be done before we can be sure of that! We hope to have further information in the autumn. At the last organ recital on Saturday 26 July, £333 was raised. Thank you to everyone who attended.

**Organ Recital:** unfortunately it has not been possible to find an alternative date for the second recital. We hope to have a series at some point next year.

**Choir Vestry Door:** please remember that this is a **security door** and during the week must be kept closed at all times. **If you leave it open, it only takes a few seconds for an intruder to enter, however careful you might think you are being.** Thank you.

### **A Prayer for Peace**

God of peace and justice, we lift up to you the peoples of Ukraine, Gaza and Sudan today. We pray for all the world's war zones, for the laying down of weapons and end to calls of violence; for all those who fear for tomorrow, that your Spirit of comfort would draw near to them; for those with power of war or peace, for wisdom, discernment and compassion to guide their decisions. Above all, we pray for all your precious children, at risk and in fear, asking you to hold and protect them.

We pray in the name of Jesus, the Prince of Peace. Amen

**Deadline for newsletter items: 12 noon on Wednesday**

### **Contact Us**

**Benefice Office:** 01959 561 330 / [office@chwbenefice.org](mailto:office@chwbenefice.org)  
Open Mon, Tues, Wed and Fri, 9am to 1pm. **Closed Thursday**  
**Website:** [www.chwbenefice.org](http://www.chwbenefice.org)