



The Benefice of Crockham Hill and Westerham

Services

Sunday 30th August, Thirteenth after Trinity

Readings: [Romans 12:9-end](#); [Matthew 16:21-end](#)

10.00am, Holy Communion at Crockham Hill: a relaxed, welcoming service in modern language with hymns. Please join us for refreshments and a chat afterwards. Followed by refreshments and a chat. We are delighted to warmly welcome a visiting group of children from our linked parish in New Cross (NC), accompanied by Fr. Grant and Stacy Ward (NC outreach lead), coming to join us for the Service and refreshments.

Afterwards the children will be having a picnic lunch and playing on the grass opposite the church (or in the Village Hall if it rains) during the afternoon. Members of the congregation are most welcome to bring their own picnics and join in the fun!

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

12.30pm: Baptism of Ernest and 2pm: Baptism of Theo at Westerham. We welcome the family and friends of Ernest and Theo as they bring each of them to be baptised. Please remember them in your prayers.

Diary

Day	Time	This week in our churches
Monday		Benefice Office closed
Tuesday	9am	Morning Prayer (Crockham Hill): we gather to hear the bible and pray for the world and each other.
	10am – 12 noon	Coffee Time at Westerham Community Hub in the John Fryth Room (JFR). Join us for tea, coffee, snacks and friendship
	7.45pm	Bellringing practice
Wed - Sat	9am	Morning Prayer (Westerham) in the Resurrection Chapel

Wednesday	10am 10.30am	No Midweek Communion Funeral of the late Mrs Jean Pearch (Westerham)
	10am – 12 noon	Jigsaw Group at Westerham Community Hub in the JFR. Come along for refreshments and a chat
Thursday	7pm	Choir practice in the John Fryth Room

Sunday 6th September, Fourteenth after Trinity

Readings for morning services: [Colossians 1.15–20](#); [John 1:1-14](#)

8.00am, Book of Common Prayer Holy Communion at Crockham Hill:

a spoken service using the beautiful language of the Book of Common Prayer

10.00am, Family Service at Crockham Hill: a service of hymns and readings with an all-age talk. Please join us for refreshments and a chat afterwards.

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

6.00pm, Choral Evensong at Westerham: a quiet, reflective service to end the weekend.

Readings: [Psalm 104](#); [Ezekiel 47:1-12](#); [Revelation 22.1–5](#)

Notices

Plant Sale with refreshments! **Saturday 19th September, 10am – 12 noon at St Mary's.** Please come along and buy something for your home or garden. Plants will be supplied by the green-fingered members of the Flower Guild. If you can volunteer to bake a cake, please contact the Benefice Office.

Christian Vocation

We are all called by God, all our lives. Into a deeper relationship with him, into more Christ-like living and sometimes to a particular ministry or role.

Confirmations: Confirmation is a very special service in which people who are old enough to speak for themselves reaffirm their baptismal promises in the presence of the Bishop (or if you weren't christened, get baptized by him), their friends and Christians from all

round the area. They then receive Holy Communion for the first time. It marks an important step in the journey of belief.

If you are of faith, and over 12 years old, and would like to be Confirmed – or want to find out more – please talk to Revd Dave or Revd Emma, or leave you contact details with the office. You do not need to already be baptised/christened.

The next Confirmation service is in November in Sevenoaks, and we'd love to enable you to take part. **We will be running confirmation classes (exploring the faith, and what is involved in Communion) during September and October.**



If you're too young to be confirmed but want to receive communion, we also have the Bishop's permission to allow Communion before Confirmation. If you'd be interested in this, please let us know so that we can arrange preparation classes.

It's Your Calling is a day for anyone wishing to explore how God is calling them. It looks at our journey and the gifts that God has given us, as well as the Biblical understanding of vocation. The day is a chance to meet others on a similar quest and to explore your sense of vocation in a structured way.

After the day you will be offered a chance to contact a Vocations Adviser for an informal chat.

The next day is on 31st October. Details are on the Diocesan Website or [follow this link](#). To book onto the day, you will need Revd Dave to complete a form so please speak to him ASAP.

Discernment Conversations: If you would like a discernment conversation about your Christian life in general, or a particular sense of calling, please do not hesitate to speak to Revd Dave or Emma.

New Westerham rotas for Sept/Oct/Nov will be ready to view online this week. Please check your duties and make any swaps in good time. If you have lost the link, or it doesn't work, please contact Alyson in the Benefice Office.

Benefice get together: If you have pencilled in the 12th September for our next get together, please cross it out in your diary! That day the Fayre on the Green will be taking place in Westerham, and Revds Emma and Dave will both be there.

News



August 2nd Sunday Service – Big Butterfly Count 2026 in Westerham churchyard

The recent heatwaves and dry conditions have had a negative impact on nature in our churchyard. Nevertheless, during the *2nd Sunday* service in August we walked around the churchyard and counted butterflies for the Big Butterfly Count 2026. We saw only five that day, but earlier in the summer lots of different butterflies were seen. This photo

shows, from top left in a clockwise direction: a small copper, a red admiral, an Essex skipper and a gatekeeper.

Although our churchyard might be seen as a place of mourning and remembrance for those who have died, it is also a sanctuary where trees, plants, birds, butterflies and other insects live, reminding us throughout the year of the natural beauty that God provides for us.

The Vicar Adds: it was striking how rapidly the number of insects in the churchyard and the Vicarage garden dropped over a couple of weeks as the drought progressed. It is easy, now the temperature has eased and rain has come, to forget the conversations people were having about this summer showing us that climate change is really here. **Don't forget those conversations; don't accept the new normal.** If you are concerned about the climate and the loss of the wonderful creatures upon whom, we all depend, **please take a**

moment using the link below to email our MP and ask her to attend the Biodiversity Loss debate at Westminster Hall on 3rd September. Following the link sends you to a template email that you can send as-is or amend, asking her to:

♥ Call on the Government to set out a new vision for action in this debate - cutting emissions, restoring nature and building resilience.

♥ Press for the full findings of the Joint Intelligence Committee's (JIC) nature security assessment and the DEFRA Futures food security report to be published.

♥ Call for a Funded National Resilience Plan, with clear and independent accountability for delivery, that takes the full scale of climate and nature risk seriously.

If you don't agree with those aims, you can delete them and simply ask her to attend – in a recent poll, the 74% of respondents said that they are worried about the climate, an increase of 6% from before the drought and wildfires of this summer – so it's in her interest to attend and in all our interests for elected representatives of all political stripes to get involved in the debate and collaborate with each other in making decisions. [Click here to access the email tool.](#)

[The JIC national security assessment can be found here.](#) It drives home what the global crises means for the UK. What I find most sobering is not so much what is being said in it which, largely, is no surprise to me, but that what is being said is the sort of stuff that not so long ago was still being rubbished by Government as alarmist or improbable. Now, it is the Government's own security advisors that are saying it.

As Christians entering the Season of Creation next week, and as inheritors both of the vocation to tend the Garden and of the promise of the reconciliation of all things in Christ, we have a calling and duty to act – encouraging our elected representatives to act on our behalf is a fairly easy action that can have long lasting impact.

In October, we hope to be offering a viewing of the People's Emergency Briefing, which is a film about the climate crisis designed to help communities and decision makers (our MP will be

invited) to hear the science and respond together. **Watch this space.**

Westerham PCC Outcomes: Wednesday 5th August

Those present at the first meeting of the Joint Council on 29th July reported that it had been a good-natured meeting, full of excitement, hope and enthusiasm. Ways of working together, helping and sharing were discussed.

Revd Emma talked about the listening exercises she will be doing over the next few months. This will involve listening to God, listening to congregations and listening to community individually and together about the future of Benefice and how we are called. The listening can happen in formal and informal settings and can include what is already going well and what might be seen as opportunities to grow along those lines.

The PCC resolved to sign the contract with South Coast Organs, the chosen organ builders. This has now been done. To date, 50% of the required funding has been raised – thank you to all individuals and organisations who have donated or made a pledge to date. The Organ Working Group is continuing to work on applications to grant-giving bodies to raise the remaining funding required.

Simple Security and Watchfulness. As you may know, the organ console in St Mary's was vandalized recently. No major damage, thankfully, but it underscores the need for vigilance. Our insurers, Ecclesiastical, report that churches that are kept open are actually less prone to things like this happening but they recommend that church members make a point of looking in when they're passing. Potential thieves and vandals don't tend to target churches when there is plenty of coming and going. So when you're passing either church, perhaps just take a few moments out of your day to come in and enjoy the peace. It's good for you and it's good for the building, too.

A Prayer for Peace: God of peace and justice, we pray for the peoples of Ukraine, the Middle East, Somalia and Sudan today. We pray for all the world's war zones, for the laying down of weapons and an end to calls of violence; for all those fearing tomorrow, that your Spirit of comfort would draw near to them; for those with power over 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, protect and provide for them. We pray in the name of Jesus, the Prince of Peace.

**Please send news and notices to the Benefice Office
by 12pm on Wednesdays**

Contact Us

Benefice Office 01959 561330; office@chwbenefice.org

Open Mon, Tues, Wed and Fri, 9am to 1pm

Closed Thursday

Website: www.chwbenefice.org

Vicar: Revd David Fox-Branch (rest day: Monday)

Associate Priest: Revd Emma Wylie TSSF

(working days Sunday – Wednesday)

St Mary's Westerham

**2nd Sunday
in Creationtide**

13th September at 10.30am

Our informal service of word, prayer
and praise – songs, worship, craft
activities and refreshments available
throughout on the theme of God as
provider and creator

Everybody's welcome



Living Water

Season of Creation 2026