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## THE NORTH WEST HAMPSHIRE BENEFICE

ASHMANSWORTH + CRUX EASTON + EAST WOODHAY + HIGHCLERE + WOOLTON HILL

**Rector**  
Vacancy  
Benefice office  
07577 423715

**Associate Priest**  
The Revd Professor Christopher Hancock  
The Clergy House  
Highclere, RG20 9PE  
(01635) 254718



# Easter Greetings

*from the Churches of the  
North West Hampshire Benefice*

*Ashmansworth + Crux Easton + East Woodhay + Highclere + Woolton Hill*

Easter 2024

## Easter – A time like no other

Chris Hancock, Associate Priest

I find it hard to believe that this is my second Easter in the Benefice. Sundays and services, like time itself, pass quickly! You will be aware, as I am, that you, and your loved ones, are a year old than in 2023; that the gap between now and when you and they were born, baptised, left home, married or, sadly, died, is a little wider, even if the memories are just as vivid. Time is a stirring reality and a very deep mystery. Though we try to impose our control/s on it, it remains sovereign. We are its servants. Watches, alarms, anniversaries, named seasons, and the pages of history may try to pin time down, but it always eludes our grip. Like the wind, we see its effects but can't hold it. Like the breath of life itself, time comes and goes, and goes as soon as it has come. It reminds us how powerless we are and how fleeting biological life and human accomplishments, really are. To a Christian, Easter redefines the way we see – and ought to see – time. The whole Easter story, from Jesus's last meal with his disciples, through his arrest, cross-examination, kangaroo trial, torture, mockery, stumbling path to Golgotha, brutal crucifixion, death, and resurrection, is built on the clash between God's time and human time. The four gospels make clear that everything that took place, though apparently a human decision, was in reality by divine permission; that nothing happened without God's say-so, that what looked like a crushing human process was in reality a liberating divine mission. And in the act of resurrection God snatched back for all to see his true, reliable, control on time and events. He reversed there the seeming irreversibility of the great event in time we all face, our death. When there was 'darkness over all the earth' during Jesus's death on the cross, it was as if time stood still. In a sense, it did, as God re-set the time and course of human life and history by his grand intervention at Easter. It is a 'Royal Visit' with inordinate consequences, leaving an indelible memory. Literally, the day that changed history.

As you celebrate Easter again this year, pass through the days of Holy Week and enjoy the sense of new birth in Easter Week, let me encourage you to remember that just as the clocks change on Easter Day this year, so life and death are recalibrated eternally by what God in His beloved Son Jesus did, and does, by dying and rising in love for His people and, if recognized, the world as well. With God, there is *always* time, time to pray, time to be 'reborn' spiritually, time to repent, time to rejoice in the hope we have as Christians that God conquered and conquers the curse of time for (our) good.

God bless you all.

Christopher

## Palm Sunday

Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> March

We commemorate Jesus entering Jerusalem when crowds shouted, 'Hosanna to the King!' We gather for a **Palm Procession** beginning at 9.45am at Highclere Cricket Ground to join the service in church....

### 10.00am The Entry to Jerusalem: Benefice Communion

We join from all around our parishes to worship together at **St Michael & All Angels', Highclere**

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**Monday, Tuesday & Wednesday of Holy Week:** we gather each evening for a simple service of Night Prayer with Bible reading and reflection.

Monday 25 <sup>th</sup> March	8.00pm Compline	East Woodhay
Tuesday 26 <sup>th</sup> March	8.00pm Compline	Ashmansworth
Wednesday 27 <sup>th</sup> March	8.00pm Compline	East Woodhay

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## Maundy Thursday

Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> March

We recall the institution of the Lord's Supper when Jesus teaches his disciples about service and shares bread and wine as a symbol of his own life poured out for all.

**7.30pm Holy Communion of the Last Supper** St Thomas', Woolton Hill

## Good Friday

Friday 29<sup>th</sup> March

Our churches will be open for private prayer. The following solemn services will be offered:

<b>9.30am Good Friday Service</b>	St Michael & All Angels, Crux Easton
<b>11.00am Family Service</b>	St Thomas', Woolton Hill
<b>11.00am An hour at the Cross</b>	St Michael & All Angels', Highclere
<b>2.00pm At the Foot of the Cross</b>	St Martin's, East Woodhay

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## Easter Sunday

Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> March

**Alleluia! Christ is risen!** We rejoice in the resurrection of Christ

<b>9.30am Festival Communion</b>	St Thomas', Woolton Hill
<b>9.30am Festival Communion</b>	St James', Ashmansworth
<b>11.00am Festival Communion</b>	St Michael & All Angels', Highclere
<b>11.00am Festival Communion</b>	St Martins', East Woodhay
<b>11.00am Holy Communion</b>	St Michael & All Angels', Crux Easton

(by ext BCP)



# NORTH WEST HAMPSHIRE BENEFICE

ASHMANSWORTH + CRUX EASTON + EAST WOODHAY + HIGHCLERE + WOOLTON HILL

...making Christ known in our communities

## Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> April 2024

### Easter 2

**9.30am Morning Worship** Woolton Hill  
*Minister: Suki Coe*

**11.00am Matins** Highclere  
*Minister: Suki Coe*

**11.00am Parish Communion** East Woodhay  
*President & Preacher: The Associate Priest*

**6.00pm Evensong** Ashmansworth  
*Minister: The Associate Priest*

*Readings: Acts 4: 32-35, Psalm 133, John 20: 19-end*

## Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> April 2024

### Easter 4

**9.30am Morning Worship** Woolton Hill  
*Minister: Suki Coe*

**9.30am Holy Communion** Ashmansworth  
*President & Preacher: The Associate Priest*

**11.00am Parish Communion** Highclere  
*President & Preacher: The Associate Priest*

**6.00pm Evensong** East Woodhay  
*Minister: Suki Coe*

*Readings: Acts 4: 5-12, Psalm 23, John 10: 11-18,*

## Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> April 2024

### Easter 3

**8.00am Holy Communion** East Woodhay  
*President: The Associate Priest*

**9.30am Parish Communion** Woolton Hill  
*President & Preacher: The Associate Priest*

**11.00am Holy Communion (BCP)** Highclere  
*President and Preacher: The Associate Priest*

*Readings: Acts 3: 12-19, Psalm 1, Luke 24: 36b-48*

## Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> April 2024

### Easter 5

**9.30am Parish Communion** Woolton Hill  
*President & Preacher: The Associate Priest*

**9.30am Morning Worship** East Woodhay  
*Minister: Suki Coe*

**11.00am Holy Communion** Crux Easton  
*President & Preacher: The Associate Priest*

*Readings: Acts 8: 26-end, Psalm 22: 25-end, John 15: 1-8*

#### ***A prayer for our parishes:***

*Eternal Father, we give thanks for calling us to be fellow-pilgrims in Christ. Strengthen our faith, renew our common life and guide us into the future in the power of your Spirit. With your grace may we be faithful witnesses, in both word and deed, to your love and saving presence in all our communities. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

**Rector:** Vacancy **Benefice Office** 07577 423715 **Associate Priest:** Revd Professor Chris Hancock 254718

**Reader:** Suki Coe 07990 755323 **Reader Emeritus:** Rosemary Cahill 253306

**Benefice Co-ordinator:** Sue Hopkinson e-mail: [coordinator.nwhb@outlook.com](mailto:coordinator.nwhb@outlook.com)

#### **Monthly Notice Sheet:**

Please send details of church news and events for this sheet to Bertha (253199 or [berthab@btinternet.com](mailto:berthab@btinternet.com)) by the **24th of the preceding month.**

## Update from the Benefice: April 2024

Our Associate Priest will be holding '**Open Door**' at **The Clergy House on Mondays from 5.30-7.30pm** This is for anyone who wishes to see him about anything for a brief conversation. He can also be contacted during this time by phone. Telephone 254718.

**Benefice Prayer Group.** Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> April at 10am in St. Thomas' Church. For more information contact Rachael or Netty on 07979 952611.

**St Thomas' Church** Spring Clean Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> April 10am-12noon. Offers of help to Margaret Falconer Telephone 253144.

### Annual Parish Meetings:

- **St Thomas'**, Woolton Hill APCM will be held on 3<sup>rd</sup> April at 7.30pm in the church.
- **St Martin's**, East Woodhay APCM will be held on 15<sup>th</sup> April at 8pm in the church.
- **St Michael and All Angels'**, Highclere APCM will be held on Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> April at 6.30pm in the Dunlop Room.
- **St James'**, Ashmansworth APCM will be held on 25<sup>th</sup> April at 7.30pm in the Village Hall.

**The Community Café** is **every Friday from 10.00am** in St Thomas' Church, Woolton Hill. All welcome.