**I encourage you to use your church this Lent and Easter**

We are very fortunate at St George’s to be able to keep our church open every day of the year (apart from a few days around Christmas). Anyone can pop in for a few minutes of peace and quiet, away from the hectic pace of a busy life. Like most things that we take for granted, we do not appreciate it until it is not there. Regrettably, when it’s not being used for services, we’ve had to close the Mission Church in Sandhurst for the time being – due to the thoughtless actions of a few individuals. I encourage you, through this Lent, to take the opportunity to use and enjoy the quiet, spiritual space at St George’s church; it is open from 8.30/9am until about 4.30/5pm. Thank you to those who unlock and lock the church every day; to those who keep it clean and tidy, and to those who provide beautiful flowers to decorate the church.

The time of Lent (preparing ourselves for the celebration of Easter) is, ironically, a busy time within the church. Again, though, I encourage you to get involved in as many of the services through Lent and Holy Week as you can. On Sunday 4 March, during the 10am All-Age Communion service, we will be raising awareness of safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults in our community and in the church setting in particular. The issue is a sad reflection on our society, but not a new one, as we see so often in the press or on the news. Ian Malaugh will be helping us become more aware of our personal responsibilities for safeguarding those unable to protect themselves. The following Sunday 11 March is Mothering Sunday. This will be marked in the 10am service. Sunday 25 March is Palm Sunday. You are very welcome to join us for breakfast at the Memorial Hall before processing up to church for the 10am service.

Following Palm Sunday, we enter Holy Week. There is a Reflective service, in the benefice every day at 7.30pm. (All are at St George’s except Tuesday’s is at the Mission Church.) On Maundy Thursday there is also a lovely service at 11am at our Cathedral in Canterbury. If you’ve not been before, why not try it this Lent. Good Friday we spend an ‘Hour at the Cross’ together, remembering the crucifixion; on Holy Saturday there is another Reflective service at 7.30pm. Then we can celebrate together on Easter Sunday, the 1 April this year; we start early with a sunrise service at 6.15am at St Nicholas Sandhurst. (That is not an April Fool! Breakfast is served afterwards as well.)

This world needs more of the joy and love that is expressed in the celebration of Easter Sunday. I encourage you to come and be part of it. God bless.

Revd David Commander, Rector