

Church of All Saints in the Vendée

"To know and to share Jesus Christ"

The Grapevine

February 2015

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Preface



Dear Friends,

Hello everybody, today, as I write this, it's a brilliantly sunny day but very cold, there was a sharp frost our way this morning, but there is a noticeable difference in the day light hours thank goodness! I know that many of you have had one or other or even both of the bugs going around so I pray that improved health is on its way.

We are publishing on the web site a calendar of events for ASV, please check it or print it, we will endeavour to keep it as up to date as possible. We hope that a visual method will help make planning events around your very busy lives even easier.

Life is busy, even, or especially, for us retired folks, but God wants even our seconds to be full of him, he wants us to make wise decisions about how we use our time, so that we can have the full potential of what he has planned for us. See Ephesians 5:15-20 for example: ' Be very careful then how you live - not as unwise but as wise- making the most of every opportunity'

We have been celebrating the "Week of Prayer for Christian Unity", Polly and I went to a service in La Roche that was only in French and then there was the celebration on the 25th at Puy de Serre. For me, the language barrier makes unified working much harder, but I believe we are trying to work with those of different denominations and traditions, even if we don't particularly enjoy or appreciate those differences. I have regular meetings with the group of Protestant Ministers in the Vendee, and we work well with the Catholic community at Puy de Serre and with the French Catholics who come to Faites le Plein. I maintain contact with other English speaking Christian groups and it is with those people and the different traditions/ preferences within our own community that I think we have room to improve. You can't please all of the people all of the time, but there has to be room for difference and variety in our worship styles so

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that some of the time we can please some people and so that we can support our fellow English speaking Christians in their efforts to deepen their knowledge or in mission opportunities. Many of us Priests get used to working with styles of worship which aren't to our taste, because we are serving the people who do like that style, and we try to do it to the best of our ability, and sometimes God works in unexpected ways and places, sometimes it is in the difference that we can see him afresh or learn something new.

So I ask you please, be generous with people of different traditions, don't always write off that particular experience, give God the chance to use what ever means are available and our time to perform his works within us. We are, after all, called to be one and to love one another as he has loved us.

The following poem will be on our web site as well, because although it was written for a different set of circumstances I think it applies to us now as well.

God of our past, you have brought us together
from different traditions, each called to serve you,
each with much to learn, feeling in need of your
grace. We thank you for calling us.

God of our present, you bring us together in
fellowship with you and each other. We learn
from sharing our gifts, accepting new challenges
and daring new ways. We acknowledge our need
of your grace every step of the way.

God of our future, you send us out to serve you in
ways we cannot yet imagine. We trust you for our
lives, whatever we do, wherever you lead us. We
ask you to bless us as we go forth in your name.

Father, Son and Holy Spirit;
Creator, Redeemer, Sustainer;
One God for all time, for eternity.

Anon

God bless,

Caroline

***Please see attachment below
for news of the Bishop`s Lent Appeal***



Dates for your Diary



28th January, Wednesday, 1430 South Western Home Group at the home of Myra Holmwood, in Champs St. Pere, and fortnightly thereafter. (see details on page 10)

4th February, Wednesday, from 7pm, Faites le Plein, La Roche-sur-Yon contact Liz Jond

6th February, Friday, 6pm, Puy de Serre Salle: First Quiz of the Year contact Polly Ward

7th February, Saturday, Puy de Serre Salle: Soirée Crêpes contact Polly

10th February, Tuesday, 2.15pm Eastern Home Group at the home of Doug & Chris Green, Largeasse. (see details on page 10)

11th February, Wednesday, 1430 South Western Home Group at the home of Myra Holmwood

17th February, Tuesday, 2.15pm Eastern Home Group at the home of Doug and Chris Green

24th February, Tuesday, 2.15pm Eastern Home Group at the home of Doug and Chris Green

25th February, Wednesday, 1430 South Western Home Group at the home of Myra Holmwood

26th February, Thursday, 11am: Ladies Circle at Mouilleron en Pareds. (For more details, please contact Joan Stewart on 02 51 00 34 70)

...and looking ahead:

11th March, Wednesday, 1430 South Western Home Group at the home of Myra Holmwood

21st March, Saturday: ASV AGM, Les Essarts

24th March, Tuesday, 2.15pm Home Group at the home of Doug and Chris Green

25th March, Wednesday, 1430 South Western Home Group at the home of Myra Holmwood

27th March, Friday: Quiz, Puy de Serre

31st March, Tuesday, 2.15pm Home Group at the home of Doug and Chris Green

2nd May, Saturday: Marian and Richard's non-annual Coffee Morning and Plant Sale

A Thousand Gifts, a Thousand Blessings!



Don't forget your gifts on the **2nd Sunday** of each month.
Bill and Carole will collect them
and pass them on to Restos du Coeur in Coulonges.



Diary Updates are available on our Website: www.AllSaintsVendee.fr

Soirée Crêpes

Puy de Serre

7th February 2015

The village of Puy de Serre will be holding its annual 'Soiree Crepes' on Saturday 7th February.

There are tickets available from Polly for the 'bourriche'.
If you would like to attend this event, please let Polly or Bernard [ex-maire] know as soon as possible.



This also means that the Salle will not be available to us for Bring and Share lunch the following day – as they will be clearing up!

Names on our Prayer List.....



Please continue to remember in your prayers **Peter Hutchinson** and **Avril Simmons**...

And also remember **John and Lucia Golding** at this time of upheaval, following their return to the UK...

... and for **Jean Mylod**, following her recent stay in hospital...

Our Prayer Co-ordinator is David Pearson. Please let him have details of any folk you become aware of who need our prayers. ☎ 02 51 61 05 04 ✉ david.sally@orange.fr

“Thank you all for your continuing prayers”

You may sometimes hear of members or friends of our congregations who are not wanting to go on our Prayer List, but who are ill or in need.

In these cases, please let David Pearson, our Pastoral Organiser, know.

Tel: 02 51 61 05 04

Notes from our Church Wardens



I am sure many cannot wait for Winter to end! A Winter of illnesses and family visits and departures. As I am writing this, the weather is reflecting my mood – grey, dull, depressing and spitting with rain. Ugh! But guess what? January is almost over! The days are getting longer. There are bulbs beginning to flower in the gardens and slowly, slowly Spring is approaching! Don't be sad and throw SAD away – there is a lot to look forward to! Most of our friends have returned from travelling the world – or at least the UK! We are back to business as usual, so we have times of fellowship to look forward to in our regular Services and our social calendar begins again...

Our first Quiz of the year is only next week – and you can follow this with a `Soirée Crêpes` at Puy de Serre. Then, don't forget, it's Valentines Day! Before you know it, it will be time to put our Winter coats away!

The date has been set for our AGM. This will take place in the usual hall in Les Essarts on the afternoon of the 21st March. Please put the date in your diary now, as, after all the necessary business is completed, it is your opportunity to put your point of view and raise any concerns you might have at the Open Forum.

Please note that our Electoral Roll Officer, Chris Green, has to update the Electoral Roll before then – and the timing of this is strictly laid down. So she is planning to do this between 21st February and the 6th March. So, if you are not on the roll and wish to be, please make sure you complete a form [available from Chris and the Wardens]. People sometimes ask me what is the benefit of being on the Electoral Roll. It is simply that – you can vote at ASV elections. We, of course, have members who do not choose to be on the Electoral Roll – and that's all right, too!

Barbara and Joan

Electoral Roll



The Electoral Roll for ASV has to be prepared every six years. This was last done in 2013. In between complete revisions of the Roll the Electoral Roll Officer has a duty to make amendments, as necessary, and present the revised roll at the AGM. There is a strict timetable for this revision. It must be completed not less than 15 days and not more than 28 days before the AGM. Once the revision is made the Roll is "frozen" until after the AGM has taken place. This year's AGM will take place on Saturday

21st March so I will be revising the roll between the 21st February and the 6th March.

If anyone wishes to be added (or removed) from this Roll please contact me as soon as possible. Application Forms for enrolment can be obtained from me or one of the Wardens.

Chris Green, Electoral Roll Officer
Email greensinfrance@yahoo.co.uk

Letter from the Editor

Gung Hay Fat Choy! [Happy New Year, Chinese style!]

The coming month sees the start of Chinese New Year celebrations [on the 19th February this year] and heralds the start of the Year of the Goat.



Many people clean their homes to welcome this Spring Festival. They put up red posters with poetic verses on to their doors, special New Year pictures on their walls and decorate their homes with red lanterns. The evening before, fireworks and firecrackers are set off, hoping to get rid of bad luck and make room for good. Children often receive "luck" money. Many people wear new clothes and send Chinese New Year greetings to each other. Out on the street, it is loud and noisy and joyous - beating drums and gongs, spectacular dragon and lion dances...

Chinese New Year marks the end of winter and the beginning of spring. It is a time for family reunions, for honouring ancestors and for thanking the gods for their blessings. It is also believed that what happens on the first day of the year may decide events for the year ahead – so make sure you say and do the right things! Oh, and I hope you think good thoughts!

As some of you may guess, I am looking forward to celebrating with friends. Having a close friend who is Chinese ensures the day does not go unmarked..



For Christians here in France, Candlemas is celebrated on February 2nd. It is the day when pancakes/crêpes are eaten and candles are blessed in churches. It marks the day that Mary presented Jesus to God at the Temple in Jerusalem after her traditional 40-day period of purification for mothers following a birth. According to the gospel of St Luke, Simeon held the baby in his arms and said that he would be a light for the Gentiles (Luke 2:32). It is for this reason that this event is called Candlemas.

Snowdrops are sometimes known as Candlemas bells. These tiny white flowers are seen as a symbol of hope. A legend tells of the time when Adam and Eve were expelled from the Garden of Eden. Eve was beginning to despair that winter would never end, when an angel appeared. The angel transformed some flakes of snow into flowers, showing that Winter would certainly give way to Spring, and so ending Eve's despair and giving her hope. For me, these are a most precious herald of Spring. I am already looking anxiously in the garden to see if the little bulbs are sprouting.



I hope our gardens will soon be full of snowdrops and our hearts full of hope as the new growing season begins! After all, Spring is on its way!

Joan Stewart



'Faites le Plein' !
Wednesday February 4th
From 7pm

(Faites le Plein is a monthly activity run under the umbrella of the Congregations of All Saints Vendée.
Literally translated into English, it means "Fill up"!)

So we invite you to come and "fill up" spiritually at our February meeting held in La Roche sur Yon.
We first of all share some refreshments, then there is a time of sung worship,
followed by a talk given by a guest speaker.

After the talk there is an opportunity, for anyone wishing to receive prayer, to do so.

The prayer team is trained specifically to minister to others and in a sensitive and confidential way.

The guest speaker for February will be Tim Baynes-Clark, the director of Le Pas Opton,
the Christian holiday centre near St Gilles-Croix de Vie.

Tim and his wife Monique live near Challans in the Vendée.

Tim is manager of the Spring Harvest Holidays camp site "Le Pas Opton" which is situated on the coast.

Together with Monique they are establishing "Freedom in Christ" in France.

Tim is president of the "Interserve" mission.

They worked as missionaries in Pakistan and Tim pastored a church in southern England.

So we welcome anyone who has not been before to join us on :

Wednesday 4th February 2015
The meeting will start at 7.30pm, but
There will be refreshments from 7pm

At the Maison du Diocèse
62 rue Maréchal Joffre
La Roche sur Yon

(Just by the Siloë Bookshop, there is a car park, behind the high railings).

The ground floor room in which we'll hold the meeting, is situated at the back of this car park on the left hand side,
behind the big house, through the blue doors.

We look forward to meeting and greeting you !

Liz JOND for the "Faites le Plein" team

For more info: liz.jond@wanadoo.fr

<http://www.thefillingstationfrance.com>



A Thousand Gifts, a Thousand Blessings!



*Don't forget your gifts on the 2nd Sunday of each month.
Bill and Carole will collect them and pass them on to Restos du Coeur in Coulonges.*

RESTOS DU COEUR

There are many positive blessings for me in working with Restos du Coeur. Getting to know more people who worship at Puy de Serre, getting to know more French people, the helpers at the food bank, the pensioners from the Maison de Retraite who make cakes and sweets for the food bank and contact with some of the people and their problems who benefit from the food bank.

A number of friends at Puy de Serre have said that they have always wanted to give but didn't know how. Hardly a week goes by when someone says they have seen people arriving at food banks in big cars to get food. I realised that when ever I take things to the food bank there is usually a row of good looking cars outside. (There is no car park) However some of the volunteer helpers are people of considerable means who live far enough away to have to drive to the food bank. I know of no one receiving food who has either a big car or probably not even a bike. But some people owning cars and made redundant and live in villages have to travel into the town by car as there are no bus routes through the many little local villages. In most of the larger towns and cities in Europe, night time journeys are made to feed people who sleep rough in the streets and sometimes die there of the cold winter's nights. Food has to be carried in some vehicle from somewhere. Everyone who receives food from food banks has been recommended by a responsible social care or medical agency and all recipients are interviewed by responsible helpers of the food bank. Sadly there is not enough food to give it where it is not needed. My car is sometimes outside the food bank. Do people consider that we are taking food to eat ourselves ?

The lead up to Christmas was so wonderful. When I began to collect food "Oh man of little faith" I sometimes thought "What if nobody brings anything"! Thanks to the generosity and goodness of many Christian and non Christian friends together, we were able to take 2 car loads of good things.

The reading on my Bible Notes.....Lord Jesus, prepare me to read about your earthly ministry Luke 3:11. John replied..."If you have 2 coats, give one to the poor. If you have food, share it with those who are hungry"

Thank you to all who give so generously.

May we all have a Blessed and Peaceful New Year

Bonne Année

God Bless

Bill

(There have been a number of Articles in recent editions of: "Connexions". Bill hopes you will read "Solidarity not Charity" on Page 12 of the current, January edition which is not yet available on line, but if you would like to read an earlier article which is published online, please click on:

http://www.connexionfrance.com/news_articles.php?id=6379

Jacqui





Thank you to everyone for the gift of two engraved All Saints Vendée wine glasses and a card of good wishes, presented to us just before we departed France to return to the UK to live, at the beginning of December 2014.

All is well.

The paperwork is arriving less frequently and life is beginning to calm down.

Wishing you all a Happy and Healthy New Year 2015.

John and Lucia Golding

In memoriam - Tom Goode

30th JANUARY 2015

PREMIER of Chorale No.53 taking place in Oxford

and

8th MARCH 2015

DEDICATION OF HYMNBOOKS at which Chorale No.53 will be played

I would like to take this opportunity to update those who were kind enough to contribute to Tom's funeral retiring collection last February for Exeter College, Oxford. Your generosity enabled me to replenish hymn books for the College Chapel. The College was also very keen to take part in the International Orgelbüchlein Project as part of its 700th Year Anniversary. (Please see more details on line at: <http://www.orgelbuechlein.co.uk>)

The Orgelbüchlein Project is a major international composition project to complete J.S. Bach's Orgelbüchlein... "Little Organ Book". The manuscript of Orgelbüchlein has 118 missing pieces, ghostly gaps with only the title penned by Bach. Each of these gaps will be filled by a new composition based on Bach's intended melody. The new pieces, written by the most interesting composers at work today, will survey a range of modern styles'.

As Tom was a member of Exeter Chapel Choir and the Oxford Bach Choir while up, this seemed a very apt project for the remainder of his retiring collection. Chorale number 53 Allein Gott in der Höhe Her, dedicated to Tom, has now been composed by David Briggs and the premiere will be in Oxford on 30th January.

On Sunday March 8th at 6pm during a Choral Evensong service the hymn books will be dedicated, the Organ Chorale played and Tom mentioned in the prayers. I will be attending with family and any friends who would like to attend.

Thank you all so much for your support and enabling me to have such a special memoriam in Tom's name.

Ticia Goode

(If you would like to attend either or both of these occasions and require further information, please contact Ticia at : ticiagoode@gmail.com)

2 Invitations...

28th January and
fortnightly thereafter

HOME GROUP (South West Vendée)

The next meeting of our Group will be on Wednesday the 28th January at the home of Myra Holmwood, in Le Champs St. Père, at 1430 hrs. We shall be studying Brian D. McLaren's book "We make the road by walking". We meet normally every other week.

If anyone would like to join us in the Group, perhaps you could give Sally Mills a call on 02 51 33 30 46, email: sally.mills@wanadoo.fr, or, Myra Holmwood, herself on email : Holmwood.myra@neuf.fr.

10th, 17th and 24th February, and
24th and 31st March

HOME GROUP (East Vendée)

This Home Group meets at the home of Doug and Chris Green in Largeasse, Deux-Sèvres, not far from the Vendée border. We are about to start a new 5 week study based on the wonderful hymn, "O Lord my God! When I in awesome wonder" which will make a good Lent study leading up to Easter.

We will meet on Tuesdays at 1415 on the 10th, 17th and 24th February, then a gap and finishing on the 24th and 31st March.

We would welcome new members and this is an ideal time to join this small, friendly group who meet for an hour or so followed by refreshments and a chat.

More details can be obtained from Doug or Chris on 05 49 72 18 46 or greensinfrance@yahoo.co.uk.



ASV Website News

You'll find: **STOP PRESS** messages ... **SERMONS YOU MAY HAVE MISSED....**
EVENTS that were received too late for the Grapevine deadline
PICTURE GALLERY....and even previous editions of **THE GRAPEVINE**

FROM TODAY you will be able to view the **CALENDAR OF ASV EVENTS** on the website so if you are organising a Church event (Home Group, Lent Lunch, a meeting, quiz, walk, social event, coffee morning, fête, garden party, etc.), please let me know! Just email the details of the event, date and time, location and contact name to me at: sjfamily66@hotmail.com. If you prefer not to advertise your phone number or email address on the website, then contact can be made using my email address.

Finally, I have heard that the **Ecumenical Service** at Puy de Serre was much appreciated by the French participants. Someone was taking photographs and I would like to show these in our website **GALLERY**. I understand there was a photographer covering the service for a local newspaper but it's unlikely he would release his photos, so, if you took any photos at the Church or the Salle afterwards and would be prepared to let them be available to the website, please let me know. Also, if you were unable to attend the service, it is now possible to read the Talk on the website which was given by John Matthews (in both English and French!);. just click on **SERMONS YOU MAY HAVE MISSED**.

Don't forget, the website is there for you! Just click on: www.allsaintsvendee.fr

Jacqui - (Website Co-ordinator)

**Please send your contributions and letters for the
March issue to:**

"The Grapevine" Editor at: jpsmorandiere@free.fr before 15th February

*Requests to be included on the emailing list should be addressed to Jacqui Stainton-James at:
sjfamily66@hotmail.com*

Page Ten



Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

BISHOP'S LENT APPEAL 2015



Earlier this month I travelled to Athens. During my stay I had the opportunity to visit two detention centres on the outskirts of the city where irregular migrants are held. One of the centres is a dedicated facility for unaccompanied minors. The other is an adult prison, with a sector set aside for unaccompanied minors. The young people I met were mainly from Afghanistan and Pakistan; some were from the Middle East and a few were from Africa.

What these youngsters have in common is that they have all fled, for good reason, from their home countries. They are not criminals. But they are being held in prison conditions, for periods of 18 months or more. The conditions, particularly at the adult prison, were appalling. The children were kept in containers surrounded by gravel and razor wire. They lacked proper shoes. They had no entertainment – not even a football. They looked thin and some were evidently traumatised. I was truly shocked that, in modern Europe, children are being kept in these kinds of conditions.

This situation contravenes the basic rights of the child. But, of course, Greece has no money and migrants are at the bottom of the pile. Children are put in detention centres because there is nowhere else for them to go.

The Greek Orthodox Church is doing what it can to provide assistance. In particular, they have set up and are operating a reception centre for unaccompanied refugee minors.

My appeal for Lent 2015 is therefore devoted to “Hestia”, (meaning “Home”) a hostel for unaccompanied minor refugees in Athens.

“Apostoli”, a social action charity operating under the auspices of the Greek Orthodox Church offers Hestia as a safe place for unaccompanied children and young adolescents. The Hostel can accommodate up to 20 residents. Since its foundation, in 2012, it has supported more than 100 children and young people. It currently looks after children from Syria, Palestine, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Gambia and Guinea.

As well as food and lodging, the Hostel provides basic social and health care services. Young refugees also benefit from activities aimed at their social integration, such as schooling, occupational therapy, participation in several educational and cultural activities and basic training in the Greek language.

The cost of running the hostel is 25,000euros per month. The hostel is supported by various partners and by an EU programme. However, there are difficulties in sustaining the continuity of some funding streams. So extra funding is urgently needed.



The Greek Orthodox Church greatly values its partnership with the Anglican Church.

I hope we can make this partnership real, through offering some sponsorship of Apostoli's 'Hestia' hostel.

Please do consider this project for your charitable giving and/or bring it to the attention of your mission committee.

This is a very practical way in which our diocese can come to the aid of some of the most vulnerable children in Europe. Money collected for the Lent Appeal should be sent, as usual, to the Diocesan Office.

With every blessing,

+ Robert Gibraltar in Europe

+Robert Gibraltar in Europe



‘Some of the young people of Hestia with H.E. The President of the Hellenic Republic, Mr Karolos Papoulias, at the Presidential Palace.