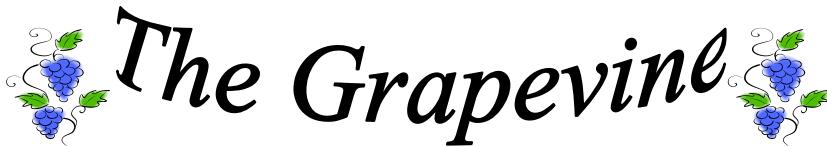


Church of All Saints in the Vendée

"To know and to share Jesus Christ"



March 2015

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Preface



Hello all, and welcome to our March issue.

Spring is coming and at the end of this piece there is my favourite spring poem. We are well into Lent now and I would advise you to get into the habit of checking our web site as we now have a calendar of events and late news. There is a lot going on in Lent including our Lent lunches and we would like you to have the opportunity to join us in all that is going on.

The Church Council decided against having a church away weekend or away day this year but voted to make use of the 5th Sundays as a time for all of us getting together and working on something together. The first of these happens on the 29th March which happens to be Palm Sunday. For this 5th Sunday we are using Puy de Serre and we will have a traditional Palm Sunday service followed by a bring and share lunch in the Salle. After this we will spend some time in the afternoon getting our focus onto Holy Week. I am sorry that for some of you in the west this means a long drive but we are spreading the 5th Sunday venues around so please try and join us, whether for all or part of the day.

There is also our Annual General Meeting on the 21st March at Les Essarts. If you are on the electoral roll you can vote at this meeting. But you are welcome, indeed encouraged, to come to the meeting even if you are not. I would also urge you to pray for the meeting and also to spend time with God to see if he is prodding you to serve him and the church in some way. Both experience and fresh blood are vital for running the church, and it does require some sacrificial giving as we are all busy people who may have to give up something to serve God. I also think it is important that everyone has a rest now and then and can come to church just to be, to worship, to spend time with God. And sometimes, just occasionally, God is challenging us to step outside of our comfort zones and discover hidden talents and ways of serving him.

Continued/...

.../Continued

My story about this; I was going forward for training so my Rector wanted to make use of me in the services, he ordered an Alb (the long white dress) for me. It was only at the first service after it arrived and I joined the procession at the start of the service that I realised I had never thought that being a Priest involved me in dressing up! My next hurdle was preaching, somehow that hadn't crossed my radar either and I felt so ill-equipped to do that, and even after my training that didn't go away. Remember God knows you better than you do, he knows what you are capable of if you let him guide you. It doesn't mean that I will ever be the best preacher, or that you would be the best whatever you are called to, **but**, to be doing, trying, to do what you think God is calling you to is all that can be asked of you.

And now for the poem.

Springtime Jesus by Joy Cowley

You, Springtime Jesus,
just as I'd settled down for winter,
you broke down my heart and danced your love right across it in a mad excess of giving.

Just as I'd got comfortable with bare branches and unfeeling,
just as my world was nearly black and white,
there you were, kicking up flowers all over the place.

Springtime Jesus,

I tried to find a way to tell you that there were places where you could or could not dance.

I wanted to guide you on my paths and have you sign the visitors book;
but you laughed right through my words and sang to me your melting song,
causing sap to fire the branches,
causing the flames of buds to flicker into green bonfires,
causing a windquake of blossom,
causing burstings, searing, breakings,
causing growth-pain,
causing life.

Springtime Jesus,

the fullness of life can be frightening and I'm lacking in courage.

It isn't easy to live with a heart that's wide open to invasion.
Teach me, Jesus, how to move with you, step for step, in your love dance.

Touch my fears with your melting song.
Gift me with your laughter, and in the mystery of your Springtime,
show me the truth of the blossoming cross.

Caroline



THANK YOU

Bob and Caroline would like to thank you for your prayers and support for his illness following the "bonfire episode!" He is now recovering well after starting a course of cortisone and is feeling like a pin cushion after so many blood tests. He must be better he is moaning again!!!

But seriously, thank you all, it meant a lot and I'm sure the power of prayer helped get us through.
God Bless you.

MARCH into APRIL CHURCH SERVICES WITH BIBLE READINGS

All Services start at 11am except where indicated

[We have also included the Psalms for each week, as they may inform your own reading at home]

1/3/2015	MW	LCP 1 st Lesson: Genesis 17: 1-7, 15,16 Epistle: Romans 4: 13-25 [<i>Psalm 22: 23-31</i>]	Lent 2 Gospel: St Mark 8: 31-38
8/3/2015	HC	PDS 1 st Lesson: Exodus 20: 1-17 Epistle: 1 Corinthians 1: 18-25 [<i>Psalm 19</i>]	Lent 3 Gospel: St John 2: 13-22
15/3/2015	HC	LCA 1 st Lesson: 1 Samuel 1: 20-28 Epistle: Colossians 3: 12-17 [<i>Psalm 127: 1-4</i>]	Mothering Sunday- Lent 4 Gospel: St John 19: 25-27
22/3/2015	HC	PDS 1 st Lesson: Jeremiah 31: 31-34 Epistle: Hebrews 5: 5-10 [<i>Psalm 51: 1-13</i>]	Lent 5 Gospel: St John 12: 20-33
29/3/2015	HC	PDS (meet at 10.45 in car park) Liturgy of the Palms: St Mark 11: 1-11 [<i>Psalm 118: 1-2, 19-24</i>] Liturgy of the Passion: Isaiah 50: 4-9a; Philippians 2: 5-11; St Mark 14: 1-15, 47. [<i>Psalm 31:9-16</i>]	Palm Sunday
3/4/2015	11am 3pm	LCP PDS	Good Friday
5/4/2015	HC	LCP 1 st Lesson: Acts 10: 34-43 Epistle: 1 Corinthians 15: 1-11 [<i>Psalm 118: 1-2, 19-24</i>]	Easter Day Gospel: St John 20: 1-18

LCA = La Chapelle Achard; PDS = Puy de Serre; LCP = La Chapelle Palluau,

MW=Morning Worship; HC(CW)=Holy Communion (Common Worship); BCP=Book of Common Prayer;



PLEASE JOIN US

for Tea, Coffee & Biscuits after our services, followed by a Bring & Share Lunch.

Everyone is welcome to join us



- even if you have not brought anything, there is always enough to go round!
(Unfortunately, when there is a service on the fifth Sunday in the month, the hall is not available).



Lent Lunches 2015

Lent lunches are now in full swing.

Please see 'Dates for your diary' and the website for the full list.

They will end with a Quiz night on 27 March. Please contact Polly for further details.



Dates for your Diary

6th March, Friday, 10.45am: **World Day of Prayer Service.** La Morandiere, Mouilleron en Pareds

6th March, Friday, 12 noon: **Lent Lunch.** At the home of Maggie and Tony Carlton, Thiré

8th March, Sunday, 12noon: **Lunch in support of the Bishop's Lent Appeal.**

At the home of June and Jim West, La Chapelle Hermier.

12th March, Thursday, 12noon: **Lent Lunch.** At the home of Maureen Willis, Mareuil sur Lay.

14th March. Saturday. **LENT LUNCH** followed by **GAMES** and **AFTERNOON TEA**

at the Maison du Diocese in La Roche sur Yon.

17th March, Tuesday, 12noon: **LENT LUNCH.** At 'Cup', La Roche sur Yon. Please contact Liz Jond.

21st March, Saturday, 2pm: **ASV AGM, Les Essarts**

26th March, Thursday, 2.30pm: **Ladies Circle at Mouilleron en Pareds.**

For more details, please contact Joan Stewart on 02 51 00 34 70

27th March, Friday, 5.30 for 6pm. **Quiz, plus Lent Lunch supper.** At the Salle in Puy de Serre.

29th March, Sunday, following lunch after the Service at Puy de Serre. **ASV Focus on Holy Week.**

In the Salle at Puy de Serre.

...and looking ahead

2nd April, Maundy Thursday, 6pm. A 'Passover' meal, remembering the Last Supper.

At the Salle in Puy de Serre

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

For details of these Events, Home Groups, Lent Lunches, Meetings and much more,
please visit our Website: www.AllSaintsVendee.fr



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.

* * * * *



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 as they settle into their new life in the UK...

And for **Jean Mylod**, who is awaiting the outcome of medical consultations...

Please continue to remember **all those whom we know and whose names do not appear here**,
that are in need of prayerful support at this time.

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

Spring will soon be here and today is one of those warm sunny days that holds the promise of blue skies, warmth, and having lunch outside! It won't be long now!

The month of March is going to be a Souper month with six Lent Lunches spread throughout the Parish. Last year these lunches proved to be very popular and we are delighted that this year it is the same. Thank you to all who are providing these lovely lunches and introducing us to some very super soups!

On Saturday the 14th March one of these lunches will continue with an afternoon of Games and Afternoon Tea. This will be at the Maison du Diocese in La Roche sur Yon. We hope that this will attract a number of people as it sounds like a really good event.

We are delighted to report that following our plea for help with Sunday Club Jenny Wilkinson has volunteered her services, thank you Jenny your help will be much appreciated. We are also pleased to say that our two oldest boys have made contact with St. Christopher's C of E High School in the U.K. and have found penfriends at the school.

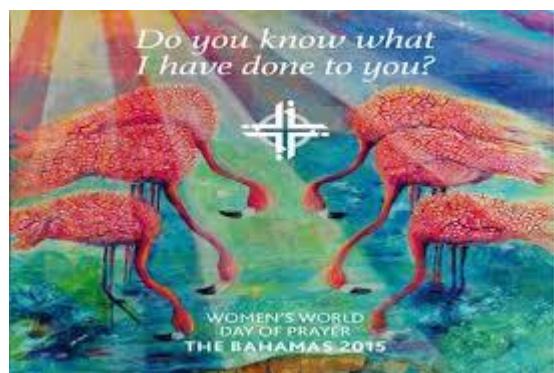
March is also the date for the ASV AGM. I know it is a formal requirement and it is a time when all aspects of our church life for the past year are reported back on – but please do not yawn as, after the formal business [and a cup of tea!], you have the chance to voice your praise and concerns at our 'Open Forum'! It has been an exciting year in the life of ASV. We now have our own 'vicarage', so, although there are outgoings, we no longer have to find monthly rent. I believe, because of this, our future is more secure. So, please do not forget, **Saturday 21st March, 2pm**, [the usual hall opposite the Church car park], **Les Essarts**.

Some of you may be aware that, over the past year, Joan Stewart has been unwell rather a lot. She hastens to tell you that it is 'nothing significant', just many small complaints. Partly for this reason, she feels she has been unable to do her job as Churchwarden as well as she would have liked. She will therefore be stepping down from this position at the AGM. This means that we are in need of a Churchwarden. Please search your hearts and seek God's guidance. Is this a position that you feel you could fill? Please speak to Caroline and the Churchwardens for more information.

Sadly, Maggie Jelley is also resigning from the Council. She has been our Treasurer for some years now. If you have some expertise or ability in this area and feel this is a role you could take on, then please speak to Caroline or Maggie. I would also remind you that we are still looking for someone to take over Grapevine, Joan assures me it is not too onerous!

Remember that our electoral roll officer, Chris Green, is currently updating the Electoral roll and you only have until the 6th March to apply. 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



'World Day of Prayer' Friday 6th March 10.45am

La Morandiere, Mouilleron en Pareds

Come and participate in this International Day of Prayer,
Written by the women of the Bahamas
Jesus said, 'Do you understand what I have done for you?'

LENT

[This piece was originally written for the website by Revd Caroline]

Ash Wednesday marks the start of the Lenten period, traditionally a time of preparation for Baptism and/or Confirmation, a time for repentance, fasting, meditating on God's word and giving service to others.

Seasons like Lent remind me why I am a Church of England priest, despite my love of informal, modern, Spirit led worship. Lent is different from the everyday, by this season of waiting and preparing for Easter it adds to the specialness of Easter. For those of you old enough to remember a time without credit cards it is a bit like the joy of saving up for a desired item and then finally being able to buy it!

Our service of Ashing starts the season by allowing for a serious time of repentance, both individual and corporate. We are also reminded of how we should use these 40 days, the opening prayer says:

"By carefully keeping these days, Christians take to heart the call to repentance and the assurance of forgiveness proclaimed in the Gospel, and so grow in faith and in devotion to our Lord. I invite you, therefore, in the name of the Church, to the observance of a holy Lent, by self-examination and repentance; by prayer, fasting, and self-denial; by reading and meditating on God's holy word."

The point of all of this is to bring us closer to God, to help us grow more in the likeness of Christ, not to be pious and self -sacrificing, or even to lose weight! We, like the people of Israel, are God's people and he wants us, loves us, and heaven celebrates when a sinner returns to God. We can do this through his grace and mercy not in our own strength.

We have the hope of Easter, we know the joy that is available for us, if we only love God with all our being and love our neighbours as ourselves. Each time we celebrate the Eucharist we claim the promise of the Resurrection.

The Eucharistic Prayer for Ash Wednesday says:

"For in these forty days you lead us into the desert of repentance that through a pilgrimage of prayer and discipline we may grow in grace and learn to be your people once again. Through fasting, prayer and acts of service you bring us back to your generous heart. Through the study of your holy word you open our eyes to your presence in the world and free our hands to welcome others into the radiant splendour of your love."

Forty days seems achievable to take time daily to be with God, it can also start new habits so that daily time for God becomes part of your lifestyle. But, as I said at the beginning, this period needs to be different, challenging, sacrificial not just another 40 days in our lives.

For those of you needing resources the Church of England website allows access to the Daily Prayer services, Bible Gateway offers verses of the day as to many other sites. For those that prefer the written word I have several Lent resources which can be borrowed and this year's books are available through web ordering.

As a church community we have several events this Lent; including our Lent lunches when money is raised for Restos du Coeur; a celebration of the triumphal entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday at Puy de Serre followed by a bring and share lunch and a chance for the whole parish to spend time together focussing on the events of Holy Week; a Passover Supper ending in an enactment of the Last Supper; two services allowing time for reflection; 11.00am at La Chapelle Pallau and 15.00 at Puy de Serre and of course our joyful celebration of the Easter story also at La Chapelle Pallau.

I pray that Lent will be a special time for you all, that your relationship with God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit will grow and be fruitful and will finish with the post communion prayer for the Third Sunday of Lent:

"Merciful Lord, grant your people grace to withstand the temptations of the world, the flesh and the devil, and with pure hearts and minds to follow you, the only God; through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen"

Letter from the Editor

The Weather Forecast.....

Haven't we been having a lot of weather recently?! Showers of sleet, rain and hail, sunshine, frosts, mist... A real mixed bag.



But now I feel it's time for these morning frosts to stop. I really don't like the cold. It has been wonderful, though, to have such beautiful sunshine during the day. It makes us feel better and brighter too. And have you noticed how warm the sun feels? The garden certainly has. Spring is on the way! It officially starts this month. It is time to prepare for planting, time to clear away the debris of miserable Winter. Isn't it wonderful to see flowers in the gardens once again?

Weather lore for March tells us that if March 'comes in like a lion, then it will go out like a lamb'. The reverse is apparently also believed to be true. This suggests to me that we have more changeable weather on the way! However, if we have thunderstorms in March, then that bodes well for this year's harvest:

*'When March blows its horn
your barn will be filled with hay and corn'*

Living here in France, you may well have heard the phrase 'giboulées de mars'. We may have April showers in the UK, but here the showers arrive in March. There is another difference, too. If you picture April showers, they are likely to appear when it's sunny. They are light and refreshing. Not so the giboulées de mars! They can be really quite violent and cold, showering you with hail, sleet, even snow, as well as rain...

Although I'm not entirely convinced by weather lore, I am fascinated by it. We all happily quote:

*Red sky at night, shepherds' delight
Red sky in the morning, shepherds' warning*

And, similarly there is this saying in France:

*Rouge le soir, bel espoir,
Rouge le matin, de la pluie en chemin.*

[Red at night, great hope, Red in the morning, rain on the way]

There may be scientific evidence that there is an element of truth in this. Something to do with weather systems moving from west to east, I believe.

However, for me, it was interesting to find the same weather lore quoted in the Bible, in St Matthew's gospel. [Ch16, verses 2b-3] Jesus said:

*"When evening comes, you say,
'It will be fair weather: for the sky is red.'*

And in the morning,

*'Today it will be stormy, for the sky is red and overcast.'
You know how to interpret the appearance of the sky, but you cannot interpret the signs of the times."*

Whatever the weather, have a magical March – and don't forget to put your clocks back on the last weekend!

It will soon be Easter

Joan Stewart

ASV Electoral Roll

[You have until the 6th March]

An 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



**'Faites le Plein' !
Wednesday March 4th
From 7pm**

We invite you to come and "fill up" spiritually at our March meeting to be held in La Roche sur Yon.

The guest speaker for March will be Frère Jean-Marie de la Croix from the Relais Pascal, the Beatitudes community in Les Sables d'Olonne.

Please join us from 7pm for refreshments.

The evening starts at 7.30pm with a time of sung, contemporary worship.

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

In the large restaurant on the right-hand side, to the rear of the parking area.

Everyone will be made welcome !
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>



**Please send your contributions and letters for the April issue to:
"The Grapevine" Editor at: jpsmorandiere@free.fr before 15th March**

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

