

Church of All Saints in the Vendée  
"To know and to share Jesus Christ"

 *The Grapevine* 

**December 2023**

DIOCESE IN EUROPE  
THE CHURCH  
OF ENGLAND



**GOOD  
NEWS:**



For unto you is  
born this day in  
the city of David,  
a Saviour which is  
Christ the Lord  
*Luke 2:11*

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**4-Thought  
December 2023**



We're moving towards the end of the year, yet we're at the beginning of the Church's year. Advent Sunday is the start of a new year, a time of preparation to celebrate the birth of our Saviour. More importantly to me, a time to consolidate preparation for His second coming.

We don't know the time or the hour Jesus will return; our heavenly Father knows. We are the church, the "bride of Christ", and we can place our hope in Jesus that He is coming back for us!

Christians around the world have waited for the return of Jesus Christ for millennia. The Bible says no man knows, and not even the angels know, the time of Jesus' coming. But when Saint Paul spoke to the Thessalonians, he said children of light will know the season.

So how can we as children of light prepare for that wonderful day of Jesus' second coming?

Here are five ways to spiritually prepare for Jesus' return:

**Pray:** If you want to know what God knows, begin by asking Him...

**Listen:** Sometimes, we think we know what God wants for us, but God's knowledge isn't always obvious, if we are too busy telling God what we want, we have no time to hear what He wants.

**Watch:** Saint Paul said we need to watch and be ready. We do not watch with fear and trembling, but we watch with joy and gladness.

**Store:** When Jesus spoke of His own return, He used the story of the 10 virgins. The kind of oil we need to store are those things that feed our light within: Bible study, prayer, knowledge of Jesus, church attendance and wholesome music. All of these things add light to our lives and our spirits and will help us prepare for when Jesus returns.

**Improve:** God does not expect us to be perfect, and thankfully perfection isn't required of us in order to see Him at His return. What is expected is that each day we are a little better than the day before.

If Jesus came today, He would accept our progress and count us as His, no matter how small our steps forward are. Every step moves us forward, even the baby steps.

We don't have to be perfect; we just have to do our best to make each day count as an improvement. One day at a time is all we ever have to worry about.

Martin and I wish you all a very Blessed Christmas and a Happy New Year,

Hazel

# Grapevine Treasurer's Report: October 2023:

Income: 803.89 €  
Expenditure: 2017.86 €

We have a **negative** balance for the month: **-1213.97 €**

Three large bills this month contributed to the deficit. We hope that November's quiz will redress the balance. Any more fundraising ideas will be gratefully received!

Planned Giving provides us with a regular income - if anyone else would like to join the scheme, please let me know! The French tax authorities give you a very generous rebate on your tax bill, so it is a win-win situation!

Thank you so much to everybody who already contributes so generously to the running of the church.

Iain McGregor  
(Treasurer)

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## *Sunday Club*

"No one will be turned away,  
everyone is welcome

Calling all children, including holidaymakers,  
to attend Sunday Club.

Do **please** let us know a couple of days in advance, if you'd like to come, so that we can prepare something special for you."



Please contact Jenny if you require  
more information: email:  
[jennywilkinson213@gmail.com](mailto:jennywilkinson213@gmail.com)

...and there's much more...  
So.....  
KEEP READING.....

# Prayer List

*Please remember in your prayers:*



**Jo** and Brian

**Colin** and Hester

**Gini** and Martyn

**Heidi** and **Millie-Jean**

and their parents, Joël and Jo

**Maureen**

**Steve** (Hazel and Martin's son-in-law) and Nicky

**Nel** (Mair & John Pugh's daughter)

**Pat** and Roy

**Polly**

**Bob** and **Caroline**

**Michael** (Sally's brother)

*...and for the bereaved:*

The family and friends of  
**Malcolm Butcher**

The family and friends of  
**Dick Hardwick**

The family and friends of  
**Allen Rothwell**

The family and friends of  
**Jean Gibbs**

The family and friends of  
**Eelan Hodgson**

The family and friends of  
**Bill Stocking**

*[If you would like a name to be added to the Prayer List, please contact David Pearson.  
Tel: 02 51 61 05 04 or Email: [davidpearson@orange.fr](mailto:davidpearson@orange.fr)]*



## Churchwardens' Notes For December 2023

### CHRISTMAS MEAL 10/12/2022

There will be a Christmas meal after the service on the 10th. December. The initiative for this came from Iain and Fiona McGregor and it was agreed that it had been a long time since we had enjoyed the fellowship of a meal together in the Salle after a Church service. Fiona is working out final details and she will then send out (or has already sent) an email to everyone on the Contact List asking who wishes to attend. *(See Page 12)*

### CHRISTINGLE - ALTERATION OF DATE

In view of the Christmas meal, the Christingle service will now take place on the 17th December at 1600 hrs. using the Zoom platform on the Internet. This year Jenny Wilkinson will be leading the service. Remember this is part of our Christmas giving to the Childrens' Society and collecting boxes, in the shape of a candle, are available in Church or from Chris Green so that you can donate at home over Christmas. Chris will collate the money by the end of February 2024 and send the total to the Charity.

### 9 LESSONS AND CAROLS SERVICE - VOUVANT CHURCH

We will again hold a Lessons and Carols Service at Vouvant church at 1100hrs on the 17th December. This is always an uplifting service and an opportunity to bring along friends and neighbours to hear and sing about the Christmas story. Let's try and fill this lovely church!

### ADVENT SUNDAY 3/12/2023 - LA CHAPELLE PALLUAU

This year the season of Advent begins on December 3rd and a service will be held at La Chapelle Palluau. Advent Sunday is the first day of the Church Year and Advent is a 4-week preparation to our celebration of Christ's birth. In fact, the season of Advent in the Christian calendar anticipates the "coming of Christ" from three different perspectives: the physical nativity in Bethlehem, the reception of Christ in the heart of the believer, and the Second Coming of Christ. It is a time of Spiritual reflection and the four outer candles of the Advent Wreath are often said to signify Hope, Love, Joy and Peace.

### 24/12/2024 CHRISTMAS EVE

The fourth Sunday of December is Christmas Eve but we are unable to use Puy de Serre. The service will, therefore, be held at Faymoreau Church at 1100hrs.

With our love and blessings at this special time.  
Doug and Margaret



# Dates for your Diary

## December 2023



1<sup>st</sup> December Friday

3<sup>rd</sup> **Advent Sunday** 11hr00 **Holy Communion** at La Chapelle Palluau

6<sup>th</sup> Wednesday **St Nicholas Day**

10<sup>th</sup> Sunday 11hr00 **Holy Communion** at Puy de Serre

Following the service there will be **Christmas Lunch in the Salle** at Puy de Serre".  
(Contact Fiona to reserve your place and choose your menu)

16<sup>th</sup> Saturday 16hr00 **Choraline Choir** at La Châtaigneraie church

17<sup>th</sup> Sunday 11hr00 **9 Lessons & Carols at Vouvant**  
16hr00 **Christingle service via Zoom**

24<sup>th</sup> Sunday 11hr00 **Christmas Eve** service at the **Église-St-Louis, Faymoreau**,  
at the junction of the D3/D67 (Please note: this is **NOT** the Miners' Chapel)

25<sup>th</sup> Monday **Christmas Day**

26<sup>th</sup> Tuesday **Boxing Day/St Stephen's Day**

28<sup>th</sup> Wednesday **Holy Innocents**

31<sup>st</sup> December Sunday **New Year's Eve/St Sylvester's Day**

**No service**

*Please check with the website and/or the Churchwardens in case of any alterations.*



# Dates for your Diary



January 2024

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1<sup>st</sup> January Monday

7<sup>th</sup> Sunday 11hr00 **Holy Communion** at La Chapelle Palluau

14<sup>th</sup> Sunday 11hr00 **Holy Communion** at Puy de Serre

19<sup>th</sup> Friday 18hr00 **Quiz** at Puy de Serre

21<sup>st</sup> Sunday

28<sup>th</sup> Sunday 11hr00 **Holy Communion** at Puy de Serre

31<sup>st</sup> Wednesday January

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*Please check with the website and/or the Churchwardens in case of any alterations.*

# EAST & WEST VENDÉE – CHURCH SERVICE ROTA

## DECEMBER INTO JANUARY 2024

**IF YOU FIND YOU ARE UNABLE TO BE AT CHURCH ON “YOUR” DAY,  
PLEASE TRY TO ARRANGE A SWAP AND INFORM THE WORSHIP LEADER**

DATE 2023	VENUE	TIME	SERVICE	PRESIDENT	PREACHER	WORSHIP LEADER	ORGANIST	INTERCESSOR	READERS	NOTES
Sunday 3 <sup>rd</sup> December	La Chapelle Palluau	11.00	HC	HD	HD		SS-J			Advent Sunday
Sunday 10 <sup>th</sup> December	Puy De Serre	11.00	HC	HD	HD	DG	SS-J	CG	IMG/FMG	Advent 2 (followed by Christmas Lunch)
Sunday 17 <sup>th</sup> December	Vouvant Church	11.00	9 Lessons & Carols		HD	JM	Resident Organist			Advent 3
	Zoom	16.00	Christingle			JW				(Christingle on Zoom)
Sunday 24 <sup>th</sup> December	Faymoreau Church of St Louis	11.00	HC	HD	HD	MK	SS-J	JM	KS/AC	Christmas Eve
Sunday 31 <sup>st</sup> December	No service									New Year's Eve
DATE 2024	VENUE	TIME	SERVICE	PRESIDENT	PREACHER	WORSHIP LEADER	ORGANIST	INTERCESSOR	READERS	NOTES
Sunday 7 <sup>th</sup> January	La Chapelle Palluau	11.00	HC	HD	HD		SS-J			

## FORWARD PLANNING

## DECEMBER INTO JANUARY 2024

This Forward Planning Rota displays those essential responsibilities which make our Services and Refreshments afterwards possible. If you feel able to “fill in the blanks,” please contact the Organiser concerned.

<b>Responsibility</b> (Organiser)	10 <sup>th</sup> December Puy de Serre 11hr00	24 <sup>th</sup> December Faymoreau Church 11hr00
<b>Refreshments after the service</b> (Jenny Wilkinson at PdS)	(Please note: Christmas Lunch in The Salle)	-
<b>Flower Rota</b> (Barbara Matthews)	-	-





# These are YOUR pages.....



My thanks to all the Contributors of notices and articles for this month's "Grapevine".

Christmas Lunch; Poppy Appeal; The Remnants; Ladies Circle; Next Quiz; Resto du Cœur; Keeping in Touch; Sunday Club x2

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## Mike Mylod is our link with Restos du Cœur



He will continue to collect your gifts of dry goods, etc. which are particularly important now and which from now on will be delivered to the local depot at La Châtaigneraie

**Please phone Mike before leaving goods with him at Moulleron-en-Pareds: 02 51 51 07 36**

Mike Mylod & Dominique made their first visit to Restos du Cœur in La Châtaigneraie. ASV has generously supported the Coulonges branch in the last 5 years, but fuel and logistics mean that delivering your donations locally makes more sense and they still fill empty stomachs. This Resto is open Tuesdays and Thursdays 14:00-16:15.

The lovely volunteers were delighted with your contributions and lost no time in getting them onto the shelves. Mike explained that ASV would bring a monthly donation and they could not have looked more pleased ♡ December 10th is the next collection date and tins, jars, packets (especially foodstuffs which have low cooking fuel requirements) as well as basic hygiene items will protect vulnerable families from hunger and illness in tough times. Thank you everyone and merry Christmas 🎄



Dominique



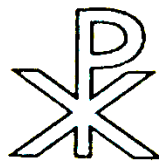
## Sunday Club



*Something to chew over...*

🦋 Christmas or Xmas? 🦋

Christmas is also sometimes known as Xmas. Some people don't think it's correct to call Christmas 'Xmas' as that takes the 'Christ' (Jesus) out of Christmas. (As Christmas comes from Christ-Mass, the Church service that celebrated the birth of Jesus.)



But that is not quite right! In the Greek language and alphabet, the letter that looks like an X is the Greek letter chi / X (pronounced 'khee' rhymes with 'key' or 'kye' rhymes with 'eye') which is the first letter of the Greek word for Christ, Christos.

The early church used the first two letters of Christos in the Greek alphabet 'chi' and 'rho' to create a monogram (symbol) to represent the name of Jesus. This looks like an X with a small p on the top:  $\chi\rho$

The symbol of a fish is sometimes used by Christians (you might see a fish sticker on a car or someone wearing a little fish badge). This comes from the time when the first Christians had to meet in secret, as the Romans wanted to kill them (before Emperor Constantine became a Christian). Jesus had said that he wanted to make his followers 'Fishers of Men', so people started to use that symbol.

When two Christians met, one person drew half a basic fish shape (often using their foot in the dust on the ground) and the other person drew the other half of the fish. The Greek word for fish is 'Ikthus' or 'Ichthys'. There are five Greek letters in the word. It can also make up a sentence of Christian beliefs 'Ie-sous Christos Theou Huios So-te-r' which in English means "Jesus Christ, Son of God, Saviour". The second letter of these five letter is X or Christos!

So Xmas can also mean Christmas; but it should also be pronounced 'Christmas' rather than 'ex-mas'!

Jenny



# Sunday Club



*Something to chew over...*

**To which tribe do you belong?**



**Do you belong to a family group?**

What do you think of people of other family groups?

**Do you belong to a village or town?**

What do you think about people of other villages or towns?

**Do you belong to a country?**

What do you think about people who belong to other countries?

**Do you support a football or rugby team?**

What do you think about supporters of other teams?

**Do you belong to a Christian church?**

What do you think of Christians in other churches?

**What do you think about people who belong to other religious groups, humanists, agnostics, atheists, or those who have never had the opportunity of learning about the concept of God or Christianity?**

**What do YOU think?**



*"It's easier to understand when you come closer together!!"*

Trudy

This year we are having a **Celebratory Christmas Lunch** 'in house' immediately after the service in Puy de Serre on Sunday 10th December!

**Please reply to Fiona as soon as possible with your choice of menu.**

# ASV Christmas lunch 2023

Salle St. Augustin, Puy de Serre  
December 10, 2023, midday onwards

## Apéritif

*Kir royal*

## Your Starter

*Roasted Butternut Squash soup, served with cream and herbs*

## Main Course

*Roast Turkey, with trimmings, including chipolatas, roast potatoes and vegetables*

*Or*

*Vegetarian option: Salmon steak and sauce, roast potatoes and vegetables.*

## Cheese

*A selection of French cheeses*

*Please provide  
your own drinks  
to  
enjoy during the  
meal*

## Dessert

*Traditional Christmas Pudding*

*Or*

*Trifle*

*Coffee*

**15 € per person**

**Booking essential, including choice of menu (where appropriate)**

**by 24 November to Fiona McGregor [mcgregor@lalogette.com](mailto:mcgregor@lalogette.com)**

# The Remnants

October 2023

La Chapelle Palluau



We managed a Remnants meeting this month as a Bring and Share with Jane and Graham who has just arrived following a ferry journey of 16hrs! It was lovely to be all together. Jane played her piano and the singing was enthusiastic. We learned about Lectio Divina, a way to prayerfully read the Bible. A good time was had by all.



Linda



Did you know  
PREVIOUS SERMONS and TALKS  
can be read at:  
[www.allsaintsvendee.fr](http://www.allsaintsvendee.fr)



It's a real joy to hear from our ASV friends.... ....Keeping in touch....

## Prayers

*abridged from the service at Puy de Serre 22.10.2023*

Dear Father, we pray to you this day when the wonderful world of Your creation is at war. We are witnessing the terrible loss of life and destruction of homes and facilities which will take years to replace. Lives have been blighted and destroyed. The return to normality will take years.



Dear Father, we do not come to you in a bid to apportion blame, but to ask for the blessed gift of peace and normality. What is of particular sadness is that such events are occurring in the Holy Land where Your Son walked the roads, preaching the gospel of peace and tolerance. Grant your errant people the gifts of peace, security, and justice and a rapid end to the cruelty of war

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer

Loving Father, in the world You created there are millions of your children who will not eat this day, victims of an unfair and cruel distribution of the produce of this fertile world. We have the technology and knowledge to do so much better, but we are hindered by political differences and rivalries. Lord, protect the weak and vulnerable and help us to distribute the riches of this planet in a fairer way.

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer

Dear Father, we view the future of our wonderful World with trepidation and alarm, alarm too at the rise in violence and unacceptable behaviour we show to one another. We, with our growing population must all live together on this planet.

Lord, help us to show a more tolerant approach in our daily lives towards our neighbours so that peace may come to our world.

Merciful Father, accept these prayers for the sake of Your Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

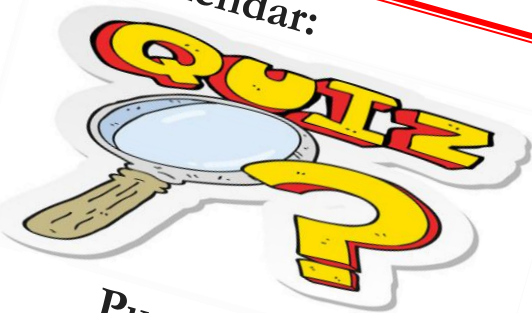
Amen

*(With thanks to Mike Mylod)*

Remembrance Sunday at Puy de Serre



For your calendar:



Puy de Serre  
19<sup>th</sup> January 18.00hrs



### **POPPY APPEAL COLLECTION**



Thank you everyone for contributing to the Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal this year.

I have sent £45 to the Royal British Legion in the U.K.

Our Remembrance Service on the 12th November was a fitting memorial to remember and honour those who died in the line of duty.

".....We will remember them ...."

Chris Green



## **ASV LADIES' CIRCLE**

### **The Ladies' Circle Meeting and Sewing Group**

#### **Women's Fellowship - Ladies Group -**

We're always happy to receive new members – Everyone is welcome

Contact either Joan Stewart or Jenny

[Jennywilkinson213@gmail.com](mailto:Jennywilkinson213@gmail.com)

[Jpsmorandiere@outlook.com](mailto:Jpsmorandiere@outlook.com)

*I know, it was bound to happen – a small space to fill and someone willing to fill the space .Thank you Trudy:*

## **Church Ladies with Typewriters.....**

### **They're Back! Those wonderful Church Bulletins!**

**These sentences actually appeared in church bulletins or were announced at church services:**

The Fasting & Prayer Conference includes meals.

Scouts are saving aluminium cans, bottles and other items to be recycled. Proceeds will be used to cripple children.

The sermon this morning: 'Jesus Walks on the Water'.  
The sermon tonight: 'Searching for Jesus.'

Ladies, don't forget the rummage sale. It's a chance to get rid of those things not worth keeping around the house. Bring your husbands.

Don't let worry kill you off - let the Church help.

Miss Charlene Mason sang 'I will not pass this way again,' giving obvious pleasure to the congregation.

For those of you who have children and don't know it, we have a nursery downstairs.

Next Thursday there will be try-outs for the choir. They need all the help they can get.

Irving Benson and Jessie Carter were married on October 24 in the church. So ends a friendship that began in their school days.

A bean supper will be held on Tuesday evening in the church hall Music will follow.

At the evening service tonight, the sermon topic will be 'What Is Hell?' Come early and listen to our choir practice.

Eight new choir robes are currently needed due to the addition of several new members and to the deterioration of some older ones.

Please place your donation in the envelope along with the deceased person you want remembered.

The church will host an evening of fine dining, super entertainment and gracious hospitality.

Pot-luck supper Sunday at 5:00 PM - prayer and medication to follow.

The ladies of the Church have cast off clothing of every kind. They may be seen in the basement on Friday afternoon.

This evening at 7 PM there will be a hymn singing in the park across from the Church. Bring a blanket and come prepared to sin.

The pastor would appreciate it if the ladies of the Congregation would lend him their electric girdles for the pancake breakfast next Sunday.

Low Self Esteem Support Group will meet Thursday at 7 PM. Please use the back door.

The eighth-graders will be presenting Shakespeare's Hamlet in the Church basement Friday at 7 PM. The congregation is invited to attend this tragedy.

Weight Watchers will meet at 7 PM at the First Presbyterian Church. Please use large double door at the side entrance.

### ***And this one just about sums them all up***

The Associate Minister unveiled the church's new campaign slogan last Sunday:  
'I Upped My Pledge - Up Yours.'

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I hope you have enjoyed this edition of "Grapevine".

My thanks to all the Contributors.

Please consult the website for updates at [www.allsaintsvendee.fr](http://www.allsaintsvendee.fr)

Please send your items and comments for the **January edition**

to: Jacqui at:

[sjfamily66@hotmail.com](mailto:sjfamily66@hotmail.com) **before 15<sup>th</sup> December 2023**

