

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



February 2024

DIOCESE IN EUROPE
THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND



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**4-Thought
February 2024**



Some quotes about this month:

In the coldest February, as in every other month in every other year, the best thing to hold on to in this world is each other. ~ Linda Ellerbee

February brings the rain, thaws the frozen lake again. ~ Sara Coleridge

February is merely as long as is needed to pass the time until March. ~ J.R. Stockton

And one from my grandmother:

February fill-Dyke foretold heavy rain.

Is February the gloomiest month of the year? Perhaps the highlight is the 14th?
The day commerciality goes mad?

According to Wikipedia (once again thanks):

Saint Valentine was a 3rd-century Roman saint, commemorated in Western Christianity on February 14 and in Eastern Orthodoxy on July 6. From the High Middle Ages, his Saints' Day has been associated with a tradition of courtly love. He is also a patron saint of Terni, epilepsy, and beekeepers.

That caught my interest, particularly as one of our grandsons is an avid beekeeper, and I wondered what the connection might be... Further research..

Apparently, bees symbolize love and beekeepers symbolize the protection of marriage and family. By managing their hives and caring for their bees, beekeepers ensure that their bee colonies flourish and the honey continues its sweet flow. Keeping bees is a special calling- it requires scientific know-how, but apparently also requires a kind and gentle heart. To protect these protectors of bees, St. Valentine was made the patron saint of Beekeepers in 496A.D.

St. Valentine lived in the third century, when the Roman Empire was still flourishing. Legends say the Roman Emperor banned marriages because he thought single men made better soldiers. Valentine was found guilty of secretly marrying couples. While in jail, awaiting his execution, he began to convert his jailers to Christianity. To prove his faith, the head-jailer asked Valentine to heal his blind daughter, which Valentine did by praying with his hands over her eyes. After his execution, a letter was found in his cell, addressed to the jailer's daughter—it was signed "your Valentine".

St. Valentine is believed by many to aid those who call on his intercession to help ensure the sweetness of the season's honey and provide special protection to those who keep bees. His feast day is February 14, which is the day he was executed.

So there you have it, no big commercial fest, simply a plan to keep honey sweet, and, not insignificantly our crops thriving and our harvests booming. Perhaps it's time to readjust our focus, away from the brainwashing of commerce, and back to the love Christ shows us and Valentine??

Hazel

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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)

This request from David:

Sally and I are in the UK at the moment spending time at the hospice with Sally's brother, Michael. Sadly, his days are numbered now but he's sometimes in great pain and prayers would be appreciated.

Thank you, David P.

...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: davidlpearson@orange.fr]



Churchwardens' Notes For February 2024

ECUMENICAL EVENTS

In January 2024 we were involved with two ecumenical events. The first was "Voeux Oecumeniques 2024" held at Fontenay Le Comte. It was unfortunate that only a few of ASV congregation were able to attend, due to illness, etc. but it was a chance to meet our fellow Christians from the Catholic and Protestant churches. On the 21st January it was the joint service at Foussais Payré during the Week of Prayers for Christian Unity. The service this year was prepared by churches in Burkina Faso with the theme "Go and do likewise" and focussing on the parable of the Good Samaritan.

STUART AND JACQUI

Stuart and Jacqui Stainton-James have sold their house in France and will soon be moving back to the U.K. We send them every good wish for the future and thank them for all they have done for ASV in the past. This does mean we have some "holes" to fill and so are appealing for anyone who can help with music at LCP and assist Ann and Carole at PDS. As far as Grapevine is concerned, we have already had two, very welcome, volunteers to continue the production. Dominique Mylod saw Jacqui and said she could assist in the short term but then Nigel Pearce contacted us to take on this task. A huge "thank you" to both of them and they will be liaising with Jacqui to ensure a smooth takeover.

FUTURE QUIZ

Just a reminder there will be a quiz at 1800 on Friday 16th February. These have been very enjoyable and are a very good opportunity to bring along friends and neighbours. If you are not already a member of a team, don't worry, you will be invited to join another team and so join in the fun. Please contact Fiona to "book in".

LENT

The first day of Lent, Ash Wednesday, is on the 14th of this month. The Lenten season allows us to set aside time for reflection on Jesus Christ—to consider his suffering and his sacrifice, his life, death, burial, and resurrection. We look forward to you joining us in church whenever you are able.

With blessings and every good wish.

Doug and Margaret.

Grapevine Treasurer's report:
for December 2023:

Income: 2716.98 €

Expenditure: 1459.46 €



We have a **positive** balance for the month: 1257.52 €

What good news to end the year with! The positive balance this last month was mainly due to the November Quiz, showing how important it is for ASV to maintain its fundraising and outreach activities, and also to a most generous donation to church funds.

Thank you so much to everybody who already contributes so generously to the running of the church, but if anyone should wish to discuss the benefits of planned giving, please contact a member of Council, or myself...



Joyeux Noël et Bonne Année à tous !

Iain McGregor
(Treasurer)



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

...and there's much more...

So.....

KEEP READING.....



Dates for your Diary

February 2024



1st Thursday February

4th Sunday 11hr00 **Holy Communion** at La Chapelle Palluau

8th Thursday **Ladies Group Sewing Meeting**

11th Sunday 11hr00 **Holy Communion** at Puy de Serre

13th Shrove Tuesday

14th **Ash Wednesday**

16th Friday 18hr00 **Quiz**

18st Sunday

25th Sunday 11hr00 **Holy Communion** at Puy de Serre

29th February Thursday

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



Dates for your Diary



March 2024

1st March Friday

3rd Sunday 11hr00 **Holy Communion** at La Chapelle Palluau

10th Sunday 11hr00 **Holy Communion** at Puy de Serre

14th Thursday **Ladies Group Sewing Group**

15th Friday **The final Quiz of the season**

17th Sunday

24th Sunday 11hr00 **Holy Communion** at Puy de Serre

28th Thursday **Ladies Group**

31st March Sunday

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

EAST & WEST VENDÉE – CHURCH SERVICE ROTA

FEBRUARY INTO MARCH 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 2024	VENUE	TIME	SERVICE	PRESIDENT	PREACHER	WORSHIP LEADER	ORGANIST	INTERCESSOR	READERS	NOTES
Sunday 4 th February	La Chapelle Palluau	11.00	HC	HD	HD		SS-J			
Sunday 11 th February	Puy De Serre	11.00	HC	HD	HD	AC	SS-J	JM	BC GK	
Sunday 18 th February										1 st Sunday of LENT
Sunday 25 th February	Puy De Serre	11.00	HC	HD	HD	MK	AM	CM	WL MK	Lent 2
Sunday 3 rd March	La Chapelle Palluau	11.00	HC	HD	HD		SS-J			Lent 3

FORWARD PLANNING

FEBRUARY 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.

Responsibility (Organiser)	11 th February Puy de Serre 11hr00	25 th February Puy de Serre 11hr00
Refreshments after the service (Jenny Wilkinson at PdS)	Jenny W.	Jenny W.
Flower Rota (Barbara Matthews)		



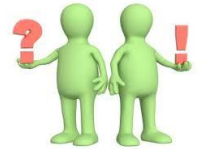
Did you know
PREVIOUS SERMONS and TALKS
can be read at:

www.allsaintsvendee.fr
See : John Matthew's recent Talk





These are YOUR pages.....



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

The Remnants; Ladies Circle; Resto du Cœur; Voting in France; Next Quiz; Keeping in Touch; Sunday Club; "Farewell"



Sunday Club



Something to chew over...

Bats in the Belfry

Three Anglican vicars discuss their problems with bats in their respective church belfries:

- Vicar 1: I fired a smoke bomb into the belfry, and the smoke did indeed send them flying, but within three days they were all back.
- Vicar 2: I fired a shotgun into the air, and the noise did indeed scare them away, but on the following morning they had all returned.
- Vicar 3: I baptised them all: I haven't seen them since.



The term "**bats in the belfry**" is an idiomatic expression that originated in the United States in the late 19th century. It refers to someone who is thought to be crazy or eccentric. The phrase comes from the idea of bats flying around in the belfry of a church or other building, creating a sense of chaos and confusion. The adjective, »batty« is a derivative of this expression (and one often used by Agatha Christie). There are other, more modern derivatives which are however not suitable for this publication.

And.....

A Sunday School teacher decided to have her young class memorize one of the most quoted passages in the Bible -- Psalm 23. She gave the youngsters a month to learn it. Little Bobby was excited about the task, but he just couldn't remember the Psalm. After much practice, he could barely get past the first line. On the day that the children were scheduled to recite Psalm 23 in front of the congregation, Bobby was so nervous. When it was his turn, he stepped up to the microphone and said proudly, "The Lord is my shepherd . . . and that's all I need to know!"

Trudy

The Remnants

La Chapelle Palluau



We had a meeting of **The Remnants** at the home of Alison and Ian on Sunday the 14th January. Alison made us a delicious Shepherd Pie and Linda excelled herself with her Lemon Meringue pie. I think she has been watching Mary Berry create her masterpieces! We were seven, and the weather was wintery but not raining.

Alison led us in a discussion starting with an Archbishop who decided to retire after many years of service and thought how meaningless his life would be after retirement. We read 1 Corinthians 1 verse 18, that the message of the Cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.



Our prayers were for those in need in all our lives, and we enjoyed singing our favourite hymns. We were lucky to have Ian lead us in the singing with his lovely baritone voice.

I was happy to have received many nice comments from old friends living far away, how they enjoyed hearing about us, the remnants of what we use to be.



Joyce

ASV LADIES' CIRCLE

The Ladies' Circle Meeting and Sewing Group

Women's Fellowship - Ladies Group -

Sewing meetings are every 2nd Thursday of the month and Ladies meeting is every 4th Thursday but as Joan is away the next meeting will be 4th April. For sewing.

New members very welcome
contact jennywilkinson213@gmail.com
or Joan Stewart jpsmorandiere@outlook.com



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 Mouilleron-en-Pareds: 02 51 51 07 36**

Dominique reports:

Dad made his 2nd delivery to La Châtaigneraie Resto du Cœur and thank you all for your generous contributions. The shelves empty rapidly and your donations of canned, dried high protein foodstuffs which need minimum cooking energy (eggs, pre-prepared meals included) UHT milk, toiletries, nappies & loo paper protect vulnerable families from illness and disadvantage. Next collection is at the 11th February service to load into Mike Mylod's car (hopefully less dented by then!). Merci beaucoup in advance.

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

From Martyn Crompton:

We had a wonderful weekend at Scargill and while we were there, we heard this story - a sort of modern-day parable:

An elderly couple watched with interest as new neighbours moved in. They were watching some days later when the young wife put her washing out on the line. 'Disgusting,' said the old wife to her husband. 'I'd be ashamed to peg my washing up when it was still covered in dirty patches. She must be using the wrong powder.'

The same thing happened the following week, but the week after when the young wife put out her washing it was spotlessly white. 'That's better,' said the old lady to her husband. 'Did you go round to tell her which powder we use?' 'No,' he replied. 'I just cleaned our windows.!'



ASV Fun

Date: **Friday 16th February 2024 at 18.00 hrs**

Place: **The Salle at Puy de Serre.**

Cost: **10€** to include the meal

Booking: **By Monday 12th January** at the latest
(with details of food allergies / vegetarian option)

Fiona McGregor mcgregor@lalogette.com 02 51 53 82 55

Please let me know if you can donate a dessert
or a raffle prize for any of our quizzes

All are welcome!

- so please invite your family, friends and neighbours!

Maggie and Geoff Kent are our new Quizmasters, with lots of easy to answer questions (we hope!), and Jenny and her team are providing the meal.

There will be tables of 5-6, so if you want to enter with a group, please let me know, alternatively if you want to come alone or as a couple, I can put you into a group - a great way to make new friends!

Please bring any 'nibbles' you want to sustain you during the first few rounds before the meal, and your own cutlery, drink and glasses

[Note: The final quiz of the season will take place on 15th March]

Thank you, Doug, for this Voting Update:

IMPORTANT CHANGES TO U.K. VOTING FROM OVERSEAS

On Tuesday 16th January there were important changes to the UK's electoral system. One change was to remove the 15-year limit on the rights of eligible British citizens to vote in U.K. Parliament elections.

The online registration process is quite straightforward and shown below is the information sent out by The British Embassy Paris.

Doug.

The screenshot shows a Facebook post from the British Embassy Paris, dated 1h ago. The post title is "Changes to voting in UK Parliament elections from overseas". The text of the post reads: "In 2022, the UK Parliament passed the Elections Act, which made several changes to the UK's electoral system. These changes include the removal of the 15-year limit on the rights of eligible British citizens to vote in UK Parliament elections. If you are a British citizen living abroad, you can now vote in UK Parliament elections even if you've lived outside the UK for more than 15 years. You will need to have previously lived in the UK or been registered to vote in the UK at some point in your life. Your overseas declaration is now valid for three years, lasting until 1 November in the third year after it takes effect (for example, if your declaration takes effect on 1 March 2024, it will expire on 1 November 2026). You can register online at www.gov.uk/registertovote. This applies to UK Parliament general elections, by-elections and recall petitions. It does not apply to local elections or elections for the Scottish Parliament, Senedd or Northern Ireland Assembly. For more information visit : <https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/news-and-views/elections-act/changes-overseas-voting>." Below the text is a large orange graphic of a paper airplane with a black outline of a ballot box on its side. The Facebook interface shows the time 13:20 on Tue 16 Jan, a battery level of 53%, and navigation icons for Home, Friends, Video (with 9+ notifications), Marketplace, Notifications, and Menu.



Stuart joins me in saying our farewells to all our friends in All Saints Vendée:

Stuart and I joined the La Merlatière congregation in 2003 and the following year we moved to France permanently. Stuart took over playing for services there and afterwards at Puy de Serre “on a temporary basis”!! He also played occasionally at La Chapelle Achard. Over the years Stuart has played for Anglican services all around the Vendée, Foussais Payré and La Jonchere, La Tallud for Evensong, as well as marriages and funerals wherever he was requested. Many folk have fond memories of “Singing Round The Piano” in our basement. It was a time of informal fun and fellowship and singing favourite hymns.

Over the years, the portable KORG organ-keyboard deteriorated and recently we were delighted to replace the old keyboard with the benefit of donations from “Grapevine” readers, and members of the congregations of La Chapelle Palluau and Puy de Serre.

“The Grapevine” started life as a one-page Pewsheets and eventually grew into the (sometimes)16-page Newsletter it is today. I have welcomed contributions from all the congregations as well as friends who have moved away. It has been a great way of keeping in touch with friends of ASV around the world. I am delighted to learn that Nigel with Dominique will continue to produce it.

Back in 2004, we had intended to stay in France for 10 years so feel that now the time is right to return to family after 20 years here! I know we shall sorely miss the ASV family but we shall be able to keep up-to-date with news and “The Grapevine” on the ASV website.

So.....



*Now is the time to say Goodbye,
Now is the time to yield a sigh,
Now is the time to wend our way,
Until we meet again some sunny day*



(Thanks to Peter Cooke and Dudley Moore)

and....

I hope you have enjoyed this my final edition of "Grapevine".
My thanks to all the Contributors and your friendship over the last
20 years.

Please consult the website for updates at **www.allsaintsvendee.fr**

and for the **March edition**, please send your contributions
not to me, Jacqui Stainton-James,

**but to: Nigel Pearce at njp78@hotmail.com
before 15th February 2024**

