

# The Grapevine

June  
2024



Photo NJP, 2023

“June is the month that calls us out of our houses, out of ourselves, to become one with nature. It sweeps us up into the noise of life, into the warmth of life, into the community of life. Sit on your doorstep; take an aimless walk down the street; plant a small flower in a small pot. Be a tribute to creation. Be a part of the chorus of life.”

from : *A Monastery Almanac* by Joan Chittister

*This month's cover photo features the beautiful church of Notre-Dame-La-Grande in Poitiers.*

# The Grapevine

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## June 2024

Some thanks :

Thank you, as always, to all those who have contributed to the Grapevine. In particular, to Jacqui S-J, who unhesitatingly swung back into action to produce the May edition, when circumstances prevented me from doing so. Finally, to the innumerable, selfless members of the French health system who cheerfully turn a crisis into a positive experience. Heartfelt thanks (literally!) go to all hospital staff in Fontenay, Niort, CHU in Poitiers and the Clinique Cardiocéan near La Rochelle. In such people's care, one certainly does feel blessed.

# 4 thought

With thanks to Rev. Hazel

As many of you will be aware, we recently attended our eldest daughter's silver wedding anniversary party. A "silver" wedding commemorates 25 years of marriage.

As I am wont to do, I got to wondering about other significant dates and names, off to do some research.... (with thanks to various internet sources.)

The celebration of wedding anniversaries apparently dates back to Roman times when husbands gave their wives a silver wreath for 25 years of marriage, and a gold wreath for 50 years.

Twentieth century commercialism, (of course!) then led to the addition of more gifts to represent colour and names for other years. By the 1930's there was a material or symbol representing the year as a gift suggestion for the first year and milestone years such as 10th, 20th, 25th and 50th. Over the years more were added, and the gift list updated and modernised by various American and British greeting card companies, no surprise there!

Apparently British couples can receive a message from the King for a 60th, 65th and 70th anniversary, and every year after that. The end of World War Two is reflected in the number of messages sent - in 2005 thousands more diamond wedding messages were sent due to the large number of marriages as soldiers returned home from the war. Some British couples have even held Guinness World Records for marriage!

Because of the different legal system here in France, (compared to the UK), no priest can conduct a legal wedding, but we are permitted to bless a civil marriage. It has been my happy privilege to conduct many such ceremonies during my time as a priest. I have three planned for this year so far, and enquiries for 2025 as well. I must confess it is comforting to me that there are still couples who actively seek God's blessing at the start of their married lives. What many people don't know, is that I can also conduct a renewal of vows service for those who wish ; maybe that is something we as a chaplaincy might look at undertaking for the future. Let me know what you think.....

Every blessing, Hazel

## Notices

Some of you will remember that for the previous two years we have held services of the Word during the summer months. This year we will be doing the same, in the months of July, August and September. The place of course, is the wonderful church in Vouvant, accompanied as before by Yves Rousseau on the magnificent organ.

The services will take place at 11h00 in English, on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of each month. Coffee is usually served following the service in the grounds of the Château de Recette in Vouvant, hosted by Rupert and his family, we look forward to welcoming you to join us. As our French hosts say: *Venez nombreux !!!!!*

## Stuart and Jacqui

I'm sure that most of you are aware of the imminent departure of Stuart and Jacqui, returning to the UK. In my several years of involvement with ASV, I am well aware of the amazing contribution that they both have made to our church family life, through Grapevine and through music. I know much is going to be said in the days to come, and rightly so. Their departure is going to impact on our worship throughout the chaplaincy.

I foresee that we will have need for either a musician to play our new organ, to support Ann Milton or a techno whizz to operate a system of canned music. I know there are many of you out there who are members of choirs... Please, please try to sound out someone willing to play for our worship!

Hazel

## Œcumenical walk

Iain McGregor writes :

- this year's œcumenical walk will be around the town of Mouchamps (where my grandfather was born!)
- the date is Sunday 28 July 2024, meeting by the Protestant Temple for an œcumenical service starting at 11h00.
- The walk begins at 14h30. It will cover 3.5 km, with various stops.
- it will cover a number of interesting and locally important sites around the town and slightly beyond.
- there will be a picnic afterwards (in the open, or in a closed barn, depending on the weather) - please bring your own food and drink.
- Like last year, there will be a booklet of texts in English and French (if I get them in time!)

The people who took part last year found it both interesting and enjoyable, and discovered parts of Foussais they never knew existed. The aim is to replicate last year's walk but in a different place, and with, perhaps, a slightly different emphasis. Mouchamps has an important Greek Orthodox community, and it is hoped to include them as well.



## Restos du Cœur, La Châtaigneraie



Cheery thanks and greetings from the Resto La Châtaigneraie volunteers! Here are some happy snaps\* from the distribution centre as they battle to keep some 60 families fed (60% of whom have children).

I asked what is most useful at the moment : toilettries (shampoo, soap, shower gel, loo paper, toothpaste), coffee and some 'petits gateaux' are all at rock bottom levels.

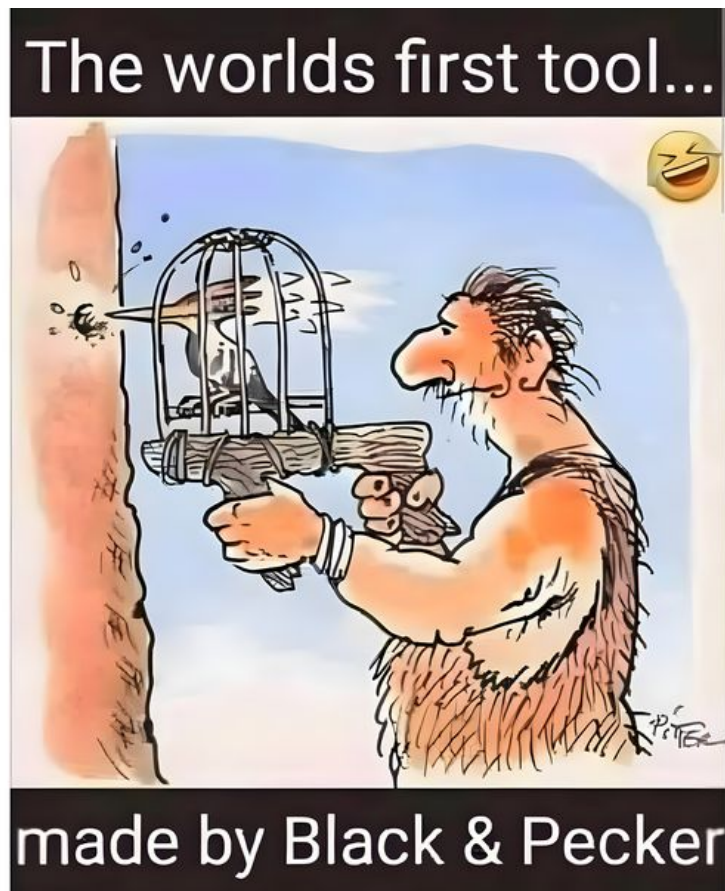
We can take fresh fruit & vegetables; the volunteers run an allotment, but the rain has delayed everything & the photo shows levels are sparse. Until we have a fairer, kinder world, thank you for your generosity & making a difference 💕

**Next collection date is 9th June 2024**

Mike & Dominique

*\*This photo selected from three provided (NJP)*

*On the lighter side...*



*...many thanks to Trudy Coates*

## *Prayer List*

*Please remember in your prayers:*

**Jo and Brian**

**Colin and Hester**

**Millie-Jean and her parents**

**Tim and Sharmila**

**Maureen**

**Nel (Mair and John's daughter)**

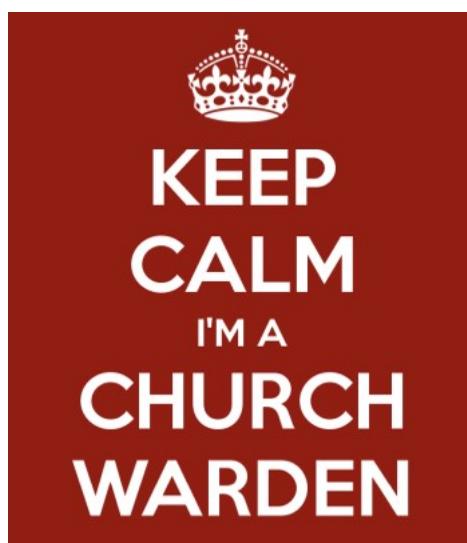
**Clive and Carole**

**Pat and Roy**

**Polly**

**Bob and Caroline**

**Chris and Ann**



## Churchwardens' Notes June 2024

Firstly, we would like to say how delighted we are that Nigel Pearce has had his operation, convalescence (hope they didn't work you too hard, Nigel!) and is now back home ready to produce this edition of Grapevine. Also, grateful thanks to Jacqui Stainton-James for editing the May edition. We think and pray for Linda Gorton, our Church Council Secretary, who had a car accident during May. She was not badly injured, thankfully, but needs time for her and husband Nigel, as well as Jo Collinson, who was present at the time, to deal with the trauma.

After the service of Holy Communion on 9 June at Puy de Serre, we will be holding a Bring and Share Lunch in the Salle. It is the last official time that Stuart will be playing the organ for one of our services. Jacqui and Stuart have done so much for All Saints Vendée over the years, so we hope that as many of our congregations as possible will be present to say our official 'Farewells' to them both.

As I write, we are looking forward to this coming Sunday. The pretty village of Vouvant is holding its annual Plant Festival. Rupert Catell is kindly opening his garden at the Château to the public and has offered ASV the total of the takings at the gate. We are also offering tea, coffee and cake. Hopefully the weather will be kind to us. It promises to be an enjoyable day\*.



\*

We are again  
W o r s h i p  
V o u v a n t  
times over the  
third Sunday  
These will not  
are arranged  
August and 15  
a l w a y s  
s e r v i c e s  
singing with

and to  
the services,  
holidaymakers.



having Morning  
services at  
Church three  
summer on the  
of the month.  
begin in June, but  
for 21 July, 18  
September. It's  
delightful to have  
there, to enjoy  
the organ  
accompaniment  
welcome others to  
both locals and

If you are planning a holiday soon, or staying put at home, we hope you have a Blessed and Peaceful summer.

Your Churchwardens,

Doug and Margaret

*(Thanks to Trudy Coates for her photos of the Château visit)*

## **The Plant Festival at Vouvant**

There is an annual plant festival held in the small town of Vouvant each year. This year, Rupert Cattell and his wife again opened their gardens to the public. Rupert kindly suggested that if some of the congregations of All Saints Vendée were prepared to sit at the gate and demand the princely sum of 1€ each from each potential visitor (unlike the huge prices demanded by other large garden owners!), then ASV could retain the proceeds. The church council readily agreed and Fiona was able to produce a rota for that very purpose. Chris and Maggie organized tea, coffee and cakes for sale - thanks to all the very able cooks for their delicious baking!

As you know, the weather has been so variable recently, with far too much rain for my liking! However, Sunday, 19 May dawned dry and sunny. We were able to



set up the refreshments in the garden, thankfully near a large barn. We started well by blowing a fuse with the urn, but Rupert soon sorted us out. We were never rushed off our feet, but with a steady flow of visitors (mainly French), we made the magnificent sum of 275€ including monies collected at the gate.

There was a short hiatus mid-afternoon, when large claps of thunder were heard and the heavens opened. We hastily de-camped to the barn for a while, but were able to return to our posts a little later.

Rupert gave Iain some historical details concerning the château and town of Vouvant. Iain then spent many (hopefully happy!) hours researching further. He was able to conduct (11 or 12!) tours around the garden, both in French and in English. Much of the boundary of the gardens is made up of walls and towers which form part of the town's ancient defences. Vouvant was established over

1000 years ago as a fortified village. The Lusignan family was led by Geoffroi de Lusignan, who was one of the richest and most powerful lords in Poitou at the end of the 12<sup>th</sup> century. The family thereafter played a major role in the military history of the town. Vouvant has its later-built Mélusine tower, town walls and defensive towers with arrow slits. It is situated on a rocky outcrop in the bend of the river Mère.



It was interesting to hear that although still an imposing building, the church in Vouvant was originally much larger.

The site of the present château, 'La Recepte', was probably the exchequer hall for the demesne lands of Vouvant, where the inhabitants came to pay their various taxes. (Iain can tell you all about it in much more detail.)



It was a delightful day, despite the intervention of the rain! What a lovely place to 'take tea', with the scent of the roses wafting over us. Thanks go to all of you who helped in any way. I must mention Trudy, who not only did her stint on the gate, but helped



## *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)

Sunday 19th May 2024 was Ascension Day



## The **Ascension** of Jesus, what is it all about ?

The Ascension of Jesus is the event when, after his resurrection, Jesus Ascended to heaven.

This event happened 40 days after Easter.

It is a significant event in the Christian faith as it marks the end of Jesus' physical presence on earth and the beginning of his spiritual presence in heaven.

Why did he ascend to heaven ?

Jesus had completed his mission on earth, which was to die for the sins of humanity and to rise again.

Jesus' Ascension was a sign of his victory over sin and death. He ascended to heaven to be with God the Father, where he continues to \*intercede\* (he speaks to God on our behalf).

Read Acts 1:9

After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, where a Cloud hid him from their sight.

AMEN



# Dates for your Diary

June 2024

2nd	Sunday 11h Holy Communion at La Chapelle-Palluau
9th	Sunday 11h Holy Communion at Puy-de-Serre
16th	Sunday
23rd	Sunday 11h Holy Communion at Puy-de-Serre
30th	Sunday
July 2024	
7th	Sunday 11h Holy Communion at La Chapelle-Palluau
14th	Sunday 11h Holy Communion at Puy-de-Serre
21st	Sunday 11h. at Vouvant





# East & West Vendée – Church Service

## Rota

May - June - July 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 !**

	VENUE	TIME	SERVI CE	PRESIDENT	PREACHER	WORSHIP LEADER	ORGANIST	INTERC ESSOR	READER S	NOTES
Sunday 26th May	PDS	11.00	HC	HD	HD	JM		DG	WL JM	
Sunday 2nd June	LCP	11.00	HC	HD	HD		SSJ			
Sunday 9th June	PDS	11.00	HC	HD	HD	MK	SSJ	SP	DP, GK	
Sunday 16th June		11.00								
Sunday 23rd June	PDS	11.00	HC	HD	HD	DG	AM	CG	IMG, FMG	
Sunday 30th June		11.00								
Sunday 7th July	LCP	11.00	HC	HD	HD					
Sunday 14th July	PDS	11.00	HC	HD	HD	IMG		MK	JW, GK	VOUVANT
Sunday 21st July	V	11.00	MW							
Sunday 28th July	PDS	11.00	HC	HD	HD	JM	AM	DP	AH, CH	
	VENUE	TIME	SERVI CE	PRESIDENT	PREACHER	WORSHIP LEADER	ORGANIST	INTERC ESSOR	READER S	NOTES





## **Forward Planning**

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 – Jenny (refreshments) or Barbara (flowers).

<b>Responsibility</b> (Organiser)	19th June Puy de Serre 11h00	23rd June Puy de Serre 11h00	14th July Puy de Serre 11h00	28th July Puy de Serre 11h00
<b>Refreshments after the service</b> (Jenny Wilkinson at PdS)	Jenny W Trudy C	Jenny W Trudy C	TBA	TBA
<b>Flower Rota</b> (Barbara Matthews)	Barbara M.	TBA	TBA	TBA

	<p><b>Did you know</b> PREVIOUS SERMONS and TALKS can be read at: <a href="http://www.allsaintsvendee.fr">www.allsaintsvendee.fr</a> See : John Matthew’s recent Talk</p>	
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## The Remnants



Lately we have tried to have a meeting of the Remnants every two weeks. This has not been easy for some due to illness or other reasons. However we did manage two meetings, one at Peggy's on the 28th of April. We were ten, and Alison led the meeting. Marylyn was with us, always a pleasure to see her. She has a caravan in Maché . Afterwards we had tea and coffee and Peggy's home-made ginger biscuits .

On the 12th of May we met at Alison's. She talked about our changing world, and its consequences, also discussing, from Matthew 22 v 39, the second most important commandment, which is to love your neighbour as yourself, asking ourselves who is our neighbour, and what are our responsibilities?

After tea and coffee we had lunch together, each one sharing in the food we had brought.

Summer is almost upon us, if only the rain would stop ! Peggy and her family are off to to Centre Parks, and Linda and Nigel off on a two week cruise of the Mediterranean. Sounds lovely !

Joyce

## **ASV LADIES' CIRCLE**

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

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

Ladies' group will be gathering together  
on the 4th July and the 18th July  
at Mouilleron-en-Pareds.  
Sewing group on the 11th July.

New members very welcome!

Contact [jennywilkinson213@gmail.com](mailto:jennywilkinson213@gmail.com) or  
Joan Stewart [jpsmorandiere@outlook.com](mailto:jpsmorandiere@outlook.com)

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

Next issue contributions, please, to me, Nigel Pearce, at

[njp78@hotmail.com](mailto:njp78@hotmail.com)

**before June 15<sup>th</sup> 2024 !**