

Church of All Saints in the Vendée

“To know and to share Jesus Christ”

The Grapevine

January 2014

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Happy New Year everyone!

May it bring everything you wish for!



Preface



Hello and a happy New Year to you all!

I hope you are all recovering well from Christmas and are keeping well.



Traditionally, in secular society, the New Year is a time for new beginnings, for making changes to life styles. I am writing this in November, after the bad news of the delay of my Installation, so I am still not sure how our life will be changed this year, I will have to wait and see! Nor am I falling into the trap of making plans to diet, exercise more, or whatever else is seen as traditional, as I have found that I make changes best when the time is right, not doing it because everyone else is doing it.

Of course as Christians we are already bucking the apparent trends, and there is always something more we can do to grow in faith, but we are reminded that God wants us to do things through love not rules. So perhaps all we can do is to provide the right conditions for our love to grow.

There are many resources we can use to feed our love, but the most important is to give time, time to pray, time to read, time in fellowship and time to spend quietly with God. Like most of you we have felt busier since we retired than we were when working, and time is precious so it can sometimes be hard to have some of the traits of Mary rather than Martha, but God wants us to be in relationship with him, and for that we need to spend time with him.

However I plan my time, and I always start off with good intentions (!), time spent quietly with God slips and gets cut into, I'm tired or busy or distracted. However, and this really isn't an excuse, I also neglect Bob, family and friends for the same reasons. Usually they forgive me and understand and I know that God is merciful so I believe he does too.

So I will end by wishing you all God's blessings for the New Year
and
all the best with any resolutions you may be making,

Caroline

JANUARY into FEBRUARY CHURCH SERVICES WITH BIBLE READINGS

All Services start at 11am except where indicated

5/1/2014	HC	Second Sunday of Christmas	LCP
1 st Lesson: Jeremiah 31: 7-14		Psalm 147:12-end	
		Epistle: Ephesians 1: 3-14	Gospel: St John 1: 1-18
12/1/2014	HC	Epiphany 1 – Baptism of Christ	PDS
1 st Lesson: Isaiah 42: 1-9		Epistle: Acts 10: 34-43	Gospel: St Matthew 3: 13-17
19/1/2014	HC	Epiphany 2	LCA
1 st Lesson: Isaiah 49: 1-7		Epistle: 1 Corinthians 1: 1-9	Gospel: St John 1: 29-42
also on:			
19/1/2014	Ecumenical Service	11am	PDS
26/1/2014	HC	Epiphany 3	PDS
1 st Lesson: Isaiah 9: 1-4		Epistle: 1 Corinthians 1: 10-18	Gospel: St Matthew 4: 12-23
30/1/2014	Installation Service of Revd Caroline Sackley	-	details later
2/2/2014	HC	Presentation of Christ – Candlemas	LCP
1 st Lesson: Malachi 3: 1-5		Epistle: Hebrews 2: 14-18	Gospel: St Luke 2: 22-40

LCA = La Chapelle Achard; PDS = Puy de Serre; LCP = La Chapelle Palluau,
TSG = Tallud Sainte Gemme

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).



Dates for your Diary



19th January, Sunday, 11.00am: Ecumenical Service at Puy de Serre. Revd Caroline is encouraging as many as possible to join in this special service for The Week of Christian Unity. The service will be partly in English and French with some translation. It seems especially important to join together here in France as we share churches and are trying to work together every day, so a celebration of this work is very significant.

23rd January, Thursday, 2.30pm: Ladies Circle at Mouilleron en Pareds. For more details, please contact Joan Stewart on 02 51 00 34

30th January, Thursday, Installation of Revd Caroline Sackley.
Please keep this date free - more details later.

7th February, Friday at 1800 Quiz at Puy de Serre (for more information, please contact Polly Ward)

Don't forget that Diary Updates are available on our Website: www.AllSaintsVendee.fr



Names on our Prayer List.....

Through the coming days, please remember especially in your prayers:

Geoff Kent:

Geoff is doing well and his cardiologist has 'signed him off' for twelve months. He is having ongoing treatment / investigation over a frustrating loss of hearing in his right ear.

Revd Geoffrey Colman:

Geoffrey is very frail but still displays an inspiring and heartwarming sense of humour. We should continue to pray both for him and for Janet who is bearing the brunt of caring for him.

Peter Hutchinson:

Following treatment for a broken leg, Peter has been moved to l' Hôpital des Collines at La Châtaigneraie, room 137, where he could be for as long as three months. Peter is very independent and is finding this prospect dispiriting.

John Matthews:

John is receiving regular chemotherapy for a lymphoma in his leg together with a small 'satellite' in his kidney. John is frustrated by not being able to be his usual active self. Please also remember Barbara in your prayers as she supports him.

Chris Jelley:

Chris is in hospital in Thouars and is seriously ill. He is not responding to treatment for liver failure and his doctors are running out of options.

Jean Mylod:

Since returning from America to visit her son and family, Jean has been admitted to hospital in Fontenay-le-Comte where she is undergoing tests. Prayers please for both Mike and Jean at this difficult time.

Sadly, Arnold Burrows died peacefully on the evening of Sunday 15th December.
May he Rest in Peace

*The Service of Thanksgiving for the Life of Arnold,
took place at La Roche-sur-Yon on Saturday 21st December.
Our thoughts and prayers are with his family and friends.*

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.

You can phone him on: Tel: 02 51 61 05 04

or email him at: davidpearson@orange.fr



Unfortunately there are no

Notes from our Church Wardens

this month because Barbara's computer has broken down and Joan is away, but they do send:

"All best wishes"

Barbara Kenyon and Joan Stewart



Just before publishing "Grapevine" , I have received this letter from Jo Collinson:

Dear Friends,



I have found a **Resto du Coeur** at St Hilaire de Riez so we can now start collections at each service at La Chapelle Achard and La Chapelle Palluau. Jim and June West have met the gentleman in charge and he will be delighted to receive our gifts as demand has doubled this year.

Please would all members of the congregation bring tins, coffee, tea, rice etc, or whatever (dry goods) you have in your store cupboard to church services and we will make sure that they get to the people whose need is great,

Many thanks

Jo Collinson



ASV Website News

It is now possible to view sermons and talks from those church services you may have missed. Where possible I have published Talks and Sermons on the website at: www.allsaintsvendee.fr, under "**Notices**" then scroll down to "**Sermons you may have missed**".

So, if you are unwell or away from home, it's another way to keep in touch!

Jacqui Stainton-James - (website co-ordinator)





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 the charity in Coulonges.

Bill has sent us an update:

Dear Friends,

A THOUSAND GIFTS A THOUSAND BLESSINGS

This was the first heading we used for the Grapevine in July. During a period of silent prayer, all the ideas for working with Restos filled my mind. Even then, I had not been thinking along those lines. I wondered how we could start, then at the next service at Puy de Serre the Rev Martin Crompton spoke during his sermon of how he and his wife contributed to people in need. This was a God given opportunity to present the ideas that had been given to me. I asked Joan if I could say a few words to the congregation. By the time we went for coffee, a number of people were talking about this idea...`A Thousand Gifts A Thousand Blessings.` This seemed an amazing number. I thought this will take a long time. [Rather like when we took on our first mortgage. We already had 3 children we couldn't afford and a mortgage of £2,300 seemed like a million pounds to me! I could not see how we would ever pay it off. The extra £300 was because, by mistake, the builders had installed a coloured bathroom suite.]

"A million meals a week and rising." In a second article in the Grapevine, I said that I felt crushed and inadequate to learn that so many people were hungry but beneath our humanity. We do know that we are truly Blessed by God. Is it part of our Christian journey to be stripped to the bone; always to be rebuilt. to travel the road that our Father is inviting us to travel.?

RESTOS DU COEUR - RESTAURANTS OF THE HEART

In this article, we had learned how food is taken to the people sleeping rough in Niort. How towns are required to provide accommodation for the homeless, where a meal can be cooked and clothes washed - but only for 2 nights and then they must move on. To where?

Last week when we arrived at the distribution centre, the volunteers were trying to help a Russian gentleman who only spoke Russian. Eventually some Polish people arrived to help with translation. It is amazing to find that Coulonges is so cosmopolitan and challenging.

The "Bring and Share" volunteers picnic to which Polly, Carole and I were invited was an eye opener as there were 5 disabled old people from the retirement home in Coulonges. They had been invited as they make cakes each week for Restos du Coeur.

Together we have made a difference. With 3 churches pooling their resources, we have helped the the poor, the hungry, the down and outs. We have become strong and blessed. We have given over 1000 euros to buy a commercial cool box, 50 oven-ready chickens to enhance Christmas dinner, toys for all the children for Christmas. We have provided lots and lots of tins of food, duvets, blankets, warm clothing. It was such joy to be able to take beautifully wrapped Christmas gifts for the children who will be given them on Wednesday 18th at a special party in Coulonges organised by the willing volunteers.

We are now on our way to 4000 blessings. Halleluja to God our Father. My dear friends it is impossible for Carole and me to thank you enough for your support, your love, your kindness and your generosity. So much in such a short time. What exciting plans has our Lord for all of us next year?

Please continue giving,

Bill Stocking



STOP PRESS:
See the end of this Grapevine for the local press Report

Letter from The Editor..... Following the Star...



*We three kings of Orient are
Bearing gifts, we travel afar
Field and fountain, moor and mountain,
Following yonder star...*

Do you remember singing this as children, changing the words and finding it positively hilarious? I remember `One on a motorbike, one in a car, One on a scooter, beeping his hooter...`The idea of being secretly naughty in school assembly or when out carol singing was a chance not to be missed. I suppose these days we can not only understand the desire of children to update the carol but it does also briefly provide an amusing image, although an anachronistic one!

However, for us, this carol marks the start of Epiphany, the 6th January, the end of the twelve day of Christmas. We remember the visit of the Magi to the stable, bringing gifts of gold and frankincense and myrrh. It was in this way that Christ was revealed to those beyond his own country. Jesus Christ, the manifestation of God, in human form. In St Luke, chapter 1. we read

`through the tender mercy of God, whereby the Dayspring from on high hath visited us`

The dayspring, the dawn, the rising Sun, the rising light...

In Britain, Twelfth night was a special time, a time for mummers` plays, for drinking the wassail cup. The great Yule log would be allowed to burn down and the cinders kept for the following Christmas, when they would be used to kindle the new Yule log.



As we live in France, we are used to seeing the `galettes des rois`, traditionally eaten on this day, but in Britain, too, the Twelfth cake would be eaten, a rich fruit cake, containing a bean or `feve`. Whoever found the bean would be king for a day, but other things could also be hidden in this cake. If you found a clove, then you would be the villain. If you found a little twig, then you were the fool and, if you found a tiny piece of cloth then you were of easy virtue!



You may also have eaten Epiphany tart, a jam tart shaped into a six-pointed star, symbolizing the Star of Bethlehem which the Wise Men followed. To bring added luck, thirteen different jams would be used which gave it the appearance of stained glass.

So, despite my frivolous beginning, Epiphany marks the most important time for us, the time when Jesus Christ was revealed to us. The Son of God who became a man and died so cruelly in order that we may have everlasting life...

Joan Stewart

Letters to the Editor

Dear friends, what wonderful news! I was so pleased to hear and read the good news that ASV has a new priest. We have just moved this week into our new home after camping in a furnished let for six months. It is only now that I have had the opportunity to read the Grapevine and catch up with all the news.

Charlotte Christina is now a bouncing 6 month old baby who has made wonderful progress after a very sudden and premature entry to the world. She is an absolute delight!!

I am now a member of the local Parish Church and have the task of rejuvenating the Sunday School. I was asked to take the assembly at the local school (180 pupils) at the beginning of advent. It was such a privilege to share this time with the staff and children. Willie has enjoyed catching trout until the season closed.

We would like to wish all our friends in ASV a very joyful Christmas and a "guid New Year". We will be back in France in March so perhaps I will manage to see you all again at Puy de Serre,

Love to you all,
Christine and Willie Anderson



**Please send your contributions and letters for the February issue to:
"The Grapevine" Editor at: jpsmorandiere@free.fr before 15th January.**
Requests to be included on the emailing list should be addressed to Jacqui Stainton-James at: sjfamily66@hotmail.com

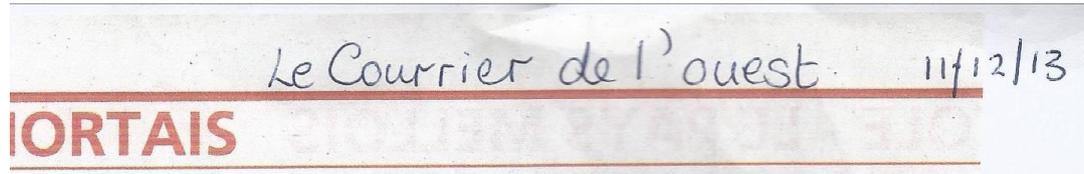


And there's more.....

Here are some photos of the Fun Dog Show which took place on October 12th at Dawn and Ray's:



Thanks to Carole and Bill for this press report of the work being done by Resto du Coeur in Coulonges-sur-l'Autize, with the help of the Anglican community, which is obviously much appreciated. (See underlined text)



Ils étaient ce matin-là huit bénévoles pour assurer la distribution. Ils posent avec la glacière offerte par la communauté anglaise et qui leur permet, en assurant la chaîne du froid, l'accès aux marchandises en provenance de Super U.

Coulonges-sur-l'Autize

Pas de répit pour les Restos

La saison hivernale s'est ouverte. Si les données chiffrées sont inquiétantes et la détresse palpable, les actions de solidarité ne se démentent pas.

A chaque distribution, de nouvelles inscriptions. Si les bénévoles des Restos se sont réjouis de voir retourner vers l'emploi trois de leurs « clients », ils ne peuvent que constater le nombre toujours croissant des demandeurs. Familles nombreuses, avec quatre ou cinq enfants, retraités, travailleurs pauvres, personnes seules, les cas sont divers, la détresse identique.

Faire des distributions des moments de convivialité

Dés solidarités s'organisent, bien sûr celle des 13 bénévoles des Restos qui essayent sans relâche de faire de ces distributions des moments de convivialité. La solidarité des Britanniques de

l'église anglicane qui ont fait don d'une partie des quêtes de leurs offices permettant l'achat d'une énorme glacière, et se sont engagés à acheter une cinquantaine de jouets pour le Noël des enfants.

La solidarité des boulangers, Martin d'Ardin et Peronnet à Coulonges, qui fournissent chaque mercredi 40 à 50 pains.

L'aide, aussi, de Super U qui donne chaque lundi viande et produits laitiers en limite de péremption.

Super U qui a donné cet été 2 594 kg de marchandises ! Ce don désormais régulier permet d'organiser actuellement deux distributions par semaine, le lundi, les produits de la grande surface et le mercredi, la distribution normale des Restos.

Afin d'accueillir plus dignement les

bénéficiaires, les Restos discutent actuellement avec la mairie pour obtenir

LE CHIFFRE

37 familles contre 31

La période de distribution d'été 2013, du 10 avril au 13 novembre, s'est terminée avec 46 familles inscrites, 122 personnes. Pour comparaison, à la fin de l'été 2012, 32 familles étaient inscrites représentant 74 personnes.

En décembre 2012, début des réinscriptions, on comptait 31 familles bénéficiaires soit 81 personnes, cette année 37 familles pour 88 personnes.

nir un local plus grand.

