

The Grapevine

March 2026



Photo © Hannah Abalain

Welcome to March's Grapevine

The remarkable photo above was taken in *Haute-Savoie* “while dropping the children off for school”. So neither *Vendée* nor March, but the photographer has a family connection to ASV, and clearly an eye for the wonders of creation.

As I start to assemble your kind contributions into this month's Grapevine, it is Ash Wednesday, and traditionally the beginning of Lent, but March also brings lots of other gems you may not yet have discovered. Read Hazel's *4-Thought* below !

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4-thought

Rev Hazel

By now we are well into the Lenten season, whether we have succeeded in keeping our resolutions to give up things, or not. For many it is a time to reflect on self, check out and remedy failings or simply to resolve to change certain aspects of the way we handle things or others. Of course, how we do this is often very personal. I find myself seeking a quiet place, usually by the fishponds, and simply empty my mind of all the busyness going on around me, watching the carp gliding around, listening to the water flowing from the filters. Then I can let go and let God reorder my day.

Lent lasts 40 days from Ash Wednesday to Holy Thursday, excluding Sundays. Sundays are an important part of Lent, but they are not included in the “40 days” because on every Sunday we remember and celebrate the Resurrection of Jesus in the Eucharist.

One of the tricky Sundays will be on the 29th March, when we will have an additional service on the 5th Sunday. There will be a service of Holy Communion to commemorate Palm Sunday, BUT that is also the day that our clocks go forward one hour to start Daylight Saving Time. Make sure your alarm clocks are primed!

What else does March have to offer?

1st of March is St. David’s Day, 15th March is Mothering Sunday, 17th is St. Patrick’s Day, and delving into Google, I also found that the 20th is French Language Day and the International Day of Happiness! That was created apparently by the UN in 2012, also added in that year by the UN is 21st March World Down Syndrome Day.

So, all in all, quite an interesting month. Enjoy!

Hazel



Churchwardens' Report, March 2026

We would like to start by acknowledging and welcoming the confirmation of Dame Sarah Mullaly as the head of the Church of England. We wish her all the best in her new role. On the 21st January, the Ecumenical greeting event was held in Fontenay-le-Comte. This was enjoyed by all as it was well organized and the singing group led all in joyful praise. Those who attended found it very informative to meet up with locals from Fontenay.



Thanks to all who supported this event and to Trudy for taking the photograph of the three speakers Carl the Catholic Priest, Lilian the Protestant Pastor and our very own Priest Hazel, who spoke in both French and English. Well done Ma'am !

January continued with the Ecumenical gatherings with the 'Light of the Light' service which took place at the church in Foussais-Payré on Sunday 25th January led jointly by the leaders of the Catholic, Protestant and Anglican churches. This was well attended, followed by a very sociable 'apéro' which was appreciated by all.

By the time you read this article, we will have had our February ASV quiz evening which was enjoyed by all. As ever, our thanks go to our quiz masters, organizers and catering staff who together make the whole evening so enjoyable. Please remember that the last quiz of the season will take place on the evening of Friday 13th March, so early booking is advised.

Due to celebrating Easter, there will be some extra services during March and April.

1st March: service at La Chapelle-Palluau. (LCP).

8th and 22nd March: services at Puy-de-Serre.

29th March: Palm Sunday service at Puy-de-Serre.

5th April (Easter Sunday): Service at both Puy-de-Serre led by our Priest Hazel Door, and at LCP where Rev Tony Lomas will be leading.

We hope that as many of you as can, will attend & bring any visitors/ friends along!

Finally, can I take this opportunity to inform those of you who may not be aware, that there is a sociable Franglais group who meet on a Tuesday evening in La Châtaignerie, for an hour and a half. The aim is to exchange in conversation English / French, so if you would like more information or you have English and / or French friends who might want to come along, you can contact myself or Nigel Pearce for further information.

Love to you all Maggie & Chris xx



Lent is a period in the traditionally associated with which most of us, if or limit our food do it by choice.



year fasting, we fast, intake,

However, for some, it is part of everyday life to go without adequate food, and it's often mothers who miss out in order to feed their children.

So the wonderful range of produce that les Restaurants du Cœur provide in La Châtaigneraie is vital for those at risk.

Donations are crucial to Resto's work, so again a heartfelt thank you, everyone for your generosity !

And my thanks too . Trudy



Mothers Union 'Prayer For The World'

Reproduced here with thanks, by kind permission of the author, our friend Wendy Scott (NJP)

Dear Lord of all, look down on us today;

It seems our world is wrenched apart once more,
Where lives are just a nightmare without hope -
And man fights man to scrape a crumb of food.
Oh Lord of Love, make good our devastation,
As many families are broken and distraught,
And children know no hint of peace on earth.
So, Lord of Heaven, we clasp our hands together
To pray that nation speaks to warring nation
And peace at last returns to every home.

Amen



Prayer List

Please remember in your prayers :

Bob and Caroline

Gini and Martyn

Roy

Hazel and Martin

Jo and Brian

Maureen

Millie-Jean and her parents, Tim and Sharmila

Nell (Mair and John's daughter)

Carole and her sister **Linda**

Carole and Clive

Sally and David

(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)

Elucidations.....

Werner Heisenberg:

"What we observe is not nature itself but nature exposed to our method of questioning."

Dietrich Bonhoeffer :

'the exclusion of the weak and insignificant, the seemingly useless people, from a Christian community may actually mean the exclusion of Christ'



Jesus spent 40 days in the desert praying and fasting, and wrestling with the temptations of the devil, in preparation for His vocation, His ministry. He resisted those temptations so He might endure the ultimate sacrifice he made to save us from our sins and enable us to join Him in eternal life.



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

The Rector will preach his farewell message, after which the choir will sing "Break Forth into Joy".

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

Grapevine Treasurer's Report



January 2026:

Income: 1385.00 €

Expenditure: 374.74 €

We have a positive balance for the month: + 1,010.26 €

We start the year in a very good state financially - income was up and expenditure was down (as it usually is as this time of year).

The beginning of the tax year is always a good time to join the Planned Giving scheme - please contact me (mcgregor@lalogette.com), and I will send you the details. Participating will give you about 66% off your French tax bill!

The tax rebate forms for 2025 have now been sent to all those who very generously contribute to the Planned Giving scheme operated by All Saints Vendée. If you participate in the scheme, and have not received an email from me about the tax rebate form, or have found

any perceived inaccuracy, please contact me as soon as you can, so that we can put things right!

I am at Ste. Marthe for most services - I shall be delighted to stamp and countersign the form then, or over coffee afterwards, so please do not forget to print it up and bring it with you for the next service at Puy-de-Serre.

Anyone who is thinking of joining the scheme will be most welcome, and I hope the brief note above will make it a lot easier for you to join. In case of difficulties, please do not hesitate to contact me (02.51.53.82.55).

Iain McGregor,
Treasurer, ASV.

Below is a fuller explanation of the Planned Giving scheme:

PLANNED GIVING THROUGH THE STANDING ORDER “VIREMENT” SCHEME.

Some people have been asking how to make a donation to ASV, or how to join the planned giving scheme.

Here are the details:

Account at the Crédit Mutuel, La Châtaigneraie:

Account Name: The Congregations of All Saints, Vendée

IBAN: FR76 1551 9390 5900 0216 6480 146

BIC: CMCI FR 2A

If you need any help, please do not hesitate to contact me:

mcgregor@lalogette.com, or by phone: 02.51.53.82.55

ADVANTAGES:

If you set up a standing order (virement) through your French bank, online, it is cost-free.

You stay in total control of what you give – the standing order (virement) can be changed at any time, but only by you!

Only the Treasurer knows how much you give per month. The details remain confidential.

You know what you are giving, and exactly when the money comes out of your account, and so your budgeting is much easier. You remain in total control.

If you complete a French tax form, then you will get a significant rebate (depending on your situation) at the end of each financial year (up to 65%).

If your French tax bill is small, then you will pay no tax at all!

ASV can plan ahead much more effectively, as it knows what contributions are coming in, rather than guessing who is going to be at church! We have recently lost some regular givers, through members returning to the UK, and so your donation at this time would be particularly appreciated.

DISADVANTAGES:

I can't think of any, so why not come and join the party!

British residents:

If you do *not* have a French bank account, but would like to support the work of ASV, then please contact me, and I can help you. Please note, you cannot use tax-efficient giving in both France *and* the UK.

Iain McGregor (Treasurer, All Saints, Vendée)



Dates for your Diary



January 2026	Information in red indicates late changes.
25th	Sunday 11h Holy Communion at Foussais-Payré
26th	Monday 14h Ladies' Group meeting at Debbie's house*
February 2026	
22nd	Sunday 11h Holy Communion at Puy-de-Serre
March 2026	
1st	Sunday 11h Holy Communion at La Chapelle-Palluau
8th	Sunday 11h Holy Communion at Puy-de-Serre
15th	Mothering Sunday
22nd	Sunday 11h Holy Communion at Puy-de-Serre
29th	Sunday 11h PALM SUNDAY Holy Communion at Puy-de-Serre
April 2026	
3rd	GOOD FRIDAY
5th	EASTER SUNDAY 11h Services at Puy-de-Serre and at La Chapelle-Palluau
12th	Sunday 11h Holy Communion at Puy-de-Serre
19th	
26th	Sunday 11h Holy Communion at Puy-de-Serre
May 2026	
3rd	Sunday 11h Holy Communion at La Chapelle-Palluau
10th	Sunday 11h Holy Communion at Puy-de-Serre
14th	ASCENSION
17th	

24th

Sunday 11h Holy Communion at Puy-de-Serre : PENTECOST



ASV Service Rota February to May 2026

	2026								
D	M	Venue	Time	Service	President	Worship Leader	Organist	Inter-cessor	Readers (2)
22	Feb	PdS	11h	HC	HD	CG	AM	DG	GK/CM
1	Mar	LCP	11h	HC	HD				
8	Mar	PdS	11h	HC	HD	JM	AM	DP	SP/JW
15	Mar								
22	Mar	PdS	11h	HC	HD	DG	AM	CG	FMG/IMG
29	Mar	PdS	11h	HC	HD				
3	Apr								Good Friday
5	Apr	LCP, PdS	11h	HC	HD, TL				Easter Sunday
12	Apr	PdS	11h	HC	HD	AC	AM	SP	BC/TC
19	Apr								
26	Apr	PdS	11h	HC	HD	MK	AM	JW	KS/CM
3	May	LCP	11h	HC	HD				
10	May	PdS	11h	HC	HD	CG	AM	DG	AH/CH
14	May								Ascension
17	May								
24	May	PdS	11h	HC	HD	JM	AM	CM	DP/SP

Forward Planning

If the information shown here is inaccurate, out-of-date or incomplete, please could I be told of any changes in time for the next issue of Grapevine.

Many thanks

Responsibility (Organiser)	Puy de Serre 11h Services
Refreshments after the service (Jenny Wilkinson at PdS)	Jenny W Trudy C
Flower Rota (Barbara Matthews)	Barbara M

As there's a spare half-page...



...you may be interested to know that the trio L'Instant Jazz (the bassist is your editor) play from time to time at the Bistrot de Halles In La Châtaigneraie (85) and they'd be delighted if you came along. Next soirée (entrée gratuite) is on the last Friday of February, 18h00.

ASV LADIES' CIRCLE

The Ladies' Circle Meeting and Sewing Group

Ladies meetings are normally held every 4th Thursday of the month. and at Debbie's Lench's house when possible.

Women's Fellowship – Ladies' Group

For details and directions, please contact Jenny – email below. **Anyone willing to host these meetings in the future, please contact Jenny !**

The times and places for future meetings will be announced as soon as they can be arranged.

New members very welcome!

Contact jennywilkinson213@gmail.com



Don't forget

All previous sermons and talks can be accessed at:
www.allsaintsvendee.fr

I hope you have enjoyed this issue of the Grapevine!

Please also consult the
website for any updates.

Thank you, if you managed to get your contribution to Grapevine in to me by this week. I know we all have busy lives, and it is much appreciated that I don't (usually!) have to chase people for copy.

Having said that, there's always room for more, and if anyone would like to (for example) put together a couple of hundred words about their year, their summer, a happy family event or any other blessing, don't hesitate !

If there is anything which you'd like to be published in the **April 2026** issue, do make sure you submit it to me,

at nip78@hotmail.com

before March 15th 2026

I look forward to all next month's offerings !

Nigel