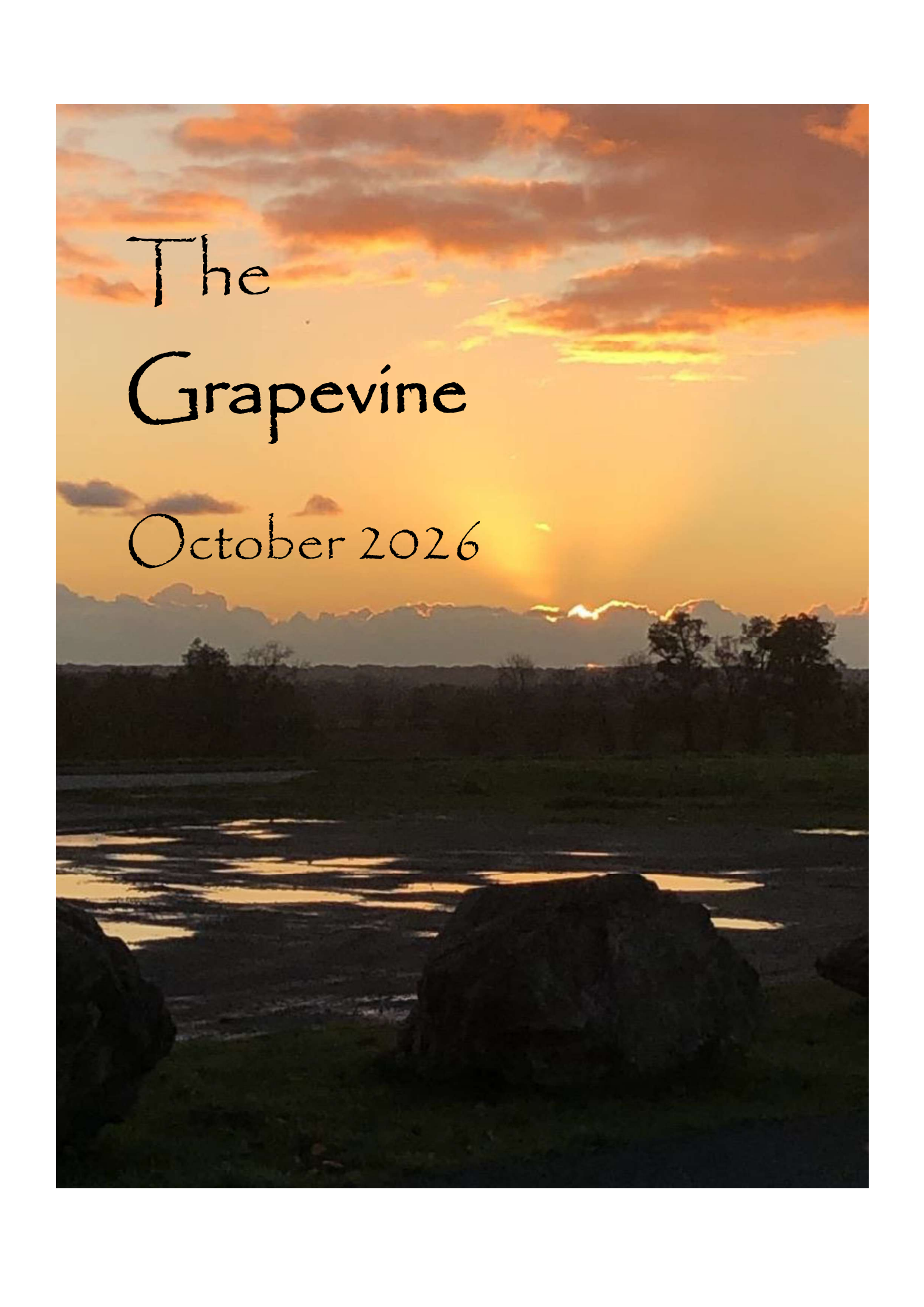




The Grapevine

October 2026

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Welcome to this month's Grapevine!

All Saints Vendée
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85110 St Vincent Sterlanges:
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4-thought

Rev Hazel

For a variety of reasons, October has always been a special month for me, not least because Martin and I were married in the church of St. Martin on the hill, Scarborough, many years ago. Kind of made me think..... we have lived here in France for over 30 years, at the last count we have 4 children, 12 grandchildren, 2 step grandchildren, 10 great grandchildren. One of these days I will do an audit of the number of cards and gifts etc that entails, or maybe not!!!

One of the Saints we commemorate in October is St. Francis of Assisi, again a personal special.

For the last few months, well since late July, one of the shops I visit has been displaying items for halloween, pumpkins, trick or treat sweets and so on. I wonder how many of those eagerly buying those items has any idea that the festival nowadays so clearly centred on paganism and witchcraft, originated (and still is) an important Christian Festival. One that should be dear to all of us, here in the Vendée. The word halloween is a corruption of All Hallows Eve. Put another way All Saints Eve, the day before All Saints Day! I understand that at one point in history, there were too many Saints to enable each of them to have their own day in the calendar.

On May 13th, A.D. 609, Pope Boniface IV established the date as "All Martyr's Day" and dedicated the Pantheon to honour all Christian martyrs. Later, in A.D. 837, Pope Gregory III moved the observance of All Martyr's Day to November 1st and expanded the celebration to include all saints.

As the reach of Christianity spread throughout the Celtic territories throughout the 9th century, All Saint's Day blended into the traditions of the Celts. Later, in A.D. 1000, November 2nd was made All Soul's Day to honour the dead.

Psalms 149 KJV:

Praise ye the Lord. Sing unto the Lord a new song, and his praise in the congregation of saints.

Let Israel rejoice in him that made him: let the children of Zion be joyful in their King. Let them praise his name in the dance: let them sing praises unto him with the timbrel and harp.

For the Lord taketh pleasure in his people: he will beautify the meek with salvation. Let the saints be joyful in glory: let them sing aloud upon their beds.

Let the high praises of God be in their mouth, and a two-edged sword in their hand; To execute vengeance upon the heathen, and punishments upon the people;

To bind their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron;

To execute upon them the judgment written: this honour have all his saints. Praise ye the Lord.

Please hold in your hearts and prayers those whom you remember. Pray also for those known only to God.

"Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them. May the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen."

Hazel



Churchwardens' Notes, October 2026

Sadly, we start this months report with details, for those of you who were not able to attend, of the funeral of our dear sister Sally Pearson, which took place on the 5th September at the Crematorium of Bressuire. It was a moving experience led by Hazel who was officiating. There is an entry in this Grapevine from Doug and James (her son) as a thanksgiving and celebration of her life which sadly ended too soon.

The Church Council met on the 1st September. The next meeting is programmed for the 14th October, incase anyone has any issues they would like raised. The main point we would like to draw to your attention is the leaflet 'What if I should die in France?', which is available as you enter the Church. If anyone has any problems re: filling out the form contained within the leaflet, including if you have difficulty storing this information with a named person, Trudy Coates

is willing to keep a Private Papers Folder rather than use ASV correspondence, so that details can be kept securely. Please remember that it is suggested that next of kin's contact details should also include phone numbers and email addresses.

Two matters just in time for this edition are that, firstly, the final Sunday summer service will be held at Vouvant the 20th September, hopefully attended and enjoyed by the usual (normally larger) congregation than can attend Puy de Serre. These services have been very successful, and our huge thanks go to Yves, our fantastic organist who makes the service so special, especially in the light of his broken arm ; so, sadly, we did not get to hear *Toccata and Fugue* by Bach this season, oh what a shame!!

The second is a reminder that Monday 21st September, marks United Nations International Day of Peace and the service of Prayers will be available on Zoom at 18h CET. If you are not able to find the link in time, please contact Chris Milton for details.

Lastly, two important (or more important should I say!!) services are coming up, firstly on the **11th October** which will be our **Harvest Festival** so please start saving your non perishable goods, and of course the **8th November** which will be our **Remembrance Service**.

Love and blessings to all,
Maggie and Chris



IN MEMORY OF SALLY PEARSON – a tribute by her son, JAMES.

Doug writes : We were saddened to hear that Sally Pearson died on Tuesday 1st September. David and their son James were with her at the end of her earthly life. James wrote a marvellous tribute to his mum and he is happy to allow us to publish this in Grapevine.

“Thank you, everyone, for being beside us throughout this, and for sharing your tributes to Mum. Here is mine, which I shared with friends moments ago:

“My beautiful mum Sally died from brain cancer this afternoon. She was 73.

Those of you who know me well will know how close I was to my mum. For many of you, she will have been almost as much a part of your life as she was of mine. I don't think I, or anyone who knew her, ever met anyone else quite like her. Infinitely positive and incredibly encouraging, she had a way of instilling quiet confidence in anyone she got to know.

She was a real queen of adventure; born in India, raised in Kenya and England, died in France. Was somehow Miss Pepsi Cola Nairobi as a child in the 1950s. Danced with friends on the tabletops of Parisian gay bars and became deeply Christian in the 1970s. Met my dad at an Amnesty International cheese and wine party in the 1980s, had an argument about religion, then married him and had me. Helped refugees on the Thai-Burmese border in the 1990s. Sold everything and moved with my dad to France in the 2000s.

She performed in Shakespeare plays (this photo is her headshot as Hermia in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*), rode horses, taught dance, taught English as a foreign language and taught chess to disadvantaged children in northeast England. She joined in my adventures in Korea and Vietnam. Her life was full of colour and fun; she embodied *joie de vivre*. She had many, many friends, and quietly helped so many people. Even if you didn't set out to be her friend, she would approach you, befriend you, tell you a funny story and that was it: you'd be hooked on Sally and good friends for life.

Before she died, I created a WhatsApp group into which I pulled as many people as I could by harvesting the contacts on her phone. It was full of actors and musicians. Artists and diplomats. Journalists and writers. Bishops and archbishops. Farmers and nurses. Anglophones and Francophones. Her former students from Europe and Asia. People I knew, and many I didn't. Friends and strangers she'd collected from all four corners of the earth.

We were able to gather countless voice messages, videos, photos, anecdotes and memories from the eclectic smorgasbord of people she had brought into her world, and celebrate her life together. Why wait until the funeral? Her tumour may have robbed her of her ability to speak and to walk, but she still managed to jive from her hospital bed to Queen, ABBA, and the Rolling Stones. Together, we celebrated life. At least three times, the doctors told us she was comatose and it was the end. And at least three times she came back to life in little ways, dancing to Booker T. & the M.G.'s, tapping away with her fingers and her toes, or finding a way to play with Ellie, her four-year-old granddaughter. We filled her hospital room in the French countryside with music, fun, and laughter. We danced together, sang together, and cried together.

Until we couldn't anymore.

She died this afternoon, surrounded by her friends and her family, with one hand holding my dad's and the other holding mine.

Throughout her illness, she made a "positivity wall" of photos and eminently positive agitprop she displayed in the various hospital rooms in which she received treatment. A glioblastoma, the kind of brain cancer that killed her, is a guaranteed death sentence. Her first mantra was Rosie the Riveter's "We Can Do It!" The second was "Love is stronger than death".

This has been such a painful time for our family. But we did discover that love, indeed, is stronger than death.

Love you, Mum. Thank you for everything you did — not just for me, but for everyone whose life you enriched in brilliantly colourful ways".

Sally Virginia Pearson (née Mantle)
14 November 1952 — 1 September 2026
Bangalore, India — Vendée, France



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 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: davidlpearson@orange.fr)

Grapevine Treasurer's Report



August 2026:

Income: **1203.95 €**

Expenditure: **378.69 €**

We have a positive balance for the month: **+ 825.26 €**

A very low expenditure this month - everyone was on holiday!

Thank you all for your continuing support for ASV.

If you would like 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!

Iain McGregor
(Treasurer)

⌘◆⌘◆⌘◆⌘◆ *Elucubrations* ◆⌘◆⌘◆⌘◆⌘◆

Tune me, O Lord, into one *harmony*
 With Thee, one full responsive vibrant *chord*,
 Unto Thy praise all love and *melody*,
 Tune me, O Lord

Thus need I flee nor death, nor fire, nor *sword*.
 A little while these be, then cease to *be*,
 And sent by Thee not these should be *abhorred*.

Devil and world, gird me with strength to *flee*,
 To flee the flesh, and arm me with Thy *word*.
 As Thy Heart is to my heart, unto *Thee*

Tune me, O Lord.

Christina Rossetti



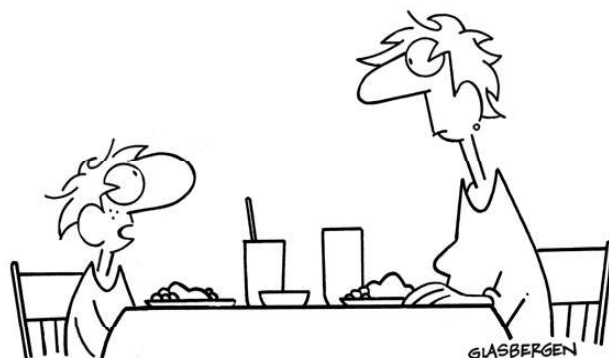
Disciples Peter and John running to the Tomb
 on the day of the Resurrection.
 Eugene Burnand 1 898

Voltaire: "Those who can make you believe absurdities can make you commit atrocities."

SUNT LACRYMÆ RERUM, ET MENTEM MORTALIA TANGUNT (Book 1 (line 462) of Virgil's Aeneid. Robert Fagles renders the quote as: "The world is a world of tears, and the burdens of mortality touch the heart."



« If I send my prayer as a text message,
 will I get a quicker response ? »



"If God wanted me to eat carrots,
 He wouldn't hide them underground!"

Thanks, Trudy



Restos du Cœur, La Châtaigneraie

The volunteers, of whom there are 60 who share duties between Tuesdays and Thursdays, are so delighted and grateful for your donations.

Currently, they are sustaining 161 families regularly, representing approximately 335 people drawn from villages all over the Pays de La Châtaigneraie.

There are also 7 volunteers who tend a vegetable and fruit garden ; they planted 450 tomato seedlings this year, but, because of the intense heat and drought this summer, for very little reward, so it's going to be a hard winter for everyone.

Jazz Soirée

At the end of August each year, Linda and Nigel Pearce host a private Jazz soirée in their beautiful, enclosed garden. They have usually been blessed with great weather, but this year, to avoid excess heat, rain or cold (!), it was held in Maggie and Jeff Kent's barn.

The music was provided by *L'Instant Jazz*, a group that comes together periodically to play for the love of it and for the enjoyment of listeners. The group had special guest player Jeff Young from Oxford on keyboard, also Tony Church on alto and baritone saxophones, drummer Hugh Randolph, Jean-Paul Fromont on a second keyboard and our Grapevine editor Nigel on double bass. Liam Maguire kindly provided and set up the sound system.

There were some 50 people eagerly listening and they were royally entertained. We had aperos to start and then followed two sets of wonderful gentle jazz, with everyone enjoying their own picnics in the music break.

We all had a fabulous evening, and a magnificent 440 euro was donated to be given to Resto du Cœur in La Châtaigneraie.

A massive thank you to the musicians and all who helped to make the evening such a success.

Maggie and Geoff Kent



Maggie presents the donations collected at the Jazz evening hosted by Maggie & Geoff

It was a great pleasure for Maggie and me to listen to Annie (centre, holding the envelope), who comes all the way from Chantonay, talk about the dedication, good humour and joy among all the volunteers.

***Thank you all, as always, for your gifts at the Sunday morning collection –
please keep them coming !
Trudy***



*"Jazz at Maggie's Barn" !
A thousand thanks to Maggie and Geoff*



The volunteers in La Châtaigneraie always express their heartfelt gratitude for your generous donations, so please keep them coming.

The arrival of nappies is always greeted with a great deal of enthusiasm, so if you are not sure what you would like to donate, a pack of « couches N° 6 » will be extremely welcome !



[illegible]



ASV Service Rota September to November 2026

	2026								
D	M	Venue	Time	Service	President	Worship	Organist	Inter-cessor	Readers (2)
						Leader			
27	Sept	PdS	11h	HC	HD	MK	AM	TL	TC/JW
4	Oct	LCP	11h	HC	HD				
11	Oct*	PdS	11h	HC	HD	AC	AM	CM	GK/KS
18	Oct								
25	Oct	PdS	11h	HC	TL	JM	AM	JW	CH/BC
1	Nov	LCP	11h	HC	TL				
8	Nov**	PdS	11h	HC	HD	CG	AM	DG	CM/AH
15	Nov								
22	Nov	PdS	11h	HC	HD	MK	AM	CG	TC/AC

**Harvest Festival*

***Remembrance Sunday*

ASV Service Rota 2026 – Index of names and positions

Name		Abbrev.	Worship leader	Intercessor	Reader
CATTELL	Rupert	RC			X
COATES	Trudy	TC			X
CONDIE	Anne	AC	x		x
CONDIE	Bill	BC			
DOOR	Hazel	HD			
GREEN	Chris	CG	x	x	x
GREEN	Doug	DG	x	x	x
HESTER	Alan	AH			x
HESTER	Christine	CH			x
KENT	Geoff	GK			x
KENT	Margaret	MK	x	x	x
LOMAS	Tony	TL		x	
MATTHEWS	John	JM	x	x	x
McGREGOR	Fiona	FMG			x
McGREGOR	Iain	IMG			x
MILTON	Ann	AM			
MILTON	Chris	CM		x	x
PEARSON	David	DP		x	x
PEARSON	Sally	SP		x	x
SLATER	Kate	KS			x
WILKINSON	Jenny	JW		x	x

Please note :

If you are unable to be at church for your place on the rota, please try to arrange a swap and inform the Worship Leader.

Anne Condie 05 49 06 27 72
 Doug and Chris Green 05 49 72 18 46
 Margaret Kent 05 49 72 27 72
 John Matthews 05 49 75 29 71

HC Holy Communion
 MW Morning Worship
 YR Yves Rousseau
 LCP La Chapelle Palluau
 PdS Puy-de-Serre

“Forward Planning”

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

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 to me by this week. I know we all have busy lives, and it is much appreciated that I very rarely 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 **November 2026** issue, do make sure you submit it to me, at njp78@hotmail.com

...ideally before October 15th 2026 !

I look forward to all next month's offerings!

Nigel