



The Grapevine



The magazine of Christ Church la Manche
A Chaplaincy within the Church of England Diocese in Europe
Walking together with Christ: Companions on the Way
August 2026

Minister's Message



As we enter August it's hard to imagine that we are already halfway through the year and on the downward slope to Autumn. Time seems to go by faster and faster each year as I get older. August is traditionally the time for summer holidays when everyone prays for dry weather and lovely sunshine. This year feels different with the climatic changes that have taken place, and many are praying for rain. During June we have seen scorching, soaring temperatures that are changing the way we think and live. As wildfires spring up across the globe one can't help but wonder how we got it so wrong. For years people have been talking about global warming and the changing climate and seasons. Well it's too

late for talk now. It is here and is a reality that we now have to learn to live with. I can't help wondering what God is thinking about all this - His beautiful gift to us gradually being destroyed by years of our abuse.

A young deer ran down the lane next to my house just as I was driving back from work. It was heading for the woods at the bottom of the lane, closely followed by a hare that disappeared up the bank into my field. Watching them and then watching the news and seeing the habitats of these beautiful creatures being burnt to ash I could only pray that the woods by me are spared. I have to admit my hosepipe is attached and ready to use should the need arise.

But it's not just the habitats of wildlife that is at risk. The farmers are frantically trying to rescue their crops, praying that rain comes soon so that the corn can swell and grow. The wheat harvest is already in and the fields being ploughed over but nothing will grow in the arid dry soil. Looking forward to September one has to wonder what kind of a harvest we will reap this year. Bringing the first fruits before God in praise of his creation may be a little thin on the ground.

Yet there is always hope. Mother Nature has a way of coming through even the worst of disasters. A good spell of rain and the parched land will spring forth tiny green shoots of new growth. We have seen it before with previous natural disasters. The wildlife may take a little longer to recover but given time even that is possible. And us? We have been given a wakeup call. For too long we have ignored the signs, abused God's gift and thought only of ourselves. It's time to change that and with God's help we can. We can all make changes, even little ones that may seem insignificant but joined together with other peoples' little changes, big changes can happen. God provided manna, quails, and water to the Hebrew nation in the wilderness because He is gracious and cares about His people. He will do the same for us, although not necessarily with manna and quail.

So as we enter into the height of summer, let us pray for those who provide our daily bread that the harvest proves fruitful, let us pray to our Lord that He use His healing powers to protect our planet, and that He grants to all the wisdom to seek the changes needed in order to protect and nurture the gift we have been given, that we may pass it on to our children, our grandchildren, and our great grandchildren, so that they have a future with plenty of the fruits of life and daily bread.

Donna Derrick

New Churchwarden admitted



Following her unopposed election as churchwarden at the Annual Chaplaincy Meeting, Michaela Winterman was duly admitted to office by Father Chris on Sunday 26th July during the morning Eucharist service.

Father Chris first invited Michaela to make a declaration promising to perform the duties of her office, with God's help, faithfully and diligently.

After this, Father Chris formally admitted Michaela as churchwarden to serve in this Chaplaincy, praying that God would give her grace to serve Him with cheerfulness and humility; that Our Lord Jesus Christ be with her in all she does in His service; and that the Holy Spirit may guide and direct her path throughout the coming year, helping her to fulfil her office to the glory of God and for the good of his people.

Formalities over, congregation members showed their approval with a hearty round of applause.

Quiz and Chips



On Thursday, 30th July, early evening, over 20 of us gathered in the Salle des Fêtes (aka church hall) at Hommèel to test our wits and then be rewarded with fish and chips followed by apple crumble and trifle, prepared by the dedicated duo: Christine and Michaela. We were offered kir and nibbles on arrival.

François's contribution to the success of the evening was remarkable too. He had set all the questions for the quiz which were in categories and supplied us with the question sheet and read out the questions too. We worked in groups of four and our answers were marked by another team.

The whole evening was very enjoyable and lots of fun: major ingredients, as usual, food and fellowship!

Wendy Woodley

Editor's note: The total sum raised, after payment of costs, was 244 euros. A big THANK YOU, as ever to those who made it all happen.



19h30 every Tuesday – a short service of Evening Prayer on Zoom.

It is fine to come for the service then either leave or else stay on for the 20h00 Bible Study or house-group.



'Something More' dates for August are 4th and 18th, continuing our series about early shapers of our Anglican tradition. Having heard about Richard Hooker last time, the next session will be thinking about Archbishop Thomas Cranmer and his Book(s) of Common Prayer.

The Bible Study will meet on 11th and 25th August continuing the study of the Letter of James.

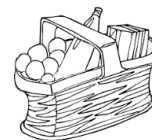


Alpha has finished now – see the next page for a report on the course from one of the participants.



Picnic with the Parson in August after the morning Eucharist service at Gratot.

Do join us, with your picnic, on **Sunday 23rd August.**





Reflections on Alpha

Mary Jackson and Helen Wordsworth wanted to do an Alpha Course last year but it never got started due to lack of participants. This year they tried again but invited this time church members instead of trying to find completely new participants. There were between 6 and 8 of us on a Thursday evening via Zoom. Not how the course has been devised as we are supposed to share a meal together before doing the session. We will be having a meal together at the end of the course which makes up for it, as we have sort of knitted together even with Zoom.

I did the Alpha course 20 years ago in the UK and I was curious to know how it has changed. For the better, more modern and really entertaining at times. I think I can speak for all of us in saying that at times you feel inspired, raised up, sad, thoughtful and really glad to be a Christian. The course gives answers to many of today's questions about Christianity; not everybody will be satisfied but I think it helps us to challenge others who say it's all a load of rubbish, etc. Being a Christian is very uncool these days and we have to fight to make it KOOL!

Nicky Gumbel, the main presenter, tells his story about how he was an atheist and that his father came to Britain as a secular Jew from Nazi Germany. Nicky tells the story of him and his wife meeting, with many jokes along the way. He's an absolute star, so charismatic. After watching the evening's film, we talk together about our own opinions and experiences. I found this very interesting.

Some of the people on the film had absolute miraculous experiences after coming to our Lord Jesus, really mind blowing. So Christian or not, faith or no, I would thoroughly recommend anyone to watch the films of the Alpha course if they can.

It's really rewarding and you feel the love of Jesus coming through.

Julie Dowler

Don't forget our August musical treat.....

Cotswold Voices, the choir led by Revd Ben Phillips, will be visiting Normandy later this month. On Saturday 22nd, they will give a concert in Saint-Sauveur-le-Vicomte – see the adjacent poster for details.

The following day, 23rd, they will be singing Palestrina's Missa Brevis at the 11h00 Eucharist at Gratot. Rather than singing it as a concert piece the different sections of the Mass (Kyrie, Credo, Benedictus, etc) will be inserted at the proper moments during the service.

We hope you will want to support the choir at one or both of these events.

Just for fun.....

I can't remember my homing pigeon's name, but I'm sure it will come back to me.

So I went for a job as a lumberjack...
Fella asks: "Have you any experience?"
I replied: "Have you heard of the Sahara Forest?"
He said: "You mean Sahara Desert!"
I said: "Well, that's what they call it now!"

CONCERT



Lamentations et bénédictions

Oeuvres de Palestrina, Tomkins, Bruckner, Stanford, Pärt

Samedi 22 août 2026, 17:00

L'Abbaye Sainte Marie Madeleine Postel
Saint-Sauveur-le-Vicomte

Concert gratuit: dons pour l'église

Cotswold Voices

When in Rome....?

It comes as a surprise to some that the Anglican family includes more than 4 million members who worship each week in French. The *Réseau francophone de la Communion anglicane* (RFCA) network unites and links French-speaking Anglicans around the world, enabling the sharing of service books, hymns and music – even an online weekly French-medium Sunday School! Anglicans are encouraged to worship and witness through the medium of French in Canada, the USA, several countries in Africa, the Channel Islands....almost everywhere...*except in France!*

'An English Church for English ex-pats' was how a church leader described Anglicans in France recently, with the suggestion that our friendly relations with the other denominations might depend on our remaining Anglophone – if we worshipped in French we might be seen instead as competitors! This implies a dreadfully negative view of the ecumenical situation in France: by that logic presumably French-speaking churches regard one another as predators rather than partners! Thankfully that isn't the case – although relationships seem a decade behind those in the UK, the warmth between mainline French churches seems genuine and sincere. And there are plenty of Lost Sheep to find here in France without going and rustling our neighbours' flocks to fill our pews by emptying theirs!

'Picnic with the Parson' is our monthly meeting at Gratot to discuss anything and everything, and at the July event, encouraged by a shift in the policy of the diocese towards using other languages as well as English, Fr Chris posed the thought that we could become somehow more French without becoming less English. His Welsh roots make him sympathetic to bilingualism anyway, but he was also responding to a recent contact with the 'new generation' of UK arrivals, now required to learn French to A2 exam level as part of a 'contract of integration' to be granted settled residence here rather than a series of (expensive!) annual visas. Of course the same effort is required of other Anglophones, eg from the USA. We may all struggle with our French, but the days of people choosing to come and live here while speaking little or no French seem to be numbered.

A 'mixed' church community which includes sympathetic French speakers and learners at all stages offers a very inviting 'safe space' for people not yet confident enough to be pitched into a naturally French context as the only learner, struggling to keep up. 'Becoming more French without becoming less English' is a cultural balancing act. An obvious first step would be to have a bilingual service booklet – maybe a translation of our current 'green' Eucharist? – so that even a totally English service can be followed in French. We might learn to say in French what is deeply familiar in English: one suggestion was that we should all be capable of saying the Lord's Prayer, and perhaps the Creed, in French. Once a month we might have one reading in French – with an English version on the service sheet to follow. Further down the line we might discover the occasional French hymn. We can help English speakers to learn French, and French speakers to learn English, while joining together in the familiar shared landscape of Christian worship – the same in any language!

A range of viewpoints were put forward at the meeting, reflecting the dilemma of wanting to be a broader, more welcoming and better integrated church without losing the qualities that make our community distinctive. We certainly aren't going to swamp people with more French than they can handle, but we mustn't fall into the mistake of saying 'we'll do more in French when we get more French members'. (Too many churches say 'we'll provide activities for children when children come along', but the result is that children never appear!) We live in France, and are members of a church which is fully recognised as part of the Christian scene in France – if we believe we have something 'different' to offer, a 'flavour' of Christianity that is distinctive, then surely we need to be open to every possibility of sharing that experience with the community in which we are set. That includes providing linguistic bridges to help people to cross cultural boundaries – in either direction!

Fr Chris

Please don't forget to pray daily for our church

Lord Jesus Christ, thank you for calling us to be a Church under the banner of your Name:
may we look to you today and find clear vision for tomorrow.

May our life together bring you glory,
as you make of us a living invitation to enter the joy of your Kingdom. Amen.

DIARY DATES	
Tuesday 4 th August 10h30	Coffee Catch-up Poké Mi, Avranches
Tuesdays 4 th and 18 th August 20h00	Something More on Zoom
Wednesdays 5 th and 19 th August 10h00 – 12h30	The Baker English Library at Gratot
Sunday 9 th August 17h00	Service in Cherbourg
Tuesdays 11 th and 25 th August 20h00	Bible Study on Zoom
Saturday 22 nd and Sunday 23 rd August	Cotswold Voices Choir (See Page3)

SERVICES IN AUGUST		
<i>Covid is still around. Please respect those who are being cautious.</i> In particular, please think of others and wear a mask if you come to church while you have a cough or cold or feel unwell. Services may be subject to change depending on availability of ministers.		
DATE	GRATOT 11h00	AVRANCHES 16h00
2 nd August	Morning Prayer	Holy Eucharist
9 th August <i>17h00, Cherbourg service</i>	Holy Eucharist	Evening Prayer
16 th August	Morning Prayer	Holy Eucharist or Evening Prayer
23 rd August	Holy Eucharist	Evening Prayer
30 th August	Morning Prayer	Songs of Praise

READINGS FOR AUGUST					
Date	Day in the Church Calendar	Psalm	1 st Reading	2 nd Reading	Gospel
2 nd	Ninth Sunday after Trinity	145:15-end	Isaiah 55:1-5	Romans 9:1-5	Matthew 14:13-21
9 th	Tenth Sunday after Trinity	85:8-13	1 Kings 19:9-18	Romans 10:5-15	Matthew 14:22-33
16 th	Eleventh Sunday after Trinity	67	Isaiah 56:1, 6-8	Romans 11:1-2a, 29-32	Matthew 15:10-28
23 rd	Twelfth Sunday after Trinity	138	Isaiah 51:1-6	Romans 12:1-8	Matthew 16:13-20
30 th	Thirteenth Sunday after Trinity	26:1-8	Jeremiah 15:15-21	Romans 12:9-end	Matthew 16:21-end

MINISTRY CONTACTS	
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Michaela Winterman Churchwarden	07 88 38 33 93
Chaplaincy Ministers - usually meet monthly with Fr Chris; please share your questions, thoughts and ideas with the Team by contacting Chris	
Fr Chris with:	
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Adrian Grainge, Licensed Lay Minister	02 99 20 38 60 adrian.grainge@orange.fr
Revd Dr Helen Wordsworth	



Useful websites

If you know of any other websites which might be of use to our readership, please let us know

https://europe.anglican.org/	The main Diocesan website
http://anglicanfrance.fr/	Anglicans in France
https://www.achurchnearyou.com/christ-church-manche-normandy	Our Chaplaincy website
www.rfi.fr/en/	French news and current affairs public radio station, good for latest news in English

NEXT MONTH'S DEADLINE for articles and photos is 24th August

Please send articles and photos to: mmupjohn@live.co.uk



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Meetings on 2nd and 4th Wednesday of each month in the salle at
Notre Dame du Touchet, 50140; 10h00 – 12h30

Trained volunteers available

E-mail: nord@cancersupportfrance.org www.cancersupportfrance.org

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