

EDITION May 2026

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At the present time the Church Mouse is an independent voice speaking for any member of the Church subject to the editor's discretion, and views expressed are not necessarily those of the Chaplaincy, Archdeaconry or Diocese.

All photos have been checked against Tin Eye



ASCENSION DAY Thursday 14 May 2026

The Ascension of Jesus
Luke Chapter 24

⁵⁰ "When he had led them out to the vicinity of Bethany, he lifted up his hands and blessed them. ⁵¹ While he was blessing them, he left them and was taken up into heaven. ⁵² Then they

worshiped him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy. ⁵³ And they stayed continually at the temple, praising God."

Ascension is the 40th day after Easter and 10 days before Pentecost. This is the day in England when it was tradition to



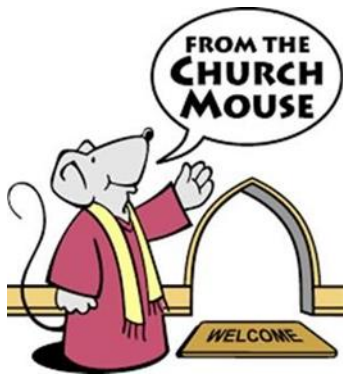
(Beating the Bounds in Lambeth in 1961)

“beat the bounds”. Members of the parish walk round the parish boundaries, marking boundary stones (e.g. by writing on them in chalk) and hitting them with sticks. According to some, it was once the young boys of the parish that were hit with sticks instead of the stones. Knowledge of the parish boundaries was once important, since churches had certain duties such as the care of children born out of wedlock

in the parish. The writer remembers beating the bounds in Oxford, walking around the boundaries of the city church, led by Revd MacDonald Ramm, vicar of St Michael's in Oxford.

In France it is a public holiday and is “un pont” which added to Friday makes a lovely long weekend!

Gill Heyworth - Cahors



The Reason we are all here

Prayer for courageous Church Leadership

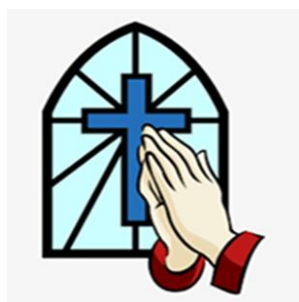
Holy One

When fear grows loud
And blame comes early
Give courage to those
Who lead with truth
Compassion and justice

Strengthen church leaders
Who choose the way of Jesus
Over the pull of anger
Hatred or popular opinion

When they are criticised
Steady them
When they are weary
Renew them
When they feel exposed
Hold them in your love

And teach your church
To seek justice with integrity
To honour those who have
been harmed
To resist rumours
And to return from
scapegoating
So that truth, justice
And peace may grow together
In Jesus's name Amen



SERVICES AROUND THE CHAPLAINCY

May/June 2026

BRENS

Sunday 24th May 11h.00 Holy Communion and Annual Meeting
Rev'd Paul Willis

CAHORS

Sunday 17th May 10h.00 Holy Communion and Annual Meeting
Rev'd Paul Willis

Sunday 24th May 10h.00 Morning Prayer – Georgina Hodgson

CARCASSONNE

Sunday 10th May 10h.30 Holy Communion & Annual Meeting
Rev'd Paul Willis

CAYLUS

Monday 25th May 10h30 Holy Communion
Rev'd June Hutchinson

TOULOUSE

Sunday 17th May 10h.30 Holy Communion and Annual Meeting
Rev'd Jacqueline Rodwell

Sunday 24th May 10h.30 Pentecost Praise
Zena Baker

VAYRAC

Wednesday 20th May 10h.00 Annual Meeting on Zoom
Chair Rev'd Paul Willis

Tuesday 2nd June 10h.30 Holy Communion
Rev'd June Hutchinson

The Chaplaincy Annual Meeting will be held on Zoom on Wednesday 27th May at 7.30pm – the Zoom link has been sent to everyone on the Worship Centre Notices

Follow us on Facebook! Our page is 'Anglican Chaplaincy of Midi Pyrenees and Aude'.



We also have local church pages which are at 'Anglican Church in Brens / Cahors / Caylus / Carcassonne' - just using the local name ! Please have a look and follow the pages and like the posts! It all helps to spread the word that we are here and are open to those who are looking to join us.



News from Cahors – LightBeam a charity supported by Cahors



It's Annual Meeting Time!

The Chaplaincy Annual Meeting will be held on Zoom at 19:30 on Wednesday 27th May. Please put this in your diary.



The Local Annual Meetings are being held around the Chaplaincy on the following dates - All meetings will be presided over by our Chaplain - except for Toulouse.

May 10 - Carcassonne
May 11 - Caylus
May 17 - Cahors
May 17 - Toulouse
May 20 - Vayrac on Zoom
May 24 - Brens

Dear Valued Donor,

We extend our sincere gratitude for your generous donation. Your valued support of The LightBeam Project plays a vital role in making a meaningful and lasting difference in the lives of disadvantaged children.

We are truly thankful for your contribution of £50 from the Cahors Worship Centre of the Anglican Church, Europe, towards the maintenance and development of the SOLE Lab at DIKSHA. The LightBeam Project has evolved into a highly effective educational resource for DIKSHA students, fostering enthusiasm for learning, strengthening teamwork, and significantly enhancing language skills.

We would like to assure you that all contributions are utilised with the utmost care and responsibility to maximise impact and further our mission of providing equitable learning opportunities for children.

The continued support of generous donors like you enables us to positively shape young lives and help children experience a happier and more enriching childhood. Thank you once again for your kindness and commitment. We sincerely hope you will continue to partner with us in advancing our shared vision of celebrating and nurturing childhood.

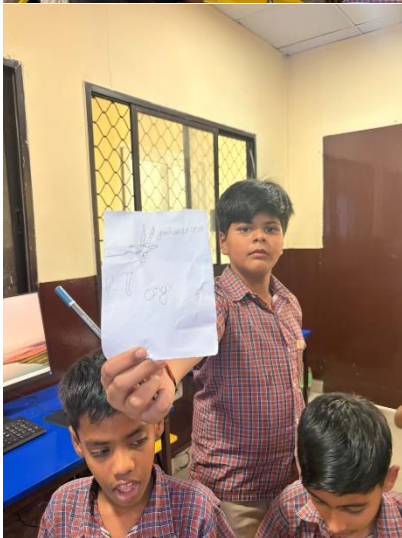
For further information about The LightBeam Project, we invite you to visit: Instagram: [@the_lightbeamproject](https://www.instagram.com/the_lightbeamproject), www.lightbeamproject.netlify.app/

Yours sincerely, Monika Banga





Continued - LightBeam



Learning is such fun, when your teacher is in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia and comes from France and you are learning English and live in India!

Archdeaconry Synod Report of Meeting on 25 April 2026 Anita Phillips, Carcassonne

The meeting began with Morning Prayer.

After this, Archdeacon Peter reported on the latest news from the Diocese and Archdeaconry.

Bishops Robert and Andrew are coordinating their ministries across the diocese so that all chaplaincies receive regular support and pastoral care. Another important focus is on the work of the Safeguarding Team and preparations for the 2027 safeguarding audit across all the dioceses in the Church of England.

Within France, we are gradually filling chaplaincy vacancies and are very happy that our own chaplaincy now has its own chaplain, Paul, in post! Other vacancies are still in progress. Among these, some very small chaplaincies are considering appointing lay chaplains rather than ordained clergy, as they don't have the resources to support paid clergy at present.

Nationally, the Archdeaconry is strengthening its ties with the Federation of Protestant Churches in France and moving towards full membership. Benefits to full membership will include access to, for example, group rates for insurance schemes enabling significant savings on annual costs and improved cover.

The bishops are continuing their tours around the chaplaincies in France and will be visiting Northern France shortly. A new feature of these tours is that they will include an episcopally-led quiet day for all who wish to attend from the relevant chaplaincies. This is to address the views recently being expressed by many chaplaincies, that there needs to be more spiritual nurture offered as part of these episcopal visits.



Archdeacon Peter concluded this section by reading out Bishop Robert's letter announcing that Archdeacon Peter himself will be leaving the diocese shortly to take up a new post in Leicester Diocese.



We then moved on to the business section of the meeting and received the accounts for 2025 and budget proposals for 2026. The finances are in a healthy state as we steward our resources carefully. We focus our spending on Continuing Ministerial Education for those in post.

For the final session we went into break-out groups. We took the opportunity to reflect on what we had heard and on what gave us hope for the future.

Broadly the groups spoke about welcoming the opportunities to work more closely with other French protestant churches. Our focus for the future was to look at the challenge of organising some face-to-face meetings for synod members, at deanery level rather than across France as a whole, as this would keep the costs down. There being no further matters raised, the meeting closed with prayer.

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Midi Pyrenees and Aude Chaplaincy

Summary of Council meeting held on 30 April 2026

1. Chaplain's Update

A range of visits to each church centre had been made although that had taken time due to the geography of the Chaplaincy. The Chaplain expressed his appreciation for all he had seen and all the work being undertaken by Council members and those who had roles in each church.

Following the well-received Holy Week prayers, he was exploring possibilities for a weekly online compline, and Morning Prayer. More news soon!

Paul was looking into an annual Chaplaincy-wide event to bring everyone together with worship and social activities, possibly in September 2026 in Montauban.

A reflective course on Creation was being planned for September based on the work of St Francis of Assisi.

2. Safeguarding

Celia Scott reported on work needed to prepare for the national safeguarding audit.

The Council approved the draft Policy on the Recruitment of ex-Offenders which applied to all paid and voluntary roles.

3. Finance

Ross Jenkins presented the Annual Report and Accounts for 2025 which were approved. While there had been a net surplus in 2025, he and the Finance Committee advised that a stewardship programme be considered. This would include time, talents and money given to the Church. The Council would consider this further in the autumn.

The Diocesan Common Fund contribution for 2026 was reported, slightly reduced from 2025 at 8,823 euros. This was to pay for Diocesan support costs including safeguarding. It was agreed to pay this in time to secure a 5% discount.

4. Communications

David Phillips reported that the next Committee meeting would be in May with Revd Paul Willis. He invited suggestions on ways to reduce the number of emails being sent to church members and some ideas would be presented to the Committee.



5. Archdeaconry Synod

Anita Phillips reported on the recent meeting. Archdeacon Peter had reported on activities of the Bishops and ecumenical developments. (See Anita's report on Page 4)

6. Electoral Roll revision

David Phillips reported that the revision was now in hand and the results would be circulated to local churches around the 8th May, in time for the local Annual Meetings and the Chaplaincy Annual Meeting.

7. Next meetings

There will be a short Council meeting after the ACM on 27 May, then on Wednesday 24th June 2026.

David Phillips - Carcassonne



PENTECOST

24 May 2026

Pentecost is a very exciting time in the Church calendar as it is regarded as the birthday of the Christian Church. The first Pentecost comes from a Jewish harvest festival called Shavuot. It is celebrated this year on May 24th.

The apostles were celebrating this festival when the Holy Spirit descended on them. It sounded like a very strong wind, and it looked like tongues of fire. The



apostles then found themselves speaking in foreign languages, inspired by the Holy Spirit. People passing by at first thought that they must be drunk, but the apostle Peter told the crowd that the apostles were full of the Holy Spirit.

Today it is the festival when Christians celebrate the gift of the Holy Spirit. It is celebrated on the Sunday 50 days after Easter. The Holy Spirit is the third part of the Trinity of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit that is the way Christians understand God.

Pentecost is a happy festival. Ministers in church often wear robes with red in the design as a symbol of the flames in which the Holy Spirit came to earth. This is reflected in the symbols which are those of the Holy Spirit and include flames, wind, the breath of God and a dove.

The biblical narrative of Pentecost is given in the second chapter of the Book of Acts. As recounted in Acts 2:1-6:

“And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven. Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language.”

The Lectern Fall was made by Andrea Higginson and is at Terre Rouge Cahors. It was embroidered in 2016. Andrea says “Sometimes inspiration takes many years to evolve and then occasionally, on the “breath of God”, in a fleeting moment. My love of using patchwork as a surface for embroidery is very apparent in this work.” Andrea also made the stole that June is wearing.



Secours Catholique

Thanks, as usual, for your support to Secours Catholique in Blagnac. They are still in need of basic foodstuffs especially **TUNA** and hygiene items: toothpaste and brushes, shampoo, sanitary items, nappies (sizes 4,5,6...)

NEWS FROM TOULOUSE – thank you Sam

We have been asked, by Bishop Robert, to pray for all those being ordained this Petertide (end June). It is good to see that we have so many people in our Diocese. They are listed in the attached "ember letter". Of course, each one of these people are special, and personally, it is good to see Stephen Razafindratsima to be priested and to continue to serve as Assistant Curate at St George's, Paris. Stephan is part of the Madagascan Anglican Community with whom we do a joint service from time to time.



Sam Silverthorn is singing in this concert on May 24th

TRINITY SUNDAY - 31 May 2026



The Trinity Lectern Fall was embroidered in 2012 and again is one of our beautiful lectern falls we use at Cahors. This green lectern fall is used for the majority of the year which falls outside the great seasons of Christmas and Easter. Again Revd June has the matching stole. Again the symbolism is the most important part of Andrea's work – the Triquetra is an early symbol of the Trinity – the continuous interweaving of indivisible but equal arcs may be taken to express eternity; in the centre is the triangle of the Trinity. The circle is eternity, sun, renewal of life. Three is the number of the Trinity and the threefold concept of man as body, mind and spirit. The Trinity is Father – Creator; Son

– Redeemer and Holy Spirit – Sanctifier.

The colours also have meaning:

- Green Life, hope and peace,
- Red Love, joy, Christ's passion, and Gold pure light, radiance and glory.

Andrea chose these symbols to make a bold impact without words.

The Church Mouse would like to thank Andrea for allowing our readers to see these beautiful Lectern Falls.



Safeguarding and the Parish Dashboard

As many of you may be aware Safeguarding has a great support and check tool in an app named the Parish Dashboards. This is a specific tool to assist the Chaplaincy (parish) Safeguarding Officer.

It was set up a few years ago to help SO's organise their records, follow procedures and assist the church council to follow all the rules and requirements within Safeguarding in the Church of England.

Only the SO can alter, add or update the Dashboard but all council members including the chaplain can review it and ask questions of the SO to assist in the protection of all vulnerable children and adults.

Recently the council spent a whole meeting discussing and reviewing certain policies and procedures

which has improved our status on the Dashboard.

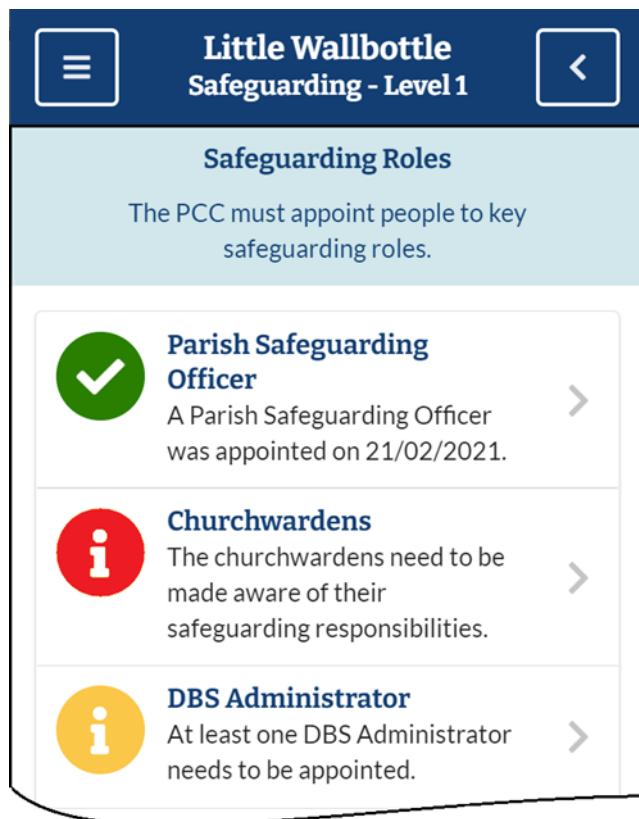
We now stand at 81% and are in to Level 3, the top level!!

There is still some work to do but Celia, our SO, is very grateful for all the help and support she has had from the council and our Chaplain Paul Willis in achieving this level.

We still need to discuss and put in place a few more vital procedures but with the help and support of all of you in our chaplaincy we are well on our way to making this chaplaincy a safe and healthy place for all to worship.

Thank You all

Celia Scott – Safeguarding Officer for the Chaplaincy of Midi Pyrenees and Aude.



This is the Diocese of Europe dashboard