

## The Lenten Message from our Chaplain Revd Paul Willis.



**EDITION**  
**March 2026**

**EDITOR:**

Gill Heyworth  
PHONE: 05 65 21 47 99

**EMAIL:**

[heyworth.g@churchinmidipa.org](mailto:heyworth.g@churchinmidipa.org)

**WEBSITE:**

[www.churchinmidipa.org](http://www.churchinmidipa.org)

**DISTRIBUTION:**

If you know someone who wants to be added to the list and receive the Church Mouse, please email the Church Mouse. Equally, if you no longer want to be on the list, please click the unsubscribe link [here](#).

If you would like the Church Mouse in large print – font 20 – please let me know. If you would like the Church Mouse printed and sent by post - again, please let me know.

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.*

### Rising from the Ashes

History books tell us many inspirational tales of disastrous situations being followed by a complete turnaround, in real, not virtual, or mythical 'rising from the ashes' narratives. Dreadful situations where feelings of despair, fear and confusion predominate, eventually replaced by the regeneration of hope, the resurgence of courage, and confidence found in a clearer vision of the possibilities that the future holds.

In ancient mythology, the Phoenix, a mythical bird creature, is truly inspirational; dying in a fire of its own making, it then symbolically rises from the ashes of its own demise, recreated, renewed, restored, to fly towards the sun. According to myth, the Phoenix, which legend tells us can live to be 500 years old, would sense the end of its life approaching, and building its own funeral pyre, would then be consumed in the flames. Three days later, the Phoenix would rise from the ashes, as if reborn.

Because of the strong themes of death and resurrection contained within mythologies about the Phoenix, the fantastical bird was adopted as an important and potent symbol in early Christianity, as an analogy of Christ's death, and three days later his resurrection: the image of the Phoenix appearing on early Christian tombstones.

There are references to this mysterious bird found in the histories of many cultures, but it is generally thought that the origins of the myth are Egyptian. Some scholars also believe that the Greeks called the Canaanites the Phoenikes, or Phoenicians, which may derive from the Greek word 'Phoenix', meaning crimson or purple. This could well have some foundation in truth, as the Phoenicians achieved significant fame and considerable wealth,



through the development of rich, purple dyes, which came from the grinding up of mollusc shells.

In more recent history, the city of Phoenix, Arizona, was built in the area where an ancient Native American tribe, the Hohokam, had built a complex system of irrigation canals as early as 300 B.C. When the city was founded in 1870, Darrel Duppa, a British settler, suggested that the city had risen from the ashes of the Hohokam culture like the mythical phoenix.

In our own era, each year we commemorate the anniversary of the end of wars around the world, particularly the 2nd World War. On Remembrance Sunday we celebrate a hard-won peace, which rose from the ashes of death and destruction brought about by the insistent rise of a particularly brutal, evil and oppressive fascism. Phoenix rising from the ashes could also be a metaphor of hope for the present day. War, chaos, words of hate, are all around us, and without hope it's easy to despair.

Rising from the ashes of life's experience happens on a personal level too. If you're anything like me, you'll have times in your life when you crash and burn emotionally, psychologically or physically (perhaps a mixture of all three), caused by events that are beyond your control.

I wonder how it might sound if I suggest the notion that at these times a supreme being is with us just like a mother hen, wanting to protect us and cover us in the shadow of her wings until our own wings have found their strength to fly again.

I hold out the hope brought with a belief that God is with us in the ashes of our lived experience, wanting nothing more than to protect us until the Phoenix of our imagination flutters and flaps its wings, so that, unfettered by the past, we can once more soar towards the sun.

Having thoughts of the Divine in mind:

He will cover you with his feathers, and under his wings you will find refuge; (Psalm 91:4)

Those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary; they will walk and not be faint. (Isaiah 40:31)

During Lent, for forty days, the Christian church journeys from the ashes of a bygone Wednesday, looking beyond the darkness of Good Friday and low Saturday, towards the light of Easter Sunday – Resurrection Day, when Jesus our Emmanuel – God with us - rises from the dust and ashes to be the light of Christ.

May the light of Christ be with you.

Rev Paul Willis

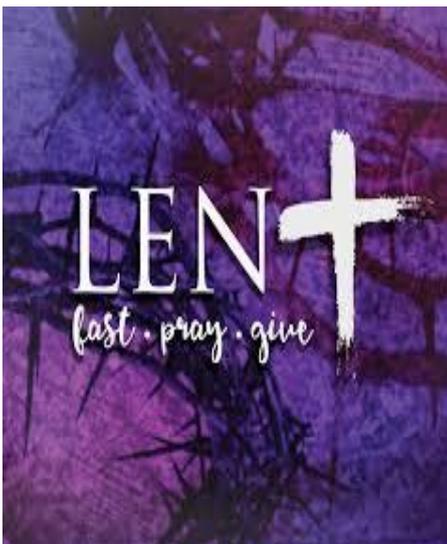




## The Reason we are all here

*The time has come," he said. "The kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the good news!" – Mark 1:15 (NIV)*

Lord Jesus, lead me through this 40-day journey with humility and courage. Help me turn away from distractions and draw closer to You. Shape my heart through repentance and fill me with steady faith. Amen.



## SERVICES AROUND THE CHAPLAINCY March 2026

### BRENS

Sunday 15 <sup>th</sup> March	11h.00 Holy Communion by extension – Peter Gibbs
Sunday 22 <sup>nd</sup> March	11h.00 Morning Prayer on Zoom
Sunday 5 <sup>th</sup> April	11h.00 Holy Communion by extension – Peter Gibbs

### CAHORS

Sunday 15 <sup>th</sup> March	10h.00 Morning Prayer- Mothering Sunday -Revd June Hutchinson
Sunday 22 <sup>nd</sup> March	10h.00 Morning Prayer – Georgina Hodgson
Sunday 29 <sup>th</sup> March	10h.00 Holy Communion – Palm Sunday – Revd June Hutchinson
Sunday 5 <sup>th</sup> April	10h.00 Holy Communion – Revd June Hutchinson

### CARCASSONNE

Sunday 22 <sup>nd</sup> March	10h.30 Holy Communion – Revd Tony Jewiss
Sunday 29 <sup>th</sup> March	10h.30 Palm Sunday Communion – Revd Tony Jewiss

### CAYLUS

Monday 23 <sup>rd</sup> March	10h30 Holy Communion – Revd June Hutchinson
-------------------------------	---

### TOULOUSE

Sunday 15 <sup>th</sup> March	10h.30 Holy Communion – Revd Jacqueline Rodwell with <b>Revd Paul Willis</b>
Sunday 29 <sup>th</sup> March	10h.30 Service of the Word – Zena Baker
Sunday 5 <sup>th</sup> April	10h.30 Easter Day – Holy Communion

### VAYRAC

Tuesday 7 <sup>th</sup> April	10h.30 Holy Communion – <b>Revd June Hutchinson</b>
-------------------------------	---



**Follow us on Facebook!** Our page is 'Anglican Chaplaincy of Midi Pyrenees and Aude' (under development). Carcassonne page is at 'Anglican Church in Carcassonne'. 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.



THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND

## 2026 Bishop's Lent Appeal: Vale Silves Community Centre, Portugal

### About Portugal

Portugal is a beautiful country and a popular tourist and retirement destination. Despite the many tourists, about 2.2 million people (about 20% of the population), are at risk of poverty or social exclusion. From 2011 through to 2015 Portugal endured a financial crisis and the pandemic has contributed to the difficulties in overcoming this. Great economic and social inequalities

Over the years, through EU grants, donated building materials, and significant personal sacrifice - including Dra Armanda taking out a mortgage on her own home - the Centre has become a fully operational, independent, non-political, not-for-profit organisation serving the parish of Boliqueime, in the Algarve.

### Our long-standing partnership

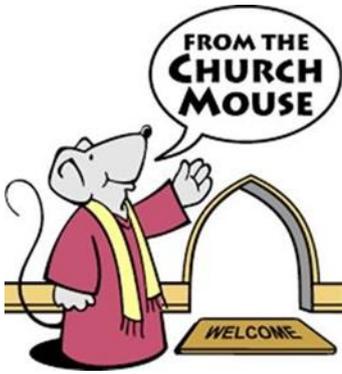
St Vincent's Chaplaincy Algarve has cooperated closely with the Centre for many years. Our partnership includes supporting the elderly outreach programme, providing annual Christmas gift bags for all elderly users and their carers, assisting with fundraising and maintaining a regular pastoral presence. This long and trusted relationship means we have had the privilege of witnessing first-hand, the commitment, integrity and compassion with which Dra Armanda and her team serve the most vulnerable in the community.

*+ Robert Gibraltar in Europe*

### +Robert Gibraltar in Europe

#### How you can donate to the Bishop in Europe's Lent Appeal 2026:

- **Via your Chaplaincy Treasurer** to Nick Wraight in the Diocesan Office
- **By cheque made out to: Diocese in Europe**  
Diocese in Europe Board of Finance  
14, Tufton St  
London SW1P 3QZ  
(Please add the words "Lent Appeal 2026" to any note you send with the cheque)
- **By bank transfer:**  
Account number: 40317039  
Sort code: 20-06-13  
IBAN: GB16 BUKB 2006 1340 3170 39 Swift / BIC: BUKBGB22
- **On the Diocese in Europe Just Giving page:**  
<https://www.justgiving.com/diocese-ineurope>



## ELECTORAL ROLL REVISION 2026



The importance of the Chaplaincy Electoral Roll - Only members of the Roll may vote at the Annual Meetings. The total number on the Roll is also an important factor in determining the number of lay representatives to be elected from the Chaplaincy to the Archdeaconry Synod.

Given this, each year a formal process is undertaken by the Chaplaincy Council, in preparation for the ACM, this year on 27<sup>th</sup> May, to ensure the Roll's accuracy. 2026 is an Electoral Roll revision year, meaning only additions and deletions are made to an existing list.

Revising the roll means adding names if necessary, removing anyone who has died, been ordained, has asked to be removed in writing, or who no longer attends worship or was not eligible when they were added.

Anyone wishing to be removed from the Roll should let me know. An email to [Phillips.david@orange.fr](mailto:Phillips.david@orange.fr) will be sufficient.

Joining the Roll - If you are baptised, are over 16 years and have habitually worshipped in one of our churches over the last six months, you can join the Roll. You simply need to complete a form, which will be available in April, and send it to me by email or post. Further details and the newly revised form will be sent out in April.

[David Phillips, Electoral Roll Officer](#)



## “I Will Give You Rest: Come”

**Matthew 11:28-30**  
**6 March 2026**

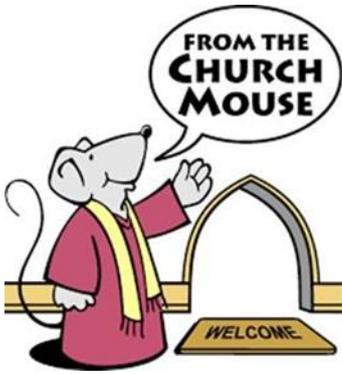


The 2026 World Day of Prayer materials from Nigeria bring us a powerful invitation drawn from Matthew 11:28-30. At a time when people worldwide are carrying heavy burdens, our Nigerian sisters offer profound insights into finding rest in God.

Through their exploration of different kinds of burdens - shame, systemic oppression, religious persecution, poverty and despair - the writers help us understand both the weight of human suffering and the depths of divine rest. Their work shows us that true rest isn't just about physical relief, but about transformation through God's grace and community support.

Nigeria has a population of over 211 million, the largest in Africa and the 7<sup>th</sup> largest in the world.

**The congregation at Terre Rouge in Cahors celebrated this event – the World Day of Prayer on Friday 6<sup>th</sup> March at 6pm.**



## Cahors News

The Cahors congregation were very saddened to learn that our Founder member Elisabeth Espitalie had died aged 97. We have put together some photos of Elisabeth over the years and the “special” tribute that Andrea added to the beautiful lectern fall that she made for Terre Rouge for our 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.



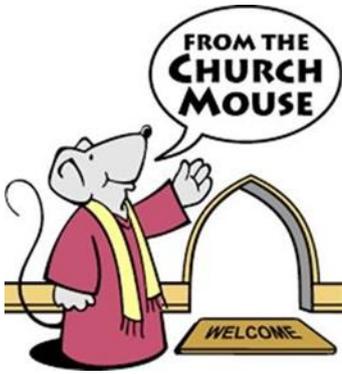
Rev. June’s retirement – September 2020



Elisabeth’s hands embroidered on the lectern fall – September 2026



Early in 2026



## Holy Week evening prayers

Our Chaplain Revd Paul Willis invites you to join him for Evening Prayers on Zoom at 18h.00 for the Monday to Saturday of Holy Week.

The prayers and readings will last around 30 minutes, and we will journey together through the events leading up to Christ's passion, in preparation for the great celebration of Easter Sunday.

Monday 30<sup>th</sup> March

Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup> March

Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> April

Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> April

Good Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> April

Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> April

The Zoom link will be sent to everyone through the Worship Centres Notices



## Summary of Chaplaincy Council meeting on 26 February 2026 Introduction of new Chaplain

The Council warmly welcomed the Revd. Paul Willis. He thanked all those involved in the Licensing service on 22<sup>nd</sup> February at Brens. He would initially spend time getting to know people and places, building trust and collaboration which were sustainable. It was important to encourage each other and build bridges.

The Archdeacon, who chaired the meeting, resigned as President of the Association, and reported that Paul had become President on his Licensing as Chaplain. Archdeacon Peter was warmly thanked for his work with the Chaplaincy over the last five years of vacancy.

The resignation of Margaret and Peter Snow, representing Carcassonne, was received and they were thanked for their service.

Members were saddened to hear of the death of Elisabeth Espitalié from Cahors, the founder member and attached to Cahors Church for over 60 years.

**Finance** The Budget for 2026 as recommended by the Finance Committee, was approved. This included the cost of the Chaplain. A deficit for the year of some €14,700 was expected, to be funded from the reserves built up over the years of vacancy. The reserves stood at around €149,000 on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2026.

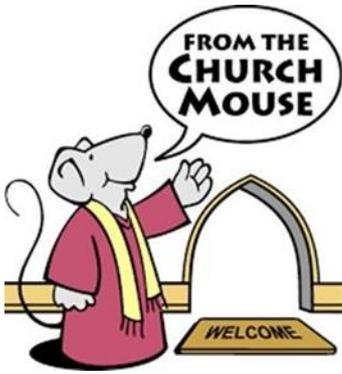
It was agreed that Gavin Porter act as Deputy treasurer for banking purposes, which was required by our bank.

**Safeguarding** Celia Scott reported on work needed to prepare for the safeguarding audit. Some members had not yet completed their required training and were expected to do so urgently. Some work on new policies and procedures needed to be drafted and approved, and Celia will undertake that shortly.

**Communications** David Phillips reported on the very positive reactions to the news of Paul's appointment and licensing. The news had also led to more Facebook page followers, and the Chaplaincy website page had 7% more followers than a month or so ago. The website news page had been viewed by twice as many people as had been normal. David commented that pictures of happy Christians and good news encouraged people to look at our Facebook pages and website - he asked for more to be provided to the Communications team.

**Electoral Roll revision** An article on the revision (especially clarifying that this is not a renewal, as in 2025) appears on page 5 of this March edition and will be followed by more publicity in April.

**The next meeting** will be on 26<sup>th</sup> March 2026. David Phillips



## Jamie Johnston

### Who am I?

My name is Jamie Johnston. I am a priest in the Church of England, until recently serving in the Diocese as Chaplain of All Saints' Marseille with Aix-en-Provence and the Luberon. I retired last summer and moved to the Gers, where I now live not far from Toulouse.

### Where do you come from?

I was born in England and my family lived in Salisbury, Wiltshire. Although much of my pre-ordination career was spent in London, I have lived and worked in France a number of times, moving here most recently in 2019.

### When did you become a Christian?

I was baptised as an infant and grew up in a Christian home. I was confirmed at the age of 15, and my faith has been a source of inspiration ever since. For many years I was involved in church life in different lay roles, before being ordained in 2016.

### What are you passionate about?

I am passionate about the Church becoming fully inclusive. I believe this reflects the welcome of Christ to us all.

### What makes you angry?

I grew up in the shadow of WW2, in which members of my parents' generation had died. It makes me angry to see the international rules-based order that grew out of that conflict being eroded.

### What makes you happy?

Being among family and friends.

### What is the bravest thing you have ever done?

That's a difficult one. Probably giving the address at my sister's funeral when I had only been ordained a few weeks.

### What do you hope for?

'Time for amendment of life'. And to see the international rules-based order recover.

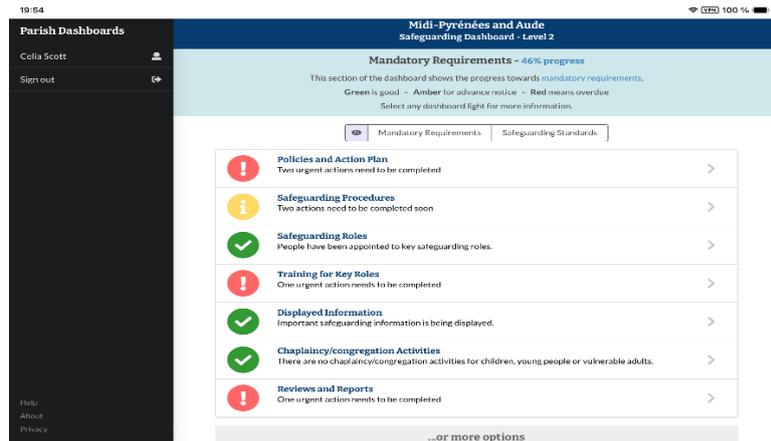
### Who would you like to be locked in a church with?

I would love to have spent time with the late Michael Mayne, whose spiritual writing I have always found inspiring.



We have a **very special Sunday next week** – as it is Mothering Sunday on 15<sup>th</sup> March - please bring your friends and family. **The service will be led by Rev Jacqueline and supported by our Chaplain, Rev Paul Willis.** We will give out the traditional flowers to our ladies. So, if you are planning to come, please let me know, so I can obtain the right number of flowers. We will follow the service with a **Bring and Share lunch**, so please join us, and welcome Rev Paul and his wife, Gill. Our next service will be on 29<sup>th</sup> March, and is a Service of the Word for Palm Sunday, led by Zena. Then we have a Holy Communion service for Easter Sunday - 5<sup>th</sup> April and our usual Holy Communion service on Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> April.

## Safeguarding update



Safeguarding is always an important part of church life. In fact, I often state that it should be part of our DNA. It is awareness of who is vulnerable which can include anybody at any time in their lives, not just children

To ensure Safeguarding is being correctly observed in our chaplaincies and parishes there is to be a big audit of everything and everyone in the Church of England starting January 2027.

This includes all members of the clergy to volunteers.

To assist with this a tool called the Parish Dashboard is available to all Safeguarding Officers (SOs). They are the only ones who can enter and edit data in this tool.

The Parish Dashboard covers all areas of Safeguarding from recording training to risk assessment of activities and many more areas.

It is a vital tool for SOs. They can see at a glance where their chaplaincy is being compliant with the Safeguarding rules and guidance. And what it has to do to achieve 100%.

At present our chaplaincy stands at 46%. So, we have some work to do.

Training is a vital part of all this. As a volunteer, depending on your role, you will need to complete various safeguarding levels of training. As your SO, I will explain all this to you and point you to where this can be accessed.

If you are volunteering, then please get in touch with Celia to find out what training you should be doing.

Safeguarding is there not only to protect others but also to protect yourself. Together we can make this a chaplaincy that promotes a healthy, safe church culture for all.

**Celia Scott**

**Safeguarding Officer for the Midi Pyrenees and Aude.**