Thoughts from The Rev. Dr. Scott Herr Senior Pastor

Dear Members and Friends of the ACP,

One of my favorite Epiphany readings is from the opening lines of Isaiah 60: “Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you. For darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples; but the Lord will arise upon you, and his glory will appear over you. Nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn.”

This text foreshadows the revealing of Christ to the Magi, but also is a very contemporary reminder that God’s light shines in the darkness, and even in and through us for all the world to see. As we are reflecting on how God is “making all things new” in our lives and world, one clear indicator of God’s generative activity is how the light of Jesus is reflected in and through our community to those around us.

I was very encouraged by the following letter received from François Danthon, Director of Alpha Development in France, following the Alpha Leader Training Conference held at the ACP, 12-13 January:

16 January, 2018
Dear Lisa (Prevett) and Pastor Scott,
On behalf of the entire Alpha France team, we would like to really bless you, and thank you from the bottom of our hearts. The ACP is an amazing and welcoming Church. We have been really impressed by your dedication to help us to organize this event... Please do extend our thankfulness to all your staff and the volunteers.

The feedback from the guests is really good. They are all praising the beauty of the church, the warm welcome, the quality of the service. We had 400 people (360 Catholics and 40 Protestants) coming from around 50 different churches in more than 30 different counties (département) in France! Amazing.

We wish you a blessed and exciting year ahead specially for your current Alpha. You are a real blessing for Paris and the Church in France.
In Christ, François Danthon

Special thanks to Lisa and the Alpha volunteer team for their hard work and amazing hospitality!

Alpha is one of the many ways our congregation reflects the light of Jesus. How is God’s light coming into your life? How is the glory of the Lord rising upon you? Photographers talk about “magic hours” and some of the most beautiful times of sunlight are called “Blue Hour” and “Golden Hour.” Any painter or photographer knows that even a stunning landscape can seem dull and flat without capturing the right light. I wonder if there is a spiritual equivalent of learning and practicing how to see and appreciate “God’s light” in our lives? I wonder if ancient and contemporary spiritual disciplines might be a way of experiencing more the brilliance and beauty of the glory of God we read about in the scriptures.

This year, 14 February is Ash Wednesday. That’s an interesting convergence of Valentine’s Day and the beginning of Lent! Interestingly, the word Lent in English actually has to do with light. It comes from the old English word “lencten,” which means “lengthen,” which refers to the lengthening of days in spring. Lent is supposed to be a time when, if you will, we “catch” the special light of Christ in a new way that brings regrowth and renewal of faith, hope and love in our lives.

Perhaps there are new ways of praying, reading scripture, exercise, eating and drinking... and even romancing that might focus your heart and mind anew on God’s glorious grace and love? How does your living – how you spend your time and money – reflect and refract God’s light to others and the world? Allison Wheeler will be our preacher for what I’m sure will be a very special Ash Wednesday service at 19h00 in the sanctuary. Come and discover the good news of Lent: “Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you.”

In Christ,

Scott
Bible readings for February

4 February  Fifth Sunday after the Epiphany
Isaiah 40:21-31
Psalm 147:1-11, 20c
1 Corinthians 9:16-23
Mark 1:29-39

11 February  Transfiguration Sunday
2 Kings 2:1-12
Psalm 50:1-6
2 Corinthians 4:3-6
Mark 9:2-9

14 February  Ash Wednesday
Joel 2:1-2, 12-17 or Isaiah 58:1-12
Psalm 51:1-17
2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10
Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

18 February  First Sunday in Lent
Genesis 9:8-17
Psalm 25:1-10
1 Peter 3:18-22
Mark 1:9-15

25 February  Second Sunday in Lent
Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16
Psalm 22:23-31
Romans 4:13-25
Mark 8:31-38 or Mark 9:2-9

Prayer Chain Team

Do you have a prayer request for our Prayer Team?
If so, please forward your prayer by email to prayerrequests@acparis.org.
Your prayer request will remain strictly private and confidential.
Prayer is powerful. We are here for you.

If you would like someone to pray with you after services, a Prayer Team member is available.
Meet in the chapel next to the theater.

BEHOLD, I AM MAKING ALL THINGS NEW.
REVELATION 21:5
Building a wall …of peace
by the Rev. Lewis Poag
Visiting Pastor

Recently, while on a walk near the Eiffel Tower with my wife and one of our daughters, we discovered a monument that was brand new to us called “The Wall of Peace.” Those who live in Paris would tell us that the Wall isn’t new at all. It was dedicated in the year 2000, by President Jacques Chirac. But for us it was a new discovery, and one that I was excited to find.

If you look at the photo of the “Wall” you will note that it is a work of modern art (by artist Clara Walter and architect Jean-Michel Wilmotte) that doesn’t exactly resemble a “wall.” It features large sheets of glass, a great number of standing columns, as well as two walls of wood, glass and stainless steel. On all of these elements (and what excites me about them) is the word “Peace” inscribed in 49 languages and 18 alphabets. For me, “Peace” writ large in many of the world’s major languages is a wonderful symbol, both of the Christian faith, as well as a longing of the human heart that is ageless.

The location of the monument adds to the power of the symbol because it stands upon the Champs de Mars (named for the Roman god of war) in front of the Ecole Militaire, a school for training soldiers. What an appropriate place to be drawn to the hope for shalom on earth. It also offers an opportunity for prayer and meditation. The Wall was designed for leaving written prayers and messages, similar to the Wailing Wall in Israel, as proposed on its website: www.wallforpeace.org.

While doing some research about the “Mur pour la Paix,” I learned that Ms. Walter and Mr. Wilmott have collaborated on two other peace monuments. One, called The Tower of Peace, is in the center of Sennaya Square, in St Petersburg, Russia. Another, the Ten Gates of Peace, is in Hiroshima, Japan, set aside for remembering the atomic blast that destroyed much of that city in 1945. I am grateful for their efforts to keep the desire for peace before us, and for creating symbols that focus on bringing people together rather than separating them. This month, as the season of Lent begins, I plan to take advantage of visiting the Wall of Peace as part of my Lenten disciplines. Being surrounded by signs of peace will help me maintain that pursuit which is so important for these times.

Another opportunity for considering the ways of peace during Lent will be included in our programming at the ACP in March. Using modern technology, we will join the Interfaith Peace Conference at Lake Junaluska, NC, now in its ninth year. “Meeting the Other: Can We Talk?” is the theme for 2018. It was chosen in response to increasing polarization in American society and, unfortunately, in many other countries, including France. The conference will focus on the art of building bridges. Three keynote speakers, each representing one of the Abrahamic faiths, will share perspectives on how the Jewish, Islamic and Christian traditions can lead us toward peaceful attitudes and practices.

We will meet on three consecutive Thursday evenings beginning on 8 March, from 19h30 to 21h00 in room G-1. The evening will start with a video presentation by one of the conference speakers, followed by a discussion of the presentation. This class is open to all who are interested, and no reservations are required. More information about the Interfaith Peace Conference and the keynote speakers is available at lakejunaluska.com. Click on Events, then Spiritual Enrichment.

Shalom, Salam, Peace,
Lewis

See next page for Robert Frost’s “Mending Wall.”
Would you like to help out at the Friday Mission Lunch?

Every Friday from 10h to 14h, the Mission Lunch Program provides a free, cooked lunch to the homeless or hungry in Paris at the American Cathedral. An ACP team of volunteers organizes the lunch on the second Friday of each month. We also welcome volunteers every week for cooking, serving, and cleaning-up. Please contact Kristie Worrel at fridaymissionlunch@gmail.com if you are interested in volunteering.

Mending Wall, by Robert Frost

Something there is that doesn’t love a wall,  
That sends the frozen-ground-swell under it,  
And spills the upper boulders in the sun;  
And makes gaps even two can pass abreast.  
The work of hunters is another thing:  
I have come after them and made repair  
Where they have left not one stone on a stone,  
But they would have the rabbit out of hiding,  
To please the yelping dogs. The gaps I mean,  
No one has seen them made or heard them made,  
But at spring mending-time we find them there.

I let my neighbor know beyond the hill;  
And on a day we meet to walk the line  
And set the wall between us once again.  
We keep the wall between us as we go.  
To each the boulders that have fallen to each.  
And some are loaves and some so nearly balls  
We have to use a spell to make them balance:  
‘Stay where you are until our backs are turned!’  
We wear our fingers rough with handling them.

Oh, just another kind of outdoor game,  
One on a side. It comes to little more:  
There where it is we do not need the wall:  
He is all pine and I am apple orchard.  
My apple trees will never get across  
And eat the cones under his pines, I tell him.  
He only says, ‘Good fences make good neighbors.’  
Spring is the mischief in me, and I wonder  
If I could put a notion in his head:  
‘Why do they make good neighbors? Isn’t it  
Where there are cows? But here there are no cows.  
Before I built a wall I’d ask to know  
What I was walling in or walling out,  
And to whom I was like to give offense.

Meeting the Other: Can We Talk?

The Interfaith Peace Conference held in March at Lake Junaluska, North Carolina, will focus on the art of building bridges. Three keynote speakers, each representing one of the Abrahamic faiths, will share perspectives on how the Jewish, Islamic and Christian traditions can lead us toward peaceful attitudes and practices. The ACP will organize its own discussions around three of these presentations. Meeting on Thursdays on 8, 15 and 22 March, from 19h30 to 21h00, participants will watch a video presentation by one of the conference speakers, and Lewis Poag will lead a discussion around the presentation.

This class is open to all who are interested, and no reservations are required. More information about the Interfaith Peace Conference and the keynote speakers is available at lakejunaluska.com. Click on Events, then Spiritual Enrichment.
In his early 20s, after looking into different religions, traveling to different parts of the world and questioning many of his assumptions about life, Greg Millikan had an encounter with hearing Jesus’ voice that he couldn’t intellectually deny and led him to rethink everything. God was in the room, now what?

This led to a season of God significantly softening Greg’s heart and of a growing awareness of God’s presence physically. As these tangible encounters with God’s love and power intensified, Greg began a gradual process of sharing this with others in multiple ministry roles as an ordained pastor in the Presbyterian Church (USA). What initially was a “Peter getting out the boat and standing on water” type of experience became a more abiding reality as Greg learned to share what was in him with others, not just in church settings, but in everyday life.

This pursuit has led to in-depth biblical and theological study and spending time with different Christian communities around the world to learn about others’ experiences of God’s presence and power.

Greg is a PhD candidate in practical theology at Durham University in the UK. He has studied scripture and theology at the University of Saint Andrews in Scotland; received his Masters of Divinity from Regent College in Vancouver, BC; and his undergraduate degree from the University of Washington. Greg is ordained in the Presbyterian Church USA. He, his wife, Alison, and their four kids are currently living in Bend, Oregon.

Note: Greg is also preaching at ACP on Sunday, 11 February. - Rev. Tim Vance, Associate Pastor

Did you miss any of ACP’s Thurber Lectures this year? You can still enjoy our amazing speakers and discussions. The archived videos are available on the ACP website at acparis.org, under “Prayer & Learning.”
News from Pune, India
by Pascale Deforge

You may have heard of our mission work in Pune, India, and the Deep Griha Society (DGS). For the last few years I’ve been organizing mission trips from Paris to India as part of the ACP Mission Outreach Committee, with much-appreciated support from the congregation. Let me catch you up with the latest news from the children of City of Child.

My neighbor Jenice, the owner of an Indian entertainment facility, blessed us. On being asked, she first offered a discount to the Sanskruti cultural park, but when two weeks later, I told her we had not been able to raise enough funds to go, she replied: Be my guests! So 60 children and staff spent a fun, tasty and joyful day at Sanskruti for free. As the food was included, the boys ate without stopping. Amazing grace of God, and provided by my Muslim neighbor!

During that same weekend dedicated to Christmas, children read Christmas Bible stories, colored and painted Christmas drawings, sang Christian songs (in English and Hindi), watched a Christmas video and learned how to bake chocolate cake, which we all shared together the evening of our Christmas celebration.

The kids were so proud to decorate the Church and Christmas tree that they decorated themselves as well!

I gave each of them little gifts and took the opportunity to tell them that Jesus is the real gift of Christmas and to not forget him when they need help in their lives.

With some of the teenagers, I have precious friendships as a listening friend, and I am blessed by their trust and love. The little children call me “Adji,” which means grandmother. I believe I have found who I am with them: a Christian grandma!

When we read Bible stories, one boy will say a prayer to end our morning “Church time.” One day, little Amit, 6 years old, prayed in Marathi, and I was so touched. I have found Christ in this underprivileged boy. Once again, I have the feeling I am in the Kingdom of God. Assuredly, Jesus loves the little ones.

Volunteer for the Breakfast and Sandwich Ministry

The Breakfast Ministry takes place on the first two Fridays/Saturdays of each month, with preparation on Friday at 19h, and distribution on Saturday at 8h.

The Sandwich Ministry takes place on the last two Fridays/Saturdays of each month, with preparation on Friday at 19h, and distribution on Saturday at 13h.

Contact: sandwichministryacp@gmail.com
A vacation in Africa serving the Lord... Why not you?  
by Patti Lafage

Do you have energy, love, and skills to share? Would you spend some of your vacation time to serve God by serving others? Would you like to impact the lives of children, caregivers, teachers, and missionaries at one of the Rafiki Villages in Africa?

ACP supports Rafiki Foundation Inc., a US-based Christian organization that operates ten “Training Villages” in ten English-speaking African countries. Each village is home to between 60 and 100 orphaned or vulnerable children, and includes schools from nursery to secondary levels, as well as teacher training colleges known as RICE (Rafiki Institute for Classical Education). Rafiki also offers income-earning opportunities for needy African women. Each person at Rafiki - children, staff, teachers, missionaries - studies the Bible daily to know God. Thanks to donors from all over the world, three to five full-time missionaries and an average of 50 African national employees, called by God to each village, make it all work. Is He calling you?

Be a “MiniMissionary!”

You, your energy, your skills, and your love are needed. Come join us for a short-term mission – 2 weeks to 6 months or more.

What do MiniMissionaries (MMs) do? You can use whatever skills the Lord has given you. Can you sing, read to children, cook? Are you artistically inclined? Or do you prefer building things, fixing things, have good organizational skills or special technical or other skills? You can work with our older children to build playground equipment or a chicken coop, repair bicycles, or repaint buildings. Teach our food service staff new recipes. Tutor children or teacher trainees in English or math. Assist teachers with grading or even teaching. Teach music or art. Plan and produce a play. Attend meals, devotions, and church with small family groups. Be surprised!

Here are some of my favorite MM stories: Ginger, a full-time pediatric nurse, substituted for a Rafiki second-grade teacher who had to take maternity leave earlier than expected. Ginger stepped up boldly, realizing that God had brought her to Rafiki Village at that very time of need. He gave her great joy and success. Jacob became “Man Friday” for a busy school headmaster by making photocopies, escorting sick children to their cottages, helping 3-year-olds with their school lunch, and minding classrooms during teachers’ breaks.

Alan, a recently retired chemical engineer, arrived at just the right time to help analyze and overhaul the village water supply and spend time with the older boys. Sandy, a retired university librarian, has been to five different Rafiki Villages to reorganize the libraries, and train teachers and children on library systems.

A lawyer helped with high-school English composition. A financial planner uploaded new software in the computer lab and taught Bible study. MMs enjoy reading aloud to the younger kids, or just spending time answering the endless questions our children come up with.

So, why not you? Throughout 2018, you will be able to read more about the Rafiki MM program in the columns of the Spire. And for the first time, Rafiki will offer a short MiniMissionary Training in Paris in April 2019 to enable you to understand how you can serve, and whether this is a good opportunity for you.

Coming next month: “20 most-asked questions about Rafiki MiniMission service.

Patti Lafage serves as a Career Missionary at Rafiki Village Uganda. Supported by The American Church in Paris, other friends, and family since 2011, she has served as teacher, Women’s Craft Program coordinator and finance manager. She is joyfully celebrating her 70th year in 2018.

For more information about the Rafiki Foundation, see www.rafikifoundation.org
I was born in Dayton, Ohio, and from the age of 10 grew up bouncing around South Florida. I attended Southeastern University in Lakeland, Florida where I drummed for the Worship Choir, and graduated with a degree in Practical Theology. While attending Southeastern, I interned in Los Angeles, California. After graduation in 2009, I spent five years in Concord, North Carolina serving a dual position as the High School Bible teacher and the Associate Youth Pastor at Concord First Assembly.

After a deep stirring to pursue further education, I enrolled at Duke Divinity School in Durham, North Carolina. During my three years at Duke University, I lived on campus as a Graduate Resident & Resident Assistant. As a student and through Duke’s Field Education program, I had the opportunity to intern in South Africa, Chicago, and North Carolina. Despite growing up in the Assemblies of God, these internships confirmed to me that I was called to be ordained through the Disciples of Christ. In 2017, and after graduating from Duke with a Masters of Divinity degree, I enrolled at UNC Medical Center as a Chaplain Summer Intern. It was during that summer when I first felt a call to the American Church in Paris.

I am the youngest in my family, never quite hit a long-prayed-for-growth-spurt (thanks, mom), and love arroz con pollo. In my free time, I love watching sports, writing, reading (again, credit to my mother), and have a love-hate relationship with the outdoors (i.e. enjoying God's grandeur that can be felt at the top of a mountain but also terrified of the critters, bugs, and several living things one most certainly has to go through to get there [that'll preach]). Though born in Ohio, I confess to being an addict of Vernors Ginger Soda and a die-hard Michigan Wolverine fan, thanks to my father who grew up in Flint, Michigan. Lastly and significantly, I am most passionate about the intersections of theology, social justice, and the arts.

What’s going on?
Tune in to ACP Today radio

Have you ever listened to ACP Today, the American Church in Paris’ radio show? Join us on Mondays at 20h45 – this month on 5 and 19 February. The 45-minute program is an exciting and inspiring mix of music, interviews, sermon highlights, and discussion on hot topics.

We’re at 100.7 FM, Radio Fréquence Protestante, and we broadcast especially for friends who may be housebound or who would simply like more devotional time on a Monday evening. Don’t like the radio? Listen online at http://frequenceprotestante.com or tune in at your leisure via the ACP website, at www.acparis.org/ACPtoday, or the ACP mobile app.

Friends and visitors, what better way to keep in touch with the ACP family and learn about the latest ACP news? All our shows are available on our website, at www.acparis.org/acptoday. Faith Talk from Paris – it’s a kind of souvenir that never gets old.

If you have any questions, comments, ideas or would like to contribute to the show, be sure to contact us at acptoday@acparis.org.
**ACP needs a few good leaders!**

Are you called to serve on the ACP Council?

by Mark Primmer and Marie Grout

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**What is the ACP Council?**

The American Church in Paris is governed by our Pastors and our Council members. Every month the Council meets to share information and make decisions on the direction and activities of the church. Each Committee is represented at Council by a Chair and Vice Chair.

Apart from the pastors, there are 18 elected members of Council who represent seven Council committees and the Executive Committee. Each Council position is for a one-year term, with a maximum of three consecutive years on Council. The good news is that most Council members stay on Council for three years. This gives continuity and stability to the governance of ACP. Ideally, not all positions fall vacant at the same time.

**What does the Nominating Committee do?**

The Nominating Committee proposes candidates to keep the Council positions filled. The committee is made up of members from all three worship congregations in an effort to know as many members of ACP as possible. The congregation is invited to submit names of persons they believe to be willing to serve. The committee also invites members with leadership skills to step forward.

**Which Council positions will be vacant?**

In June, ACP will hold a congregational meeting. At this time, the congregation will vote for the 2018 - 2019 Council slate. This year the following Council positions will become vacant and need to be filled:

- **Moderator**
- **Human Resources - Chair**
- **Christian Education - Chair and Vice Chair**
- **Property - Vice Chair**
- **Mission Outreach - Chair and Vice Chair**

For information on Council positions, or wishing to offer your leadership skills, please contact co-chair Mark Primmer, mark.primmer@gmail.com, or co-chair Marie Grout, lafamillegrou@yahoo.com, or another member of the Nominating Committee: John Benson, Rose Burke, Dominique Grelet, Lela Losq, Christopher Wobo, and Pastor Scott Herr.

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**Serve the City Mission Project**

Are you feeling the urge to help those less fortunate around you, but not sure how? Log on to facebook.com/servethecityparis. Here you will find great opportunities to a part of the Serve the City movement of volunteers, who are seeking to show compassion and kindness to the most vulnerable in our city.
Body of Christ: What’s up in Paris

by MaryClaire King

Miracles and Science: A Symposium

In the name of science, our contemporaries refuse the possibility of miracles, yet are fascinated with unexplained wonders. How do we approach phenomena that seem to have supernatural origins? In order to talk about miracles, unexplained cures must be authenticated through a medical approach as well as a spiritual one. How can such an encounter between these two different world views take place? Symposium co-sponsored by the Association of Scientific Christians.


Martin Luther

As part of its ongoing series of discussions between a philosopher and theologians, The Oratoire du Louvre invites Sorbonne philosophy professor Philippe Büttgen to discuss Martin Luther.


Russian Orthodoxy

If you have ever wanted to participate in a Russian Orthodox mass but have been held back by the language barrier, the community of the Sainte-Geneviève Orthodox Seminary celebrates the liturgy in French every Saturday. The seminary is the first and only training institution for Russian Orthodox clergy located in Western Europe.

Saturdays, 10h. Cathédrale de la Sainte-Trinité, 1 quai Branly, 75007 Paris.

Sunday Worship at the ACP

09h00: Traditional Service, with weekly communion

11h00: Traditional Service, with choirs, children’s worship service; communion first Sunday of the month

13h30: Contemporary Service, with children’s worship service, and live band accompanying sung worship
Twist and shout

Hurry over to the Fondation Cartier for “Mali Twist,” a glimpse into the heady nightlife and youth culture that blossomed in Bamako after Mali gained its independence in 1960, as captured by gifted photographer Malick Sidibé (1936-2016). The exuberant, evocative black-and-white prints feature bell-bottom trousers, platform shoes and plenty of dazzling dance-floor moves. Allow time to savor the 60-minute documentary film “Dolce Vita Africana,” a sort of Malian “Buena Vista Social Club” in which the photographer reminisces about his journey and reunites with his pals from the good old days.


The castle of pastels

The jewel-box-like Petit Palais museum encloses a hoard of sumptuous pastels, which, due to their fragility, are rarely displayed to the public. The museum has wheeled out some 130 gems from its collection for “The Art of the Pastel, from Degas to Redon.” Far outshining the big names that get top billing in the title are a slew of exquisitely detailed portraits, lusciously rendered nudes and eerily glowing Symbolist scenes that will have you doing a double-take and admiring the subtle textures and unexpected effects achieved in this surprisingly rich medium.

Until 8 April, www.petitpalais.paris.fr

Modern magic for Mozart

The groundbreaking French-born choreographer Maurice Béjart (1927-2007) dared to update classical ballet with modern-dance-inspired wit, energy and pizazz, using jarring angles and postures to wake up dance’s tired old vernacular. The Palais des Congrès is staging a mega-production of Béjart’s dazzling dance version of the classic Mozart opera “The Magic Flute”. His ballet re-enacts the entire opera, faithfully spinning the fantastic tale of a prince’s quest to win his true love, overlaying it with a colorful visual idiom replete with Masonic and shamanistic symbols.

7-11 February at Palais des Congrès, www.bejart.ch

A dog’s year

The Chinese New Year officially begins on 16 February. Dragon dancers, noisy firecrackers and festive restaurant fare will ring in the Year of the Dog in many parts of Paris, with the action centering around Belleville and the 3rd and 13th arrondissements. The Paris Philharmonie is putting on an extravagant Chinese-themed weekend 9-11 February, featuring the 16th-century Kunqu opera “The Peony Pavilion” and a gala mega-concert by the Shanghai Chinese Opera. The Musée Guimet, which focuses on Asian art, will hold special celebrations on 17-18 February.

Details at quefaire.paris.fr/41023/nouvel-an-chinois

Catch a falling star

Need to get a little perspective? There’s nothing like gazing at a 4.5 billion year-old hunk of matter that had hurtled across hundreds of millions of miles to put one in one’s place. The show “Meteorites, from sky to earth” at the Grande Galerie de l’Évolution is brimming with fun facts about meteorites, their origin and their impact, as well as a look at how meteorites have been portrayed throughout history in art, mythology and popular culture. And to make all this stargazing up-close and personal, visitors can even touch a chunk of the moon and a little piece of Mars.

Until 10 June, www.grandegaleriedelevolution.fr

What’s up in Paris

February event listings

by Karen Albrecht

The castle of pastels

© Petit Palais

© Gregory Batardon

© Petit Palais

© Petit Palais
In 2018, two big lunar-linked festivals coincide in February. With Chinese New Year starting more than two weeks later than in 2017 and Easter coming relatively early (1 April), the former is very near the beginning of Lent: Ash Wednesday is 14 February, while the Chinese Year of the Dog starts two days later.

It’s the season of movable feasts, which depend on a lunisolar calendar. In purely lunar calendars, feast days travel through the solar year; in the Islamic calendar, for instance, Ramadan takes place this year from mid-May to mid-June, but ten years ago it roughly coincided with the solar month of September, and ten years from now it will be around February.

Lunisolar calendars, on the other hand, use both the moon phase and time of solar year to fix dates. Examples are the Hebrew calendar – a version of which determines when Easter falls, and hence Lent and Pentecost – the Buddhist calendar and the old calendars of Gaul and Germania (if you believe the Romans).

Thus, Easter is forever a spring holy day, falling as early as 22 March or as late as 25 April. The Lenten period preceding Easter is a time of self-denial, so Christian societies through the centuries have partied extra hard in the days before Lent.

This period, usually called Carnival, culminates in the celebration known as Mardi Gras (“Fat Tuesday”) or Shrove Tuesday (aka Pancake Day in the UK). Christians are meant to dedicate the day to reflection on their sins – a sort of stock-taking so that when Lent begins on the following day, Ash Wednesday, they know exactly what they need to do penance for.

Human nature being what it is, however, many historically saw Carnival as a time to stock up on the eating and behavior that would soon be denied them. To make this gluttony and merrymaking seem less shameful, masks and costumes often became a standard feature of the season. For instance, the famous Venice Carnival (27 January to 13 February, 2018) includes a contest for best mask.

Since meat was among the “fat” foods forbidden during Lent, butchers were often involved in pre-Lenten festivities. In Paris, the highlight of the Carnaval was the Promenade du Boeuf Gras (“fat steer parade”), which originally – from 1739 and probably earlier – took place on “Fat Thursday” or another day in the week before Lent. But by the early 1950s, the festivities had been abandoned.

Their rebirth came in 1998, when Basile Pachkoff, an artist, launched a Shrovetide parade in eastern Paris that combines many features of the old Carnaval de Paris and Promenade du Boeuf Gras – although usually without the bovine special guest.

As usual, this year’s Promenade du Boeuf Gras takes place on Fat Sunday – 11 February. Key ingredients include costumes, clowns, bands, choirs, etc. The 2018 theme is Les Contes de Perrault et d’ailleurs – roughly, “fairy tales by Charles Perrault and from other lands.” The parade leaves around 14h from Place Gambetta in the 20th arrondissement and finishes around 17h at République, with partying expected on the Place de la République for a few hours after that.

A mid-Lent parade takes place one month later, on 11 March: the Women’s Carnival, also known as the Fête des Reines des Blanchisseuses (queens of the laundresses, the trade honored by the historical event).

The lunar festival or spring festival known as Chinese New Year lasts a couple of weeks in China, and usually around a week in the Chinese diaspora in the West. Centuries-old traditions hold that
it’s a time to clean house, honor one’s ancestors, get the family together and eat dumplings, hot pot and special meats, depending on region.

The two main Chinese enclaves in Paris have their parades on different dates. The biggest one is in the 13th arrondissement on 25 Sunday February. It features around 40 groups totaling some 4,000 participants. Starting between 13h and 14h at 44 Avenue d’Ivry, it follows Avenue de Choisy and Boulevard Masséna, ending up back on Avenue d’Ivry.

Details are still a bit uncertain about the parade in the Belleville quarter of eastern Paris. In theory, it will take place on 17 or 18 February at around 10h30 from Métro Belleville. Keep checking www.sortiraparis.com/arts-culture/balades/guides/47124-nouvel-an-chinois-2018-a-paris-et-en-ile-de-france for updates.

Special ACP event:

Korean ensemble concert, 11 February at 17h

This concert features an ensemble of professional Korean artists sponsored by the Korean ministry of culture and the Korean Embassy in Paris. The six musicians are presenting concerts in five European countries in celebration of the opening of the Winter Olympics in Pyeongchang. Come enjoy music by Bach, Mozart, Schumann, Verdi, Fauré, Ravel and Korean folk songs. Admission is free with a free-will offering taken.
In this seminar, couples are led, inspired, and challenged to discover how God wants to use their unique marriage to make a difference. This weekend seminar will teach couples to be intentional in creating a plan together to become all God has created them to be as a couple.

The seminar will be led by the founding couple Dave and Mary Gothi. You can find out more about them here: www.TheSignificantMarriage.com

Saturday 10 March: 9h00 to 17h00
Sunday 11 March: 12h30 to 18h30

On Friday 12 and Saturday 13 January, ACP hosted the Alpha France Leadership Conference. This bi-annual national event brought together Alpha teams from across France, who attended the conference to equip their teams to run Alpha in their local churches. This weekend was an extra-special event for Alpha France as the Friday night saw them launch “Worship Central” in French, with an evening devoted to prayer and worship. What an amazing sight and sound it was to see the Sanctuary full of our French-speaking brothers and sisters from around the country, praising the Lord and worshipping together to modern worship songs entirely in French!

Participants commented on the amazing welcome that ACP extended and how much they felt refreshed, equipped and re-energised to go out and spread the Gospel to their communities.

An extra-special thank you has to go to the ACP Alpha team, past ACP Alpha Guests, members of the Young Adults, Mary Hovind-Gay and her kitchen team, and the numerous volunteers from across our ACP family who worked tirelessly in various roles to give a special ACP welcome to the participants and the national French Alpha team. Praise God for our brothers and sisters in Christ and for the wonderful things He is doing through Alpha in France.
By Karen Marin

“...clothes that can dress a woman are the arms of the man she loves. But for those who haven’t had the fortune of finding this happiness, I am there.” - Yves Saint Laurent

Living in Paris and working in the luxury goods sector, I’d been looking forward to visiting the Musée Yves Saint Laurent since I heard about its opening in October. The space formerly housed temporary exhibits for the brand and for the Pierre Bergé - Yves Saint Laurent Foundation, but it is now completely renovated and dedicated to the legacy of Saint Laurent.

In contemporary terms one would say Saint Laurent was fast-tracked in his career. He left his native Algeria in his teens to study design in Paris, and quickly became the righthand man to Christian Dior. With Dior’s untimely death in 1957, YSL was thrust into the limelight, taking over the design reins of the house when he was only 21 years old.

What a huge pressure to put on the shoulders of one so young! As many designers before and since, Yves suffered his demons and was plagued by fragile health throughout his life. By age 30 he broke with Dior, and created his own design house under the guiding influence of Pierre Bergé, the man who would become his life partner. This move freed his creative freedom, and he successfully designed key pieces inspired by mundane clothing, such as workers’ coveralls, and military and missionary uniforms. He deconstructed these basics to give us stylish versions: the Jumpsuit, the Pea Coat and the Safari Jacket. One of his most recognized designs is the scandalous “Le Smoking,” a tuxedo suit adapted for a woman in 1966, when it was still controversial for women to wear trousers.

The museum displays these and other iconic pieces, often accompanied by original runway film, but having seen the retrospective at the Petit Palais in 2010, and the recent Dior exhibit at the Musée des Arts Décoratifs, I was frankly disappointed. I expected more: More ensembles, more gowns, more accessories. After all, the entire building is dedicated to the man. Fragrance and cosmetics are inexplicably absent, and yet YSL turned the world upside down, both by naming the fragrance Opium after a narcotic, and by posing nude for his own men’s cologne.

However, fans of fashion and couture will be appeased by the collection of short films presenting behind-the-scenes interviews with key members of the YSL’s various services and ateliers. Visitors can step behind the scenes of a runway show, learn the lengthy process a salesperson endured with couture clients, understand the workings of the press and PR, and more.

The museum will certainly whet one’s appetite to learn more about this legendary designer and his body of work, but I would look forward to a future expansion of its offerings.

**Musée Yves Saint Laurent, 5 Avenue Marceau, 75016 Paris**

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Prayer Workshop

**Sunday, 18 February**

**12h15 in the ACP Library**

Pastor Jake Van Asten will guide us in a practical workshop to enhance our prayer journey. All are welcome. Childcare provided.
Originating in Left Bank studios in 1895, the Atelier Concert Series became part of the cultural activities at the American Church in Paris during the early 1930s. These concerts provide a performance opportunity in Paris for talented musicians of all nationalities.

A different program is offered each Sunday evening at 17h00, September through November and January through June. There is no admission fee, but a free-will offering is taken at the door to support the series. For the schedule of concerts, see http://acparis.org
An exhibition focusing on one of Malaysia’s greatest living artists opens at the Center Pompidou in late February, putting the spotlight on art from Southeast Asia.

"Latiff Mohidin: Pago Pago (1960-1969)," running 28 February to 28 May, is a project of the Pompidou Center and the National Gallery Singapore, which jointly mounted “Re-framing Modernism: Painting from Southeast Asia, Europe and Beyond” in Singapore in 2016; the Paris show is presented as an extension of the earlier exhibition.

Covering nearly 70 artworks and documents from the main public and private collections of Singapore and Malaysia, the Paris exhibition is the Singapore museum’s first traveling exhibition.

Latiff Mohidin (b. 1941) is a contemporary painter and sculptor, and also a poet. The period covered by the exhibition includes the time he spent studying art in West Berlin, from 1961 to 1964. Upon his return to Asia, he began traveling in Southeast Asia and launched a series of works and writings he called "Pago Pago," which he completed in 1969. The exhibition’s end point is the beginning of his next career stage, marked by his winning a scholarship from France’s Ministry of Culture to study etching in Paris.

The works in “Pago Pago” were influenced by both German Expressionism and the ancestral imagery of the artist’s upbringing in rural Malaysia, then part of the Malayan Union, a British territory. Eugene Tan, director of the National Gallery Singapore, has said of Latiff Mohidin that “he is one of the first artists of the region to have imagined ‘Southeast Asia’ as a distinct aesthetic realm.” Those who have traveled in Southeast Asia may find that the exhibition triggers many memories.

Centre Pompidou, 28 February to 28 May.
Would you like to propose articles, write, proofread, do layout or take photos? Contact Alison Benney at Spire@acparis.org.

Note: Deadline for the February edition of the Spire is Wednesday, 24 January.
Looking for fellowship with other young adults, between 19 and 30 years old? Join the Young Adults group every Tuesday evening at 18h30, at the ACP. For more information, contact interimyouthpastor@acparis.org.

Looking for help with your French or your English language skills? Join the ACP Conversation Course every Thursday night, from 18h-19h30, at the ACP. Just show up. Or, for more info, contact: Haig Gorton at haiggorton@yahoo.com.

The Movie Discussion Group
19h30, Thursday 22 February
Room G2

This month’s movies to see beforehand:
Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri (3 Billboards, Les Panneaux de la vengeance), La Douleur, The Insult (L’Insulte), and Phantom Thread
Contact: movies@acparis.org

As we enter the New Year and start to think about our resolutions for 2018, why not make Alpha part of your new year’s resolutions? You could commit to praying for the course or helping out in the kitchen or as part of the welcome team. And you could even extend an invite to someone you know. We all know someone who has questions about life and faith but it isn’t always easy to discuss our faith with family, friends and colleagues. Giving them an Alpha invite and personally inviting them along to the Alpha Course is one of the easiest ways to reach out and give someone you care about the opportunity to come and discover more about God.

The course runs weekly on Thursday evening, with a meal at 19h00 followed by a video talk and small group discussions.

Over 29 million people around the world have done Alpha – will you come and join the adventure? For more information, please contact alpha@acparis.org. Details about the Launch Party and the course are available via the website at acparis.org and our social media channels.
### Special Events and Monthly Meetings and Concerts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event Type</th>
<th>Details</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Contact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Adult Fellowship</strong></td>
<td>Singles and pairs, join us for fellowship every first Friday of the month in a lounge café setting, sharing testimonies, talking about the highs and lows of your life with brothers and sisters in Christ.</td>
<td>Friday 2 Feb</td>
<td>From 20h email contact for location</td>
<td></td>
<td>Daphne 30plusfellowship @acparis.org</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Concert</strong></td>
<td>Free admission, with free-will offering Maria BUNDGÅRD - piano</td>
<td>Saturday 3 Feb</td>
<td>20h Sanctuary</td>
<td></td>
<td>Fred Gramann <a href="mailto:music@acparis.org">music@acparis.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Atelier Concert</strong></td>
<td>Free admission, with free-will offering Kyungmin PAIK - piano; Didier MATRY - organ</td>
<td>Sunday 4 Feb</td>
<td>17h Sanctuary</td>
<td></td>
<td>Fred Gramann <a href="mailto:music@acparis.org">music@acparis.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ACP Today: Faith Talk in Paris radio show</strong></td>
<td>Tune in for inspiring music and interviews.</td>
<td>Monday 5 Feb</td>
<td>20h45-21h30</td>
<td></td>
<td>100.7 FM, Radio Fréquence Protestante</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Friday Mission Lunch (volunteers needed)</strong></td>
<td>Every Friday a hot, nutritious meal is prepared for the homeless and needy. ACP is responsible for the meal on the second Friday of each month, but we are grateful for help with cooking, serving, and cleaning up every Friday.</td>
<td>Friday 9 Feb</td>
<td>10h-14h The American Cathedral</td>
<td></td>
<td>If you are interested, please first contact: Kristie Worrel <a href="mailto:fridaymissionlunch@gmail.com">fridaymissionlunch@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ACP MOPS (mothers of children ages newborn-18)</strong></td>
<td>Free childcare available.</td>
<td>Friday 9 Feb</td>
<td>10h-12h</td>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:mops@acparis.org">mops@acparis.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Women's Retreat - Experiencing God More in Every Day Life (Registration is closed)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>Saturday 10 Feb</td>
<td>9h00 - 6h00 Thurber Room</td>
<td></td>
<td>Kim Herr <a href="mailto:women@acparis.org">women@acparis.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Atelier Concert</strong></td>
<td>Free admission, with free-will offering Yoonjeong SIN - soprano; Dongyong NOH - baritone; Jonghoo HEO - baritone; Sooyeon CHOI - oboe Sunhye CHUNG - piano; Jihye KIM - piano</td>
<td>Sunday 11 Feb</td>
<td>17h Sanctuary</td>
<td></td>
<td>Fred Gramann <a href="mailto:music@acparis.org">music@acparis.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Thurber Lecture - Rev. Greg Millikan will speak on “God is in the Room: The Biblical Theme of God’s Presence with us in Everyday Life.”</strong></td>
<td>Rev. Greg Millikan is a PhD candidate in practical theology at Durham University in the UK. He has studied Scripture and theology at the University of Saint Andrews in Scotland; received his Masters of Divinity from Regent College in Vancouver, BC; and his undergraduate degree from the University of Washington. Greg is ordained in the Presbyterian Church USA. He, his wife, Alison, and their four kids are currently living in Bend, Oregon.</td>
<td>Tuesday 13 Feb</td>
<td>19h meal; 19h45 program Thurber Room</td>
<td></td>
<td>Tim Vance associatepastor @acparis.org</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Ash Wednesday Service</strong></td>
<td>Special service marking the beginning of a 40-day time of fasting in preparation for the celebration of Easter.</td>
<td>Wednesday 14 Feb</td>
<td>19h Sanctuary</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Multicultural Couples Potluck Dinner</strong></td>
<td>Fellowship and discussion on topics such as raising bicultural/bilingual children and cultural differences. Bring a dish to share.</td>
<td>Friday 16 Feb</td>
<td>20h Thurber Room</td>
<td></td>
<td>Monica Bassett &amp; Anja Wyss multicultural @acparis.org</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# ACP Spire Diary – February 2018

## events, meetings & concerts (cont.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Writers’ Group</strong></td>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>14h30 - 16h30</td>
<td>Room G2</td>
<td>Tendayi Chirawu <a href="mailto:writers@acparis.org">writers@acparis.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Concert</strong> Free admission, with free-will offering Lauren LIBAW - soprano; Enrico CICCONOFRI - piano</td>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>20h</td>
<td>Sanctuary</td>
<td>Fred Gramann <a href="mailto:music@acparis.org">music@acparis.org</a></td>
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<td><strong>Prayer Workshop</strong> Pastor Jake Van Asten will guide us in a practical workshop to enhance our prayer journey. Childcare provided</td>
<td>Sunday</td>
<td>12h15</td>
<td>Library</td>
<td>Jake Van Asten youthintern @acparis.org</td>
</tr>
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<td><strong>Atelier Concert</strong> Free admission, with free-will offering John MURATORE - guitar</td>
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<td>Sanctuary</td>
<td>Fred Gramann <a href="mailto:music@acparis.org">music@acparis.org</a></td>
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<td><strong>Movie Discussion Group</strong> Movie selection: <em>Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri</em> (<em>3 Billboards, Les Panneaux de la vengeance</em>), <em>La Douleur</em>, <em>The Insult</em> (<em>L’Insulte</em>) and <em>Phantom Thread</em> See any or all at your leisure; join the group for discussion.</td>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>19h30</td>
<td>Room G2</td>
<td>Rebecca Brite <a href="mailto:movies@acparis.org">movies@acparis.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Atelier Concert</strong> Free admission, with free-will offering Frédéric GONCALVES - baritone; Debra TAKAKJIAN-piano</td>
<td>Sunday</td>
<td>17h</td>
<td>Sanctuary</td>
<td>Fred Gramann <a href="mailto:music@acparis.org">music@acparis.org</a></td>
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</tbody>
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### Bring up the Bulletin

Did you forget your copy of the Bulletin in the pew? Want to find the email of one of the pastors? Confirm the date of an event? Do it with the ACP app!

1. Download the app, and launch it.
2. Click on “messages” at the bottom.
3. Click on “Bulletins” at the top.
Discover how God wants to use your unique marriage to make a difference. In The Significant Marriage Weekend Seminar you will learn to be intentional in creating a plan together to become all God has created you to be as a couple.

€175/per couple
Includes Sat. & Sun. childcare, food, drinks and workbooks.

* Partial Scholarships available upon request.

Paris, France
MAR 10-11
Saturday, 10 March: 9h00 - 17h00
Sunday, 11 March: 12h30 - 18h00
Location: The American Church in Paris (ACP)
65 quai d’Orsay, 75007 Paris, France
Register online at www.acparis.org
Questions: email secretary@acparis.org