Thoughts from The Rev. Dr. Scott Herr

Bible readings for February

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Cover photo ©Fred Gramann

Friday 8 February: Come hear live music at the ACP Café, with Still Point and friends, including Devon Graves. Free entry. Dinner & drinks available.
Dear Members and Friends of the ACP,

The season of Epiphany will end on Mardi Gras (aka “Fat Tuesday”) which is March 5 this year. The tradition has been to celebrate and “party hearty” (to “fatten up”) because Lent is a time of fasting and penance. Yes... and no. Even in this season of Epiphany we are pointed to a deeper meaning of Lent. Epiphany is the season when we celebrate the Light and Revelation of God through Jesus Christ. He is the “Light of the World.” Through Jesus the mystery of the ages has been revealed and at the heart of who God “is,” is Self-Giving Love.

This year the Association of International Churches in Europe and the Middle East (AICEME) Pastors and Spouses’ Conference is hosted by St. Andrew’s United Church of Cairo. Participating in this annual conference is one of the gifts of our congregation being members of the AICEME. Pastors from sister churches around Europe and the Middle East will be arriving in Cairo on Monday, 4 February.

We will visit the Wadi Natrun monasteries and meet with Coptic Christians. We will join monastic communities for morning and evening worship, small-group conversations, lectures, workshops, and some free time. We will join the congregation of St. Andrew’s United Church for worship, have our AICEME annual meeting. We will visit the Egyptian Museum, Ibn Tulun Mosque and walk in the Khan al Khalili as well as visit Al Ashar Park and the Pyramids of Sakkara and Giza. Some of us will visit Aswan and visit the ancient temple of the goddess Isis at the Island of Philae, sail to Kom Ombo and Edfu. We will visit other ancient archeological sites, including Luxor, and the Valley of the Kings before returning home.

This is a tremendous privilege and I want to express my deep gratitude for our congregation allowing us to participate in this conference each year, as it allows us to see different contexts for ministry and mission in parts of the world that I would normally not be able to visit.

This year is particularly important as the Coptic Church is part of what is known as the “Forgotten Church,” the Body of Christ in the Arabic-speaking world. Samuel Tadros says this, “Figures are hard to determine, but the region from Egypt to Turkey was estimated to be 20% Christian by the beginning of the 20th century. Today? Around three and a half percent. Very few today would argue that Middle East Christianity is not facing an existential crisis.” It will be important to listen to their stories and learn what it means to live faithfully as a minority which experiences persecution and oppression.

Some of the disciplines we explore in the season of Lent are daily practices for the Coptic Christians: meditation on Scripture, praying, fasting, and serving the poor. I learned a long time ago that the meaning of Lent is “Spring,” as the word comes from the Old English, lencten, or “the lengthening of days.” In other words, Lent is supposed to be life-giving, and I pray that even a brief visit to our brothers and sisters in the Arab church will be mutually life-giving.

Perhaps we will be able to better understand what some of our refugee brothers have gone through in their home countries? Perhaps our prayers will expand to include those who are persecuted for their faith around the world? Perhaps we might be motivated to continue to welcome the stranger with more compassion, or to give to missions, or serve in ministry more generously? We’ll see.

In the meantime, I appreciate your prayers. And we promise to bring home some life-giving and light-s其他的stories of God’s self-giving love to share!

In Christ,

Bible readings for February

3 February   Presentation of the Lord
4th Sunday after the Epiphany
Malachi 3:1-4
Psalm 84 or Psalm 24:7-10
Hebrews 2:14-18
Luke 2:22-40

10 February   5th Sunday after the Epiphany
Isaiah 6:1-8, (9-13)
Psalm 138
1 Corinthians 15:1-11

17 February   6th Sunday after the Epiphany
Jeremiah 17:5-10
Psalm 1
1 Corinthians 15:12-20
Luke 6:17-26

24 February   7th Sunday after the Epiphany
Genesis 45:3-11, 15
Psalm 37:1-11, 39-40
1 Corinthians 15:35-38, 42-50

Did you know you can follow the American Church in Paris on social media?

@AmChurchParis  /AmericanChurchParis
We are blessed to be in ministry in a wondrous and beautiful city. We are blessed to be stewards of a magnificent and historic building. We are blessed by music ministry under the direction of Fred Gramann. We are also blessed by ACP’s commitment to hospitality and outreach. All these blessings lead us to bless couples from around the world and every walk of life as they begin or reconfirm their commitment to the covenant of marriage.

As Pastor Scott said in his message on 20 January, ACP averaged more than one wedding blessing or marriage vow renewal every day in 2018, adding up to 373 ceremonies.

Of course, these don’t happen every day. Sundays are set aside for congregational worship, fellowship, and study for all ages. Wedding blessings during the eight months from April through November average a bit more than 42 each month. The busiest month was June, with 61 blessings. At such times, as many as four wedding blessings can be scheduled on one day, with services at 9h, 11h, 13h, and 15h.

Every wedding blessing is a special moment of worship with the movement of God’s grace, and lovely stories (just ask us!).

American, Canadian, Japanese, Chinese, British, Filipino, Norwegian, Zimbabwean, Thai, Australian and Singaporean citizens are among the couples who travel to France to be wed at ACP.

Once our exceptional Wedding Ministry Coordinator, Emma Barton, confirms and administers arrangements, Pastors Jim and Odette meet with the couples, counsel on spiritual matters, and officiate at the weddings with Fred providing music. We work with individual couples, with wedding agencies, as well as with members of our congregation.

At one vow renewal ceremony the attendants were the couple’s grandchildren and the congregation their children and extended family. At one wedding blessing the ceremony was live-streamed to 75 family members in China.

Each couple receives a Bible, a certificate of marriage blessing, the Unity Candle, and a DVD about ACP. Our registry draws couples who come to the church to visit where their parents, and even grandparents were wed.

There are already 176 weddings confirmed for 2019.

The donations received from these wedding blessings support the mission of ACP.
Learning the ropes
by Tom WilsCam, Venture Academie

Find a job, understand French work culture, and be optimistic: Those are the goals of a new program at the ACP to help refugees and immigrants find work in France. TIEO (Trouver du travail, s’Intégrer à la culture du travail française et Etre Optimiste) is a four-week course, offered two half-days per week (9h to 13h), in English. It was created by a group of professionals, some of who are members of ACP. The course begins the week of 12 February and will be offered every other month throughout the year.

The idea was inspired over a year ago by Jean Taquet’s ministry to help refugees, immigrants, and expats get their legal paperwork together to stay in France, or to receive their carte de séjour in order to work legally in France. It was clear that many of the refugees and immigrants participating in this clinic were not receiving proper training from the government, which provides very limited (if any) training on how to find work. In fact, the government really only offers basic information to refugees on how to create a CV.

So, Venture Académie asked some of the folks who work with Jean (such as Jenn Cavanaugh, Daniel Tostado, and Ursula Perrier), plus a few other ACP members (Carlotta Fea, Carline Cuozzi, Jeff Waters) to pull together a course, with feedback by expats and immigrants who had struggled with the same challenge when they first came to France.

The course addresses specific strategies on how to find a job, including how to network, how to interview properly, and how to write a motivational letter, plus best practices for using Google, LinkedIn, and other job-search sites. We also discuss how to integrate with the French work culture, and how to stay optimistic and positive during the job-search period. Serve the City provides the students lunch each day, and we hope that by late 2019, the French government will give us a grant so we can also pay for instructors.

There are three things we need to make the program most effective. First, we need instructors. Second, we need students (whether they are refugees, immigrants or expats). Third, we need to spread the word outside the ACP network about the program so others can participate in this complementary course. If anyone is interested in participating or learning more, please contact me at tom@ventureacademie.com.

French language classes

French classes are held on Tuesdays at ACP, from 18h30-20h, taught by Francois Pierre and Yasmina Rezkallah. The class is intended for beginners who are committed to learning French. Attendance is limited to 20. The annual fee is €80, and a book purchase is necessary. There is no age or nationality restriction, and no pre-requirements.

Remember, learning a new language requires significant work. There is no such thing as “French made easy.” Therefore, weekly attendance is a requirement and ongoing progress is expected. If you are interested, please come along to a Tuesday night class for a sample class.
Welcome Dinners were launched by the ACP’s Refugee Ministry. The project was created as a way to help us “break barriers by breaking bread with refugees.” We aim to have 12 dinners (96 participants) blessed by this ministry project in the first year. The hope is for members of the American Church in Paris to get to know one another better, and to meet and get to know refugees. In one evening, you can experience the blessing of extending hospitality, meeting Christ in the stranger, and forming new relationships in the breaking of bread.

The aim is to invite church members to host dinners in their homes in order to bring together refugees living in and around Paris and fellow ACP-goers in a warm, casual setting. Dinners typically include eight people: the host plus three local people, and four refugees under the auspices of the Jesuit Refugee Service.

The Refugee Ministry makes recommendations to the Mission Outreach Committee on ways to motivate members of our congregation to help alleviate the refugee crisis in Paris. The team is looking for new members. If you would like to join or see what we do, please contact Ursula Perrier at ursulaperrier@gmail.com.

100 Nights of Welcome
by Daniel Tostado

100 Nights of Welcome has successfully accomplished its first 50 nights, welcoming 10 guests each night, referred to us by the Jesuit Refugee Service. The gentlemen we have been welcoming are so well-mannered and respectful, and there have been no negative incidents.

There have been ups and downs. Samba, from Mali, helps us collect food nightly from the grocery store down the street. Amir, from Afghanistan, said one morning that his feet were cold, and I mentioned that to a few volunteers; that evening he had brand new Timberland boots waiting for him at the reception desk. Diallo, from Guinea, told me after his first night sleeping over, "I slept like a king!"

When Abdulshekur, from Somalia, walked into the gym, his face lit up to see the beds and the layout. But due to the vagaries of the French administrative system, his asylum application got moved to the Préfecture de Dijon, so just like that, he had to move there to obtain asylum, and we miss him.

The team is in need of more male overnight volunteers to help with hospitality while our guests are here in the gym, from 22h to 7h. If you are able to volunteer, please email Daniel Tostado at danieltostado1@gmail.com.
IN CONCERT
Tuesday, February 5th at 20h00

www.ensemblelumina.fr

American Church in Paris
65, quai d’Orsay 75007 Paris

lumina@acparis.org
www.ensemblelumina.fr
Valentine’s Day remains
by Alison Benney

Going somewhere romantic for Valentine’s Day? Try Dublin, where the patron saint of romance resides – at least, a few relics of him – in Whitefriar Street Church.

Saint Valentine, the symbol of romantic love, was a priest in the third century and one of the many early Christian martyrs. But are these relics authentic? The name was not uncommon; a bouquet of almost 40 other Saint Valentines are listed in the Biographical Dictionary of Saints, including three women, one 40-day pope, and a close competitor in Terni, Italy, who is the patron saint of epilepsy.

Most sources agree that Dublin’s St. Valentine is probably the one about whom Roman Martyrology reports: "After performing many miraculous cures and giving much wise counsel, he was beaten and beheaded" on 14 February, 269 A.D. (note to baby-boomers: exactly 1,700 years before the Summer of Love).

According to legend, Valentinus’ martyrdom was due to sanctifying illegal weddings, flouting the edict of Emperor Claudius II who believed that bachelors made better soldiers and so forbade young men from marrying. After other defiant acts of Christianity, including trying to convert the emperor himself, Valentine was arrested and thrown into a Roman jail. While there, he allegedly healed the blind daughter of a judge, to whom he signed his farewell letter "from your Valentine."

Yet it wasn’t until the 14th century that Hallmark Cards got its future marketing break, when the medieval custom of exchanging love notes was first recorded by Chaucer in his "Parliament of Foules." According to Wikipedia, the earliest surviving valentine is a 15th century rondeau written by Charles, Duke of Orléans, to his wife, called “A Farewell to Love,” which starts out:

Je suis desjia d’amour tanné,
Ma tres doulce Valentinée,

Of course, one could also do a romantic pilgrimage to Rome, as traces of St. Valentine remain; for instance, you can see the flower-crowned skull of St Valentine in the Basilica di Santa Maria in Cosmedin; visit the Gate of St. Valentine, now called Porta del Popolo; descend into the catacombes de Saint-Hyppolyte, or enter the ruins of the church of St. Valentine on via Flaminia, where he was beheaded.

St. Valentine’s remains have also traveled to Madrid, where his relics can be seen at St. Anton’s Church, to Prague in the Basilica of St. Peter and St. Paul, as nearby as Belgium in the Église Saint-Valentin-de-Rome, in Montignies-sur-Sambre, or as farther away in the Greek island of Lesbos.

If travel is not an option, stay home and watch an old movie with the 1920s Hollywood heartthrob, Rodolfo Gugliemi di Valentina d’Antonguolla, better known as Rudolph Valentino. Did you know that the modern-day fashion designer Valentino was named for the film star? Plus, his signature red dresses have become known in the fashion industry as "Valentino red."

So how did St. Valentine’s relics arrive in Dublin? Thanks to a gesture of appreciation in 1836 from Pope Gregory XVI to an inspiring Irish priest, Father John Spratt, some of the remains of St. Valentine were disinterred from the Saint Hippolyte Cemetery on Tiburtine Way in Rome, and transferred in a reliquary to Father Spratt’s church in Dublin. And on the 14th of February each year the priest at Whitefriar Street Church offers couples a blessing of the rings, “for those who are about to get married and those who have been married for some years.”

So move over, St. Patrick, St. Brigid, St. Brendan – Saint Valentine has a touch of Irish, too. And with good reason: after all, aren’t all blushing hearts tinged with a bit of jealous green?
A celebration of friendship & light
by Angela and Dominique Grelet

Why would ACP celebrate Chinese New Year? After all, at first glance this festivity has nothing to do with the Church. Quite the contrary actually, as it spotlights a pantheon of horoscope animals, with its load of superstitions and heathen beliefs, and on top of this it may be linked with a Buddha legend.

In 1601 A.D., Matteo Ricci, the pioneer of missions to China, became the first Westerner to be invited into the Forbidden City in Beijing. He was finally “no longer a stranger,” after decades of tireless work learning the Chinese language, getting immersed in the culture, and mastering the Chinese classics. This is also the year when Ricci’s book *On Friendship*, the first book to be written in Chinese by a European, became a bestseller. Ricci wrote: “Friendship has earned more credit for me and for our Europe than anything else we have done.”

Inspired by this book and the work of missionaries to China, this February at ACP we will celebrate friendship together as part of our Chinese New Year animations.

On 3, 10, and 17 February, during the Sunday coffee fellowships, we will set up a photo booth to take “Friendship Group Portraits,” and you will be able to build artwork through origami & collage. This will get us prepared for 24 February, when we will have a “Happening” with artwork, music, and dance; a Wall of Friendship built with the artwork and collage; a calligraphy workshop; and of course, Chinese & international snacks and drinks.

This is the Chinese year of the pig, a positive symbol also for the French (Tout est bon dans le cochon!), and the ultimate symbol of family for the Chinese. This also resonates with Ephesians 2, our ACP theme this year: “You are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God’s people and also members of his household.”

But there is more. To root the Gospel in the Chinese culture, 17th century missionaries in China imagined biblical stories and built new etymologies for Chinese characters, giving them a Christian meaning. Let’s try to do the same! It happens that the Chinese New Year is also called “Spring Festival” as it marks the first day of spring in the Chinese traditional calendar. The Chinese character for spring (春) could then be decomposed in: a) the character “three” 三 let’s say this represents the triune God; b) the character for “human being”, 人; c) and finally the character for “sun,” “day,” “light,” i.e. 日.

So we could say that 春 (Spring) = 三 (God) + 人 (Man) + 日 (Light).

The “Spring Festival” could thus be re-interpreted as the “Triune God made man bringing light to the world,” filling the world with life anew. A new feast in our Christian calendar? After all, Christmas was not a Christian day originally; the date was borrowed from the Saturnalia, a pagan Roman religious day. Why couldn’t we make Spring Festival the “Day of Christ, Light of the World”? In any case, in this season between Christmas and Easter, between God made man, and God bringing new life to mankind, we will celebrate friendship, the joy of sharing our cultural riches and differences, and the joy of worshipping together.

Less than 50 years after Ricci was first invited to the Forbidden City, the Ming Dynasty was overturned by the new Qing rulers, Manchus coming from the North. The previous power transitions had been fatal to the Church in China: the Nestorian church which reached China as early as the 7th century collapsed when the Tang dynasty fell in the early 10th century; the 14th century Christians foreigners were all expelled when the Mongol Yuan were driven out in 1368.

But this time, the Christian presence in China established by Ricci and his successors has durably survived the demise of its original protectors. This speaks for the missions inculturation strategy, which is much more than a strategy: The Good News is for all cultures and each culture can enrich the celebration of the Good News. Still an extremely timely message for our day and time.

Note: The image above was inspired by the book cover for Timothy Billings’ translation of *On Friendship: One Hundred Maxims for a Chinese Prince*, published by Columbia University Press in 2009.
What’s up in Paris
February event listings
by Karen Albrecht

Op, op, and away
The Centre Pompidou’s multicolored ’70s splendor is a perfect setting for this major retrospective devoted to Hungarian-born artist Victor Vasarely (1906 -1997), hailed as the father of Op Art. Over 300 paintings, sculptures and works of architectural and graphic design explore the interplay of bold geometric forms and eye-popping color combinations, often deployed to dizzying effect. For yet more fun with geometry, also check out the Pompidou’s excellent Cubism show, which ends on 25 Feb.

Greener pastures
The sprawling annual Salon de l’Agriculture is a chance for city mice to check out how the other half lives, via a model farm, milking demonstrations and proud displays of blue-ribbon livestock, including this year’s “vache égérie” (poster cow), a fetching five-year-old Bleue du Nord named Imminence. Savor the ample opportunities to sample traditional produce from France’s regions, and check out up-to-the-minute trends in eco-friendly farming, the virtues of the “circular economy” and what could only be termed the “fast-growing field” of urban agriculture.
23 Feb-3 Mar, www.salon-agriculture.com

Sweetheart deal
Celebrate post-Valentine’s Day togetherness and prove that two actually CAN live as cheaply as one, with a little help from the second annual “Showtime in Paris” festival. Fancy some high-kicks at the Lido or the Moulin Rouge? A little Molière magic, or the rapier wit of Cyrano de Bergerac? Or perhaps you’re even ready for a walk on the wild side of French chanson with the legendary Madame Arthur. Dozens of top shows are buy-one-get-one-free, and all offer English texts or subtitles.
25 Feb-10 Mar, www.showtimeinparis.com

Don’t stop ’til you get enough
Last days to catch the show celebrating Michael Jackson’s prodigious influence on contemporary art, from the iconic Andy Warhol portrait and David LaChappelle’s fond photographic fairytale to Kehinde Wiley’s wry old-master pastiche of Michael clad in shining armor, astride a magnificent charger. Most poignant, Appau Jnr Boakye-Yiadom’s simple pair of iconic black loafers, held on precarious tippy-toes by a bunch of multicolored balloons, as magical, unique and improbable as Michael’s talent itself — and just as fragile.

Heavenly Angel(ou)
As part of its celebration of Black History Month, the Mona Bismarck American Center is hosting a tribute to the genial poet, playwright, activist and singer Maya Angelou (1928-2014). Ursuline Kairson, a jazz diva with gospel and Broadway roots, will lend her powerfully compelling voice to readings of Angelou’s poems, interspersed with tales of her colorful life and songs, reflecting the unique spirit of this African-American icon and magically wise soul.
6 Feb, 19h, www.monabismarck.org

Hot wheels
Whether you are a fantasy sports car fanatic or a nostalgic Nancy Drew yearning for a sporty maroon roadster, the 600-odd vintage vehicles on display at the Rétromobile show at Paris Expo Porte de Versailles are sure to spark your imagination. This year, a massive 1950s Berliet mega-truck and an auction of vintage motorbikes take the vroom factor up a notch, while a quaint 1899 De Dion “voiturette” harks back to the automobile’s earliest days.
6-10 Feb, www.retromobile.com
Please join the Women’s Ministry as we welcome Josephine Kajo Poggo, speaking on “Sudanese Refugees waiting for God’s answer while living in a Uganda refugee camp.” How do the South Sudanese refugees survive in unbearable conditions? Josephine visited them in the camp and wants to share with you their incredible faith and walk with God. Josephine worked for 10 years with the World Food Programme in Sudan. She is Sudanese but is now a French citizen, having been forced to flee her home country due to the war being waged there. She currently works at Charles De Gaule Airport as Agent d’escale commercial.

We begin with a time of fellowship, providing tea and coffee. If you would like to contribute a savory or sweet treat for our snack table, we would be very appreciative. Childcare is provided in G1 and all women are invited to attend. We look forward to seeing you there.

The Heritage Society

The American and Foreign Christian Union (AFCU), our US partner in ministry, has established endowment funds to help sustain our long-term ministry. Gifts from estates are a fundamental way these endowments are funded. If you would like to participate in growing these endowment funds, please contact the AFCU at AFCUHeritage@AFCUBridge.org

Monthly Sunday Women’s Bible Study

3 February, 12h15-13h15, Room F2

This study of The Lord’s Prayer is led by Teri Lee Valluy. This month’s topic is “and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.” All women are invited to attend. Childcare is provided. For more information, write to sundaywomensbible@acparis.org

The Movie Discussion Group

19h30, Thursday, 14 February

Salle G2

This month’s movies to see beforehand:
L’Incroyable histoire du Facteur Cheval,
If Beale Street Could Talk/Si Beale Street pouvait parler
Sorry to Bother You
The Favourite/La Favorite

Contact: movies@acparis.org
Greetings and blessings from the Finance, Stewardship and Development Committee (FS&D). We have been working on a few things that we would like to share with you here.

1. Make sure you are at the Congregational Meeting on 24 March, where the FS&D will present the final audited 2017 financial statements of ACP and FAACP, and the preliminary 2018 combined results. We will also submit, on behalf of the Council, the combined 2019 ACP/FAACP budget for congregational approval and answer questions you may have about church finances. You’ll learn everything you want to know about how the church receives donations and funding and spends that to further the ACP mission!

2. In response to feedback, we plan to more regularly include brief facts or observations about church finances and giving. Have you seen the snippets in the bulletins (as above)? Read the bulletin and the Spire for the latest about church finances or what we are doing in Stewardship!

3. Do you regularly attend one of the services? On Sunday 3 February we are asking the congregation to complete a short, anonymous survey as we try to learn more about congregational giving. It is anonymous, and will be helpful to the Stewardship Committee.

4. November and December were outstanding giving months at ACP – in the month of December alone YOU gave almost 25% of the total you contributed locally for the year! A HUGE THANK YOU as it partially made up for lower giving in the first 10 months of 2018. While we missed our budget (more on that at the Congregational Meeting), we missed by less than we had communicated on those thermometers we shared in October and November. THANK YOU!

5. We do want to ask the following: When you can, spread your giving throughout the year as we incur our expenses more evenly all throughout the year and giving monthly makes it easier to manage the Church finances. That said, we understand this isn’t always possible.

6. Finally, we are modernizing giving! The bulletin and our website already explain the many ways that you can give to further God’s and ACP’s mission. However, some have asked, “Who carries checks and cash anymore?” Watch your bulletin and the Spire as we make it easier to give online with a credit card linked to the ACP app, and work to implement local credit card machines and electronic credit baskets.

Do you know how much it costs to heat the ACP Church House and Sanctuary during the year? The combined electric, gas, and water bill is €85,000 a year – that is €7,033 per month! We need your regular financial support to accomplish the mission God has for us. Thank you for your gifts.

Weekly Tuesday Morning Women’s Bible Study

10h30–12h30, Catacombs

05 Feb: Lesson 3       13 Feb: Lesson 4       20 Feb: Prayer and shared lunch

Winter Break 23 Feb-11 Mar

All women are welcome to attend. If you are in need of childcare, please email women@acparis.org at least a week in advance.
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 **4 and 18 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 house-bound 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.*

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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 after each service.*

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Prayer Workshop

**Sunday 24 February, 12h30, ACP Library**

by Kerry Lieury

Did you know that there are people waiting to pray with you after the worship services every Sunday?

We are a small team trained to listen to you and pray with you. The Bible tells us that Christ is with us when we come together to lift up our joys and our sorrows. This time together is such a blessing to each of us. Do you feel that you might be called to pray for others but wonder if you've got the necessary skills?

Come join us to explore the possibility of becoming a prayer team member at our Prayer Workshop on Sunday 24 February at 12h30, when we will discuss how we can each find our personal way of praying for others if it comes from a heart for Christ.

*For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them.* Matthew 18:20
Paris Noir: African Americans in the City of Light is the most comprehensive and compelling documentary existing on the remarkable migration of pioneering African Americans to France and the impact both cultures had on each other.

Weaving stories and themes from World War I, the Jazz Age of the 1920s up to the German occupation of WWII, Paris Noir is thought-provoking storytelling that resonates in today’s social and political climate.

More than a historical documentary, Paris Noir reveals the beginning of worldwide assertion of African American culture. Directed, written and edited by critically-acclaimed documentary filmmakers Joanne Burke and David Burke, Paris Noir blends rare photographs and archival footage, exciting period music, and insightful commentary by leading scholars and experts.

Joanne Burke was a top documentary film editor for CBS, NBC, and PBS in New York for 20 years, editor also of feature films for Sidney Lumet, and co-editor of Gimme Shelter, the Maysles Brothers’ classic documentary about the Rolling Stones, as well as over 20 documentaries.

David Burke was a longtime writer/producer for CBS News 60 Minutes and other CBS and NBC programs. He is the author of several travel books. His Writers In Paris evolved into the highly praised David Burke’s Writers in Paris Walking Tours, listed as one of Lonely Planet’s Top Ten literary walks worldwide.

Since moving to Paris in 1986, the Burkes have produced, written and edited independent films together: an award-winning biopic on jazz genius Mary Lou Williams and several documentaries focussing on innovative women in developing countries.

Their “African Americans in Paris” series, a groundbreaking two-DVD set of mini documentaries, chronicles the experiences of pioneering Black Americans. The series received the award of Best Director from the prestigious Berlin Black International Cinema Film Festival in 2015.

View the film trailer: www.africanamericansinparis.com

Wednesday 13 Feb
Thurber Room, ACP
Meal at 19h;
Presentation 19h45-21h15

Thurber Lectures is an adult community gathering and growth time that is open to all.

ADULT BIBLE STUDY

Every Sunday at the ACP, 15h-17h
Reflect and focus on God’s word
Look back on how your faith was shaped
Grow as Christ’s follower and help spread His good news to the world
Find out how you can apply the Scriptures to everyday life
sundayafternoon@acparis.org
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

The first sessions of Alpha were so successful we need more volunteers to feed the multitude. Please consider volunteering on Thursday nights. Check the doodle calendar at the links below or contact alpha@acparis.org

https://doodle.com/poll/36m7a95d6k4qq9sp

**EARLY SHIFT #1**
16H - 19H KITCHEN TEAM: FOOD PREPARATION AND FINISH BY ENJOYING THE MEAL

https://doodle.com/poll/4utcp94ith4skvxv

**LATE SHIFT #2**
19H - 21H: START WITH THE MEAL THEN DISH-WASHING / KITCHEN CLEAN-UP
Rafiki children, then and now
by Patti Lafage,
ACP Missionary in Uganda

ACP supports Rafiki Foundation Inc., a US-based Christian organization that operates 10 “Training Villages” in 10 different English-speaking African countries. Each village is home to up to 100 children and includes schools from nursery to secondary levels as well as teacher training colleges. Each person at Rafiki studies the Bible daily to know God. Thanks to donors from all over the world, three to five full-time missionaries and about 50 African national employees, called by God to each village, make it all work.

In 2011, when I first started serving in Uganda, the oldest of the Rafiki Uganda children were 11 or 12. The dramatic growth spurts, physical, intellectual and spiritual, were just around the bend.

Do the math: They are now 18 or 19 and on the verge of adulthood. While the Uganda government is urging Rafiki to release all those over 18; we have so far managed to retain nearly all, enabling them to continue their schooling. As they finish at the Rafiki school, they will be invited to apply for a Rafiki-sponsored scholarship to go on to university or technical schools.

Here are a few of their stories:

**Livingstone** was the talented athlete among the children until he suffered a fractured tibia during a football match. Change of dream: now he intends to study business and finance to become a banker. On Saturdays he often helps the bookkeeper with routine tasks. “Stone” is waiting for his National Exam results which will determine the educational track he can access. Two more years of preparation, then, if he makes it and scholarship funds are available, he will apply to a university here in Kampala.

A fifth-grader in 2011, **Samson** drummed constantly, on his desk, on his knee, in the air. At 12 he began piano lessons and was soon composing. He grabbed every opportunity to learn and play any new instrument that came to the village. He studied classical music, played first violin in the orchestra, and learned to conduct. Determined to make a career in music, Samson scored very well on the international Royal Academy of Music exams. He will apply for a scholarship to the B. A. program at African Institute of Music in Kampala as soon as grades on the National Exam are announced.

A fifth-grader in 2011, **Chloé** (left, center) has her heart set on becoming a pediatrician. Eight more years of study ahead for her. **Cathy** and **Jesca** have another year to determine next steps.

**Jovan** has completed a two-year basic course in Hotel Management and is currently completing his internship at an upscale hotel near Entebbe Airport. He hopes to continue training to earn a degree.

**Prossy** and **Lillian**, both 16, have just begun as apprentices at “Maama Gift’s Bridal Salon” in the nearby town, so continue to reside at Rafiki where the familiar and safe environment they need can be provided. They are delighted.

**Nicholas** began 11th grade last year at a military boarding school in hopes that the change of environment would be good for him. Now back on track, he is confident that his National Exam results will qualify him to apply for a Rafiki scholarship, enroll in a good school for A-levels, then on to university to study law.

Each one of these young people knows that Rafiki sponsorship has brought them this far. They have plans and dreams. Please join me in praying that God will provide the means for them to continue their education.

Note: The Rafiki MiniMission training tentatively planned for April 2019 has been postponed until April 2020. If you’re interested in joining us, please contact Patti Lafage at plafage@gmail.com. For more information on Rafiki and their work in Africa, see www.rafikifoundation.org.
Fernand Khnopff, Master of the enigma

by Karen Marin

Like one-hit wonders, sometimes it’s not a painter’s name that is known, but one particular painting or an underlying theme that sticks in the mind. And so it was a pleasurable surprise to see that the Petit Palais is hosting a retrospective exhibition on Fernand Khnopff, a Belgian master of the Symbolist genre, and most familiar for his enigmatic “L’Art ou Les Caresses.”

This painting depicts a tête-à-tête between Oedipus and the Sphinx. With her leopard body sinuously stretched out on marble, she cuddles up to Oedipus, embracing him with one paw. She may be purring, but Oedipus is unmoved, staring out blindly from the canvas. Does this symbolize the age-old dilemma of resisting or giving in to temptation? Or could it be an allegory wherein man must decide whether to pursue pleasure or power? Even more perplexing is that the face of Oedipus is a self-portrait while the Sphinx is modelled after Marguerite, his sister and muse.

Khnopff’s early works centered around landscapes and portraits, and it was only later in his career that he turned to nostalgic moments and the female figure. He was clearly fascinated by women, but had an ambiguous artistic relationship with them. His female images are mostly angelic or even virtuous compared to the femme fatale figures of artists such as Gustav Klimt, who was however inspired by Khnopff. In addition to his sister and muse, the artist also worked into many paintings a bust of the Greek god of sleep, Hypnos.

The Symbolist movement, which was both artistic and literary, had its origins in Charles Baudelaire’s Fleur du Mal, a book of poetry written in 1857. Symbolist painters took diverse elements from mythology, the occult and the world of dreams to suggest a link between the physical and the spiritual worlds. These symbols had personal meaning for the artists and varied greatly.

The comingling of the arts is best represented by the painting entitled “I Lock My Door Upon Myself” which takes its name from the poem “Who Shall Deliver Me?” by Christina Rossetti, sister of Pre-Raphaelite British artist Dante Gabriel Rossetti. The key figure seems lost in thought, shutting herself away from the world for a moment of privacy and meditation. She is surrounded by symbols, from withering iris stalks to the previously mentioned bust of Hypnos, which is next to a red poppy.

Although the exhibit is arranged thematically, the recurrent and overwhelming sense of melancholy, solitude, and reflection accompany the visitor. The works of Khnopff are interspersed with works by artists of his time, from Gustave Moreau to Klimt and Von Stuck, generating a sense of reverie and contemplation.

Through 17 March at the Petit Palais, av. Winston Churchill, 75008 Paris
### Special Events and Monthly Meetings and Concerts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<th>Contact</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Adult Fellowship</strong>&lt;br&gt;Singles and pairs, join us for fellowship the 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 1 Feb</td>
<td>From 20h email contact for location</td>
<td>Daphne <a href="mailto:30plusfellowship@acparis.org">30plusfellowship@acparis.org</a></td>
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<td><strong>Women’s Monthly Bible Study</strong>&lt;br&gt;This study on the Lord’s Prayer meets once monthly. All women welcome! Free childcare is provided.</td>
<td>Sunday 3 Feb</td>
<td>12h15-13h15 F2 (first floor).</td>
<td>Teri Lee Valluy <a href="mailto:sundaywomensbible@acparis.org">sundaywomensbible@acparis.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Kids’ Monthly Bible Study</strong>&lt;br&gt;Children’s Worship leads Bible study on the first Sunday of each month for children ages 7-12. Taught in both English &amp; French.</td>
<td>Sunday 3 Feb</td>
<td>12h15-13h15 Catacombs and G2.</td>
<td>Allison Wheeler <a href="mailto:childrensworship@acparis.org">childrensworship@acparis.org</a></td>
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<td><strong>Atelier Concert</strong>&lt;br&gt;Free admission, with free-will offering&lt;br&gt;Julia HELENA - piano</td>
<td>Sunday 3 Feb</td>
<td>17h Sanctuary</td>
<td>Fred Gramann <a href="mailto:music@acparis.org">music@acparis.org</a></td>
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<td><strong>ACP Today: Faith Talk in Paris radio show</strong>&lt;br&gt;Tune in for inspiring music and interviews.</td>
<td>Monday 4 Feb</td>
<td>20h45-21h30</td>
<td>100.7 FM, Radio Fréquence Protestante</td>
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<td><strong>Ensemble Lumina Choral Concert</strong>&lt;br&gt;You are invited to a casual 30-minute evening concert to get a taste of what the ACP chamber choir has to offer. Free admission</td>
<td>Tuesday 5 Feb</td>
<td>20h Sanctuary</td>
<td>If you are interested, please first contact: Kristie Worrel <a href="mailto:fridaymissionlunch@gmail.com">fridaymissionlunch@gmail.com</a></td>
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<td><strong>Friday Mission Lunch (volunteers needed)</strong>&lt;br&gt;Each week a hot, nutritious meal is prepared for the homeless and needy. ACP is responsible for the meal on the 2nd Friday of each month, but we are grateful for help with cooking, serving, and cleaning up every Friday.</td>
<td>Friday 8 Feb</td>
<td>10h-14h The American Cathedral</td>
<td>If you are interested, please first contact: Kristie Worrel <a href="mailto:fridaymissionlunch@gmail.com">fridaymissionlunch@gmail.com</a></td>
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<td><strong>ACP MOPS (mothers of children ages newborn-18)</strong>&lt;br&gt;Free childcare available.</td>
<td>Friday 8 Feb</td>
<td>10h-12h</td>
<td><a href="mailto:mops@acparis.org">mops@acparis.org</a></td>
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<td><strong>ACP Café</strong>&lt;br&gt;Live music by the musicians of Still Point and friends. Open to all. Free entry. Dinner and drinks served. Invite your friends!</td>
<td>Friday 8 Jan</td>
<td>19h30-21h30 Theater</td>
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<td><strong>Atelier Concert</strong>&lt;br&gt;Free admission, with free-will offering&lt;br&gt;Cyrielle GOLIN - cello; Antoine MOURLAS - piano</td>
<td>Sunday 10 Feb</td>
<td>17h Sanctuary</td>
<td>Fred Gramann <a href="mailto:music@acparis.org">music@acparis.org</a></td>
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<td><strong>Thurber Lecture</strong> - In celebration of African American History Month, Joanne Burke will speak on “Paris Noir – African Americans in the City of Light.”</td>
<td>Wednesday 13 Feb</td>
<td>19h meal; 19h45 program Thurber Room</td>
<td>Tim Vance <a href="mailto:associatepastor@acparis.org">associatepastor@acparis.org</a></td>
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<td><strong>Movie Discussion Group</strong>&lt;br&gt;Movie selection: L’Incroyable histoire du Facteur Cheval, If Beale Street Could Talk, Sorry to Bother You, The Favourite. See any or all; join the group for discussion.</td>
<td>Thursday 14 Feb</td>
<td>19h30 Room G2</td>
<td>Rebecca Brite <a href="mailto:movies@acparis.org">movies@acparis.org</a></td>
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<td><strong>Monthly Sunday Women’s Fellowship:</strong>&lt;br&gt;Ladies are invited to hear Josephine Kajo Poggo speak about “Sudanese Refugees Waiting for God’s Answer While Living in a Ugandan Refugee Camp.”</td>
<td>Sunday 17 Feb</td>
<td>12h15-13h30 Thurber Room</td>
<td>Kim Herr <a href="mailto:women@acparis.org">women@acparis.org</a></td>
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<td><strong>Atelier Concert</strong>&lt;br&gt;Free admission, with free-will offering&lt;br&gt;Cécile BONNET - soprano; Naoko FUJIWARA - piano</td>
<td>Sunday 17 Feb</td>
<td>17h Sanctuary</td>
<td>Fred Gramann <a href="mailto:music@acparis.org">music@acparis.org</a></td>
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<td><strong>ACP Today: Faith Talk in Paris radio show</strong>&lt;br&gt;Tune in for inspiring music and interviews.</td>
<td>Monday 18 Feb</td>
<td>20h45-21h30</td>
<td>100.7 FM, Radio Fréquence Protestante</td>
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<td><strong>Atelier Concert</strong>&lt;br&gt;Free admission, with free-will offering&lt;br&gt;Clémentine DECOUTURE - soprano; Nicolas CHEVEREAU - piano</td>
<td>Sunday 24 Feb</td>
<td>17h Sanctuary</td>
<td>Fred Gramann <a href="mailto:music@acparis.org">music@acparis.org</a></td>
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Sunday Atelier Concert Series

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

Sunday 3 February 17h00
Julia HELENA - piano

Johann Sebastian Bach, York Bowen,
Ludwig van Beethoven,
Franz Liszt, Richard Wagner & Camille Saint-Saëns

Sunday 10 February 17h00
Cyrielle GOLIN - cello;
Antoine MOURLAS - piano

Georg Schumann (1866 – 1952)
Sonate pour violoncelle et piano Op.19
Robert Schumann (1810-1856)
5 Stücke im Volkston Op.102
Camillo Schumann (1872 – 1946)
Sonate nº1 pour violoncelle et piano Op.59

Sunday 17 February 17h00
Cécile BONNET - soprano;
Naoko FUJIWARA - piano

Sunday 24 February 17h00
Clémentine DECOUTURE - soprano;
Nicolas CHEVEREAU - piano

LISZT, DEBUSSY, BARBER

Récital de mélodies françaises
Oeuvres de
Poulenc, Ravel et Massenet