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On the cover:
The Beacon on the Seine
Metaphor, message and mission
Thoughts from  
The Rev. Dr. Scott Herr  
Senior Pastor

Dear Members and Friends of the ACP,

In the first week of this month we have moved from the season of Christmastide to Epiphany, and I hope you are enjoying the French pastry galette des rois, which now comes in an assortment of flavors! The Magi, or Wise Men, are our patron saints, in the sense that they were the first gentiles to whom it was revealed that Jesus was the Christ child. They were the first gentiles to receive him as King and worship him. It has always interested me that after God spoke to them in a dream, “they returned to their country by another route” (Matthew 2:12b). Indeed, one’s life and direction cannot but be changed after encountering the Living God!

As we begin a new calendar year together, I’d like to invite you to consider how God is at work in your life, and how you will go forward by another route because of your faith in Christ. Some of us will literally return to our country, forever changed by our time, however long, in Paris and by our participation in the diverse community life of the American Church in Paris. By the way, we have just welcomed Revs. Jim and Odette Lockwood-Stewart as our Visiting Pastors, and I hope that you will take time to get to know them as they will only be with us until the end of June! Some of us will remain in Paris, even for years into the future, but I hope not unchanged or unchallenged to rethink how we are living our lives and living together as the people of God in this unique time in history.

Part of the story of Epiphany is the massacre of the innocents. Though the Wise Men “tricked” Herod, the King found out and “sent and killed all the children in and around Bethlehem who were two years old or under, according to the time that he had learned from the wise men” (Matthew 2:16b). I wonder, did the Wise Men ever hear about what happened? I imagine it would have changed them dramatically to know that their actions triggered such a slaughter. I should think that anyone who realizes that their actions caused another’s suffering would re-consider how to change their own lives going forward.

Last year we reflected on Micah 6:8 as a congregation: “What does the Lord require of you, but to do justice, love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?” I think further reflection is required, especially as there are still 60,000,000 refugees in the world, largely caused by war and violence in which we in the West are implicated. This is a controversial subject, but with so many millions of people displaced and suffering because of war, shouldn’t we Christians (called to be peace-makers and engaged in the ministry of reconciliation!) rethink our way forward?

I’ve always been a bit tentative about New Year’s resolutions, but I’ve decided that I’m going to pursue two new areas of study this year based on two articles* I’ve read recently in the New York Times. I’m going to explore “Agnotology” and “Inventology.”

Agnotology is a phrase coined by Professor Robert N. Proctor, a historian of science at Stanford University. It’s the study of what we don’t know! Seriously, I think more of us need to explore the depths of what we don’t know so that we are more open to the vast wealth of wisdom and knowledge that is available to us as long as we are not too full of ourselves… After all, Jesus told us that the Spirit will lead us into “all truth.” I assume that means we don’t have it all yet!

Secondly, I want to pursue “Inventology,” as this is the study of how we dream up things that change the world. Pagan Kennedy makes the observation that some of the most important “discoveries” of science came about through mistakes turned into breakthroughs, through the creative observation of those who took the time to understand what went wrong…

Perhaps we Christians need to consider how God wants us to “repent” (metanoia in the Greek literally means, “think again”). Perhaps this involves first admitting that we don’t have all the answers, and then by God’s grace we still can dream up ways of living and serving that will truly change the world for good. I hope you’ll join me! Either way, I wish you all of God’s richest blessings of grace and peace in this season of Epiphany.

In Christ,

*See Jamie Holmes, 24 August 2015 NY Times article, “The Case for Teaching Ignorance” and Pagan Kennedy’s NY Times article, 2 January 2016, “How to Cultivate the Art of Serendipity.”
Dear Members of ACP,

I wish you a new year full of blessings from our Lord Jesus Christ. The Christmas celebrations were uplifting. I love this time of year when we celebrate the joyous birth of our Saviour.

I want to thank all of you for your help, sponsorship from the Mission and Outreach Committee and all my helpers for the Marché de Noel. I hope you enjoyed what you bought that was made by my two hands, which will now benefit many more hands in the Adulam Mission in Guatemala.

The mission is going well and looking for new resources to help others. Thank you for your purchases, donations and prayers. I will send the money to Guatemala as soon as I get back home in the USA. Special thanks goes to Alison Benney for her creative editing of my November article in the Spire and to Bonnie Buchholty for her handmade crochet scarfs.

Jeff and I may be on our way home by the time you read this note. We enjoyed our year at ACP sharing our love with all of you and serving our Lord. God willing, we will see you again in a year when Jeff and I return as Visiting Pastor and Spouse.

Our love in Christ,

Alba & Jeff Powell

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A Casa for Christmas

Thank you from Alba Powell

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Bible readings for January

3 January   Second Sunday after Christmas
Jeremiah 31:7-14
Psalm 147:12-20 or
Wisdom of Solomon 10:15-21
Ephesians 1:3-14
John 1:(1-9), 10-18

10 January   First Sunday after Epiphany
Isaiah 43:1-7
Psalm 29
Acts 8:14-17
Luke 3:15-17, 21-22

17 January   Second Sunday after Epiphany
Isaiah 62:1-5
Psalm 36:5-10
1 Corinthians 12:1-11
John 2:1-11

24 January   Third Sunday after Epiphany
Nehemiah 8:1-3, 5-6, 8-10
Psalm 19
1 Corinthians 12:12-31a
Luke 4:14-21

31 January   Fourth Sunday after Epiphany
Jeremiah 1:4-10
Psalm 71:1-6
1 Corinthians 13:1-13

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 Spire is Wednesday 20 January.
He has told you, O mortal, what is good; and…/…

Alba and I will return to our home in Seal Beach, California on 14 January 2016 after spending the last year with you. We served as volunteers for the fourth 6-month term as Visiting Pastor and Spouse (2002, 2011, 2012, 2015). The Visiting Pastor directs the wedding blessing and vow renewal ministry at ACP as well as volunteers in other areas such as worship, Christian education, fellowship and outreach as needed and as available. The number of wedding blessing reservations has fallen drastically since the November 13th terror attack on Paris so this will effect the Visiting Pastor’s future schedule of activities.

Last year was a very different year for me in that I wore "two hats," so to speak. I served as Visiting Pastor from January–June and Haft-time Interim Associate Pastor from April–December 2015. Pastor Michelle and I split the Associate Pastor responsibilities with her concentrating on Children’s Ministry and Community Life and me concentrating on Adult Ministry.

I worked with the small group ministry and retreats, Thurber Thursdays, Lay Care Givers and stewardship and shared in worship, pastoral care and administration. It was a privilege and a joy to work with such a talented team of staff and volunteers. I was delighted to stay on at ACP during this past transitional year and I trust that I was able to be of help.

Last summer we said goodbye to Pastor Dan and Lauretta and welcomed to Pastor Billy. In December we said au revoir to Pastor Michelle and Kevin. As Alba and I now take our leave, we offer best wishes to Associate Pastor Tim and Maija who plan to arrive next month.

The New Year is a time for self-examination and for the making of new year’s resolutions. I encourage you to take this time to do that. It is good to look at our physical lives and get in shape and sometimes lose weight. We need to look at our financial lives and re-adjust our investments and hopefully, respond to the call to be generous and grow in our Christian stewardship. In 2016 we are challenged to give 1% more of of our household income to ACP. As a congregation we need to step up by giving More For Christ and grow towards as a tithe. This is a baby step that we can all take. I thank the 21 ACP households who have already made that commitment of 1% More For Christ and encourage everyone one else to follow their leadership.

I encourage you to look at your spiritual life. What steps do you need to take in the new year to grow your soul? Are you investing the time and energy needed to be transformed into the likeness of Jesus Christ? That’s the goal of this life so that we are prepared to meet the Lord and receive the words ‘well done, good and faithful servant.”

I encourage you to practice WORSHIP+2 in this new year. Be faithful in participating in worship at ACP or if you are traveling, seek out another Christian place to worship.

Then #1: participate in a group/activity that will help you grow spiritually such as participating in a small group, Bible study group or fellowship group. This provides spiritual input for your life, the filling of your cup to overflowing, the journey inward, so to speak.

Then #2: engage in Christian service that matches your SHAPE for ministry. SHAPE in an acronym that stands for Spiritual gifts, Heart, Abilities, Personality and Experience. This action is the giving away of yourself for others, the sharing of your overflowing cup, the journey outward in service to the world and to the church. Find a ministry and place of service such as Serve the City working with the homeless and the stranger, volunteering as an adult to work with children, youth and adults ministries, sing in the choir/band, provide a caring presence and listening ear as a Lay Care Giver. Remember the Ministry Faire and the sheet that lists ways to volunteer and serve?

WORSHIP+2 is a good way to go!

We have some Adult Christian Education events planned on Thursday evenings from 20h00–21h30 to help you on your way. Simplify: 10 Practices to Unclutter Your Soul, a.../...
Blessed to be a Blessing

Annual women’s retreat

Saturday, 13 February, 9h-16h, ACP

Doors open at 9h00 for coffee and snacks in the Thurber Room, and the morning session begins at 9h30.

Worship with Stillpoint, the ACP Contemporary Band

Childcare available

Our guest speaker is Jodi Fondell, an ordained pastor in the Evangelical Covenant Church in America. She served as co-pastor alongside of her husband Doug at Immanuel International church in Stockholm, Sweden for over 16 years. Prior to moving to Sweden she served as chaplain at North Park University, a liberal arts college in Chicago, Illinois, USA. She currently resides in London, England, serving as interim pastor at the American International Church in London, also as co-pastor with her husband.

Jodi has a deep and abiding love for the International church, having seen firsthand how the wonder and diversity of God's creation comes together in beautiful harmony. She has a passion for seeing walls between people being broken down and fruitful and healthy relationships emerge. Jodi loves to travel, enjoys sports of all kinds, especially golf and tennis, and takes delight in her 10-year-old Labrador named Tanner.

More information and to register at the Sunday Welcome Table or contact women.acparis@gmail.com.

“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.”

Colossians 3:16-17

Go With God in the New Year,
Jeff
Adult Christian Education class

Bill Hybels’ video series
Thursdays, 14 January to 4 February, 20h-21h30, Thurber Room

The study will be facilitated by a video presentation and followed by discussion. Pastor Jim Lockwood-Stewart will be leading the class. Coffee and tea are provided.

Start the New Year on a constructive note by addressing the core issues that drive your life, eradicating the clutter from your inner world and experiencing the immediate rewards: greater energy, clearer purpose richer relationships and more. All adults are welcome.

14 January: Streamline Your Schedule
21 January: Spend Wisely
28 January: Strengthen Your Relationships
4 February: Fully Surrender

Missed the Christmas Eve service this year?
You can still watch it online, on the ACP website: acparis.org
Introducing our new Associate Pastor
Rev. Timothy Vance

Tim was born and raised in Hornell, NY with an older sister and two younger brothers. He attended Houghton College in Western New York, where he played college basketball and graduated with a liberal arts degree in Biblical Studies and Educational Ministries. While at Houghton he studied abroad in London, Paris and Madrid.

After graduation in 1999, Tim moved across the country to Bellevue, Washington to work with high school students at Bellevue Presbyterian Church. It was here that Tim met his future in-laws, who eventually introduced him to their daughter, Maija. After many years of pretending to not be interested in each other, Tim and Maija started dating and then got married on 30 December, 2004.

In 2006 Tim graduated from Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, California with a Master of Divinity degree. Their daughter, Sophia, was born in 2010 and their second son, Ezra, was born in 2014.

For the last six years Tim has been serving as Associate Pastor at Gateway Presbyterian Church in The Dalles, Oregon. He is also a volunteer justice speaker for International Justice Mission, which works to address issues of slavery and injustice that disproportionately impact the world’s poor.

Tim is a New York Yankees fan and a long-suffering Buffalo Bills fan. His hobbies include basketball and cycling. His favorite Bible verses are Micah 6:8 and Acts 17:28. Tim, Maija and the kids are very excited about the possibility of moving to Paris and being a part of this beautifully diverse ACP community.

Sunday Concert Series

Sunday 10 January, 17h
Anne-Chantal CARRIÈRE - soprano
Carolyn SHUSTER FOURNIER - organ
Dominique FOURNIER - organ and piano
Music by Mozart and Brahms
American Church in Paris
65 quai d’Orsay, 75007 Paris

For “In him we live and move and have our being;” as even some of your own poets have said, “For we too are his offspring.” - Acts 17:28
Welcome to the new Visiting Pastor(s)

The Reverends Jim and Odette Lockwood-Stewart

Jim grew up in Santa Monica, California. He studied at the University of Göttingen, Germany, UCLA, and the Claremont School of Theology. He was ordained an Elder in the United Methodist Church in 1971.

He served as pastor of United Methodist Congregations in Southern and Northern California for four decades. Before his retirement in 2007, he served for six years as Superintendent of the Bay View District, overseeing the work of 70 United Methodist congregations in San Francisco’s East Bay.

Congregations he has served have initiated community counseling centers, urban redevelopment projects, homeless shelter services, and child care centers, and have been involved in prison ministries, seeking to live out their faith in the world.

Jim is a musician, a life-long bassoonist, playing for the last seven years as a member of the University of California Berkeley Symphony Orchestra, including their 2014 Eastern European Tour with concerts in Vienna, Prague, Bratislava, and Budapest.

Odette grew up in Connecticut and California, attending seminary at Boston University School of Theology. She currently is on the Faculty of the Pacific School of Religion in Berkeley where she also directs PSR’s Field Education and Contextual Learning.

She has led congregations and campus ministries for over thirty-five years as a United Methodist Elder and has given leadership at international, national, and regional levels of the church and ecumenical associations.

She currently serves on the Board of the Glide Foundation in San Francisco and The Dean’s Advisory Board of Boston University.

Jim and Odette have four grown children whose families live in Maryland, Oklahoma, and California, and seven wonderful grandchildren.

From basement to sanctuary
Sunday women’s gathering
10 January, 12h15

On hearing this, Jesus said to them, “It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners. - Mark 2:17

Please join us for a time of fellowship and to hear Holly Nugent speak on "From Basement to Sanctuary." Holly is a Christian Recovery Expert and Associate Director of Contemporary Worship for ACP. She will share the Biblical principles behind the 12-step recovery movement, and what those of us in the church can learn from the program of confession of brokenness, submission, repentance, restitution, prayer, and meditation - and ultimately healing - from any sin or struggle.

All ladies are welcome to attend, Sunday 10 January, 12h15-13h30, in the Thurber Room.

Note: as of this meeting, we will start these gatherings at 12h15, giving us more time for fellowship before our speaker begins at 12h40. Childcare will be available in G1.
About our youth music ministry

The Angel and Junior Choirs are designed to allow children to learn to sing and play rhythm instruments together, building a gradual understanding of basic musical terms and notation through practical experience, games and activities. The children will sing in church throughout the year, and learn to be part of the worship experience at ACP. Our children’s choirs are a huge amount of fun but we learn a lot and sing well too! Join us!

The Junior Choirchimes and Youth Handbells are our two instrumental ensembles, and help children to learn to read and play music together. The Choirchimes is our beginning level group, while children participating in the Youth Handbells have prior reading experience. Both groups are designed to build general musicianship, and a love of ensemble playing. We play in church throughout the year and always have fun doing so!

The Youth Choir (Shine) is our advanced choral group, and is audition-based. We work on more challenging repertoire and proper choral technique. Shine also sings on select Sundays throughout the year.

Rehearsals on Wednesdays

13h00-14h00  Angel Choir (ages 3-5),
14h00-14h30  Junior Choirchimes (ages 6-10)
14h30-15h30  Junior Choir (ages 6-10)
15h30-16h30  Youth Handbells (ages 11-18)
16h30-17h30  Youth Choir: Shine (ages 11-18)

Interested? Contact Sara Barton at ymusic@acparis.org

Prayer Chain Team

Do you have a prayer request for our Prayer Team? If so, please forward your prayer by e-mail 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.
Many people over the years must have wondered, upon seeing this simple plaque in the narthex, who Lyla Mansus was.

Her story can be quickly summed up: a schoolteacher from British Columbia, Lyla Isabel Mansus took a year of sabbatical leave and came to Paris in early 1982. A bit shy, very sweet and full of joie de vivre, she joined the ACP choir, took ballroom dancing classes at the church, visited Finland with her sister (the family was originally from there), celebrated Christmas 1982 with her ACP friends – then a few weeks later was unexpectedly hospitalized with a swift, aggressive cancer that all too quickly took her life, to the shock of everyone who knew her.

As the plaque's sparse information attests, she was only 31.

But there is more than one memorial to Lyla at the ACP. Fred Gramann, then as now the music director, had begun composing music for the choir. Some time after Lyla's death, he was working on a setting of Psalm 27, “The Lord is my light and my salvation – whom shall I fear? The Lord is the stronghold of my life – of whom shall I be afraid?”

As he recalls it now, Fred was not composing the anthem as a memorial to Lyla, yet when it was finished, something told him it was indeed for her. So he wrote at the top, “In memory of Lyla Mansus,” a dedication it still bore when, several years later, it was published in the United States by Carl Fischer, Inc. A note about the composer on the 1996 Fischer score credits Fred at that point with over 30 choral and handbell compositions.

He has continued adding to that number ever since. This year, as Senior Pastor Scott Herr announced in the December Spire, the ACP is celebrating “the way music can communicate the good news to our hearts, and how it is impossible to imagine giving God our worship and praise without singing or music.” Fred has been contributing to that joyful effort for 40 years now.

One of the highlights of the year will be an event in June marking the anniversary of Fred’s arrival as ACP music director – keep your eye out for further information, coming soon. And, as part of the celebration of this year of music, the Spire will tell the stories of several of Fred's compositions.

“The Lord Is My Light” is a personal favorite of mine: I’d like to go on record here as saying that if anyone ever holds a memorial service for me, I want it to include this beautiful anthem. When I brought up Lyla and the anthem to Fred recently, he mused, “We haven't sung that for a while…” So watch the bulletin: perhaps you'll get to hear the choir perform it sometime this year.
Marriage begins with a decision of two people to unite their lives under God. The Wedding Ministry of the American Church in Paris (ACP) is honored to celebrate the union of husband and wife. Musical assistance and clergy guidance are provided so that the ceremony will be dignified and spiritually grounded.

As an international and interdenominational congregation, we welcome people from diverse backgrounds and Christian traditions. The celebration of marriage in the ACP is not restricted to our local members.

**Off-site Wedding Blessing Ceremony**

One of the ordained pastors of the American Church in Paris can officiate your wedding blessing ceremony held outside of the church.

**Premarital counseling**

The American Church in Paris recommends all couples preparing to get married to seek counseling before the ceremony. Premarital counseling is available to anyone who would like to prepare for, and establish the strongest marriage possible to the glory of God. It helps couples

- to explore strength and growth areas
- to strengthen communication skills
- to identify and manage major stressors and/or cultural and personality differences
- to resolve conflict using the 10-Step Model
- to discuss financial planning and budgeting

Premarital Counseling is not restricted to our local members or those preparing to get married at the ACP.

Please contact our Wedding Coordinator for more information: weddings@acparis.org

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**Volunteer with Habitat for Humanity**

Founded in 1976, Habitat for Humanity has built or renovated more than 800,000 homes around the world, providing more than 4 million people with safe, decent, affordable shelter. Anyone who can hold a hammer or a paint brush is welcome to the work of Habitat for Humanity. Volunteers provide manpower that allows the building of homes or the making of renovations at considerably lower costs.

More importantly, the volunteering experience transforms lives: both for the volunteers who work alongside Habitat homeowners and for partner families who see people who care enough to help them break the cycle of poverty.

The American Church in Paris is organizing a Habitat for Humanity trip for August 2016. Join us for an informational session on Thursday 14 January, 19h30, at the ACP, in the 2nd floor Library. Volunteers must be 16 years old or older.

Questions? Contact Kai-Marcel Grunert by email at awaiting_further_informations@yahoo.com
Chiens et chats

Ever wonder what it would be like to be a dog? Or just what the world looks like to a cat? This popular show at La Villette is your chance. Step into a special booth that simulates the sensory experiences of our furry friends. Or learn to decipher animals' body language and the various sounds they make. For young and old alike, it's the cat's meow.


Cats

Andrew Lloyd Webber's musical-based "Old Possum's Book of Practical Cats" by T.S. Eliot took London and New York by storm back in the 1980s, winning 7 Tony Awards and 2 Oliviers. This French version has been so popular with Parisians that its run at Théâtre Mogador has been extended until next summer. Its signature song may celebrate "Minuit" rather than "Memory," but the mellifluous tribute to the moon is every bit as haunting.

Until 5 July, www.catsthemusical.com/paris/

Rire

The new show at the landmark Cirque d'Hiver is good, old-fashioned circus, complete with tumblers, tigers, and trapeze artists, plus equestrian acts and even a colorful company of trained parrots. As the title (meaning "laughter") indicates, the accent is on light-hearted fun, with plenty of clowning around interspersed with the acrobatic thrills and chills.

Until 6 March, www.cirquedhiver.com

Who's afraid of women photographers?

Twin expositions trace women's contribution to the history of photography, with Part I (1839-1919) at L'Orangerie and Part II (1918-1945) across the river at Musée d'Orsay. In addition to women who contributed to Surrealism and other major artistic movements, the shows highlight the many unsung heroines who wielded their cameras in the UK, US, France, and Germany.


Florence - Portraits at the court of the Medicis

Plunge into the sumptuous world of 16th-century Florence, via exquisite paintings by Bronzino, Andrea del Sarto and other masters, gathered from Italy and all over Europe. Marvel at the intricate brushwork that lights up the fascinating faces, elaborately jeweled garments and even a pampered Florentine lapdog or two.


Sepik

The Musée du Quai Branly is showcasing some 230 sculptures from the Sepik river valley in Papua New Guinea. The show explores various depictions of the founding ancestor figures revered by the Sepik people, in both their public and their "secret" forms.

In giving you receive
Deep Griha Society ACP mission in India
By Pascale Deforge

Deep Griha (DGS) is an interfaith independent charitable Indian organization. The mission of DGS is to enable “empowerment of the marginalized through capacity building and sustainable urban and rural development programs.”

Since 2013, DGS has been an official mission of the American Church in Paris. This year, from mid-February to 6 March, the Mission Outreach Committee is proud to be hosting our second intergenerational mission trip. There is still place waiting for you if God is calling you to be a modern missionary in India.

Also, God willing and providing, we wish to witness by deeds the love of God by donating the following needed items:

- **a reliable solar water system**, to offer filtered water to the Children of CoC: City of Child (cost: 2064 euros)
- **4 fans** for the children’s bedrooms (cost: 97 euros)
- **8 mats** for the four creches (cost: 44 euros)
- **43 birthday gifts** for the 43 underprivileged kids of CoC (cost: 206 euros)

and most importantly:

- **a one-day picnic** in a waterpark! (cost: 400 euros) for all CoC kids & staff
- **and supplies for activities** with the children (cost: 100 euros)

Please donate to the Deep Griha Society; please pray for them and for our mission trip.

As disciples of Jesus Christ, God is calling us to spread the Good News to the poor. We will serve by providing Christian worship services to children in DGS interfaith communities and organize vacation Bible studies, with storytelling, songs, theater, dance, crafts, games, and of course, learning cricket with the joyful children of City of Child!

We will serve in two slum areas, in Pune DGS centers, plus a children’s Christian residence (City of Child) & a DGS school in the rural area around Pune.

Last year was particularly difficult for Deep Griha because some foreign funding was stopped, which is why we are asking for these donations.

Our previous mission trip was a life-changing experience. Come along and experience it for yourself, or please consider donating to the cause.

If you are able to contribute, please contact Pascale Deforge at pascaledeforge@live.com. For more information, see www.deepgriha.org

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A prayer of praise for all the 2015 donations to Deep Griha

*The Mission Outreach Committee’s 2015 Christmas donation*

*The Marche de Noel proceeds*

*The Tuesday Women’s Bible Study donations*

*The Stoles Project donations*

*The individual donations*

Praise the Lord for his providence to Deep Griha by the ACP and its communities and membership! Thanks be to you and to God.
Feeling safe at ACP
Our security restrictions

Security doesn't have to be all grim and bear it. Andrea Richard, our church business administrator, tells us how we can help to keep the process smooth and upbeat.

As an institution open to the public, the church must abide by strict security rules, even in the calmest of times. With the city operating under a state of emergency since 13 November, French police are extra-vigilant, and ask that we play our part as well.

Whether a regular at ACP or just a visitor, you’ll notice there is often a security guard on duty to check bags and to check out people. As this is in your interest, please have your bag open and ready and prepare to be as cooperative - and patient - as possible.

The security-locked door at the entrance to the Reception requires you to hit the buzzer to the left of the door, look into the camera and speak distinctly when the receptionist asks you to identify yourself. It helps a lot if you provide your name and which activity you’re taking part in.

Don’t leave bags lying around, of course, and if you see one which has no apparent owner, report it immediately to the security guard, or on Sunday, to the usher and/or the desk receptionist.

Be vigilant, look around you and if you see anyone suspicious report it to the security guard, Sunday usher and/or the desk receptionist.

Most importantly, don’t panic. Do yourself and those around you a favor and think before acting or reacting to an unexpected incident. Nerves are running high and we all need to help everyone around us to keep their cool, to soothe tempers, and generate a strong, faithful sense of assurance.

Feeling safe at ACP
Our security restrictions

Did you know that you can learn French at ACP? Classes are held every Saturday from 5 to 6:30 pm. It is taught by two native French speakers: Francois and Yasmina.

The class is intended for beginners who are seriously committed to learn French. In addition to the class time, personal effort and commitment are required. Attendance is limited to 20. The sign-up fee is 30€, and you will have to buy a book. There is no age requirement and any nationality can apply.

We cannot stress too much that learning a new language requires significant work. There is no such thing as “French made easy.” Therefore, consider carefully if you are ready to make that commitment. Weekly attendance will then be required. You will be expected to show regular progress.

If you are here for several years, or if you want to obtain working papers, a knowledge of French will be required. And also consider the practical benefits for your daily life: shopping, visits to City Hall or the Prefecture, hospitals, schooling for your children, employment - life, quoi!

If you are interested, send your personal data (name, address, phone, nationality) to fkpierre@gmail.com
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 17 January

"Duo Mélusine"

Mine KRAUSE - violin

Céline ANTONIN - piano

Music by Bach, Mozart, Liszt, Grieg, Abramian, Beach, Williams

### Sunday 24 January

Lauren LIBAW - soprano

Helene RUSQUET - piano

Music by Haendel, Mozart, Donizetti, Poulenc, Britten, Weill, Rogers, Marzullo, Porter, Guglielmi, Scotto

### Sunday 31 January

Bonnie BROWN - piano

Kanae ENDO - piano

Music by Beethoven, Villa-Lobos, Rachmaninoff

### Sunday 7 February

Caroline DRURY - soprano

Laurana MITCHELMORE - piano

Music by Richard Strauss, Gabriel Fauré, Francis Poulenc, Robert Schumann
To give anything less than your best is to sacrifice the gift.
~Steve Prefontaine, runner

Life zooms by at an amazing speed. It seems like yesterday I was changing my kids’ diapers and now I am looking at college applications. Where did the time go? The time passes whether we do what is most important to us or not. We have all been given special gifts to use in our lives. If we don’t use them, the gifts remain dormant. The more we use them, the gifts grow and flourish, and we serve God and build our Christian community. Don’t let your life pass and leave you with only regrets. Take time to plan your year and actively use your gifts.

This goal-setting workshop will help you look at the big picture of your life to see what is truly important to you. We will work on setting specific goals in each of the domains of your life: spiritual, financial, family, relationships, career, and health. We will look at 5 key tools highly successful people use every day to stay on track and see how to add them to our life. In the end, you will have an action plan to achieve your priorities for 2016 and a strategy to stay on track to achieve your goals.

Don’t leave your success to chance or hope. Take charge and make 2016 your best year yet!

RSVP aliciaberberich@gmail.com or register at the acparis.org website. The ACP is sponsoring this workshop. Alicia Berberich regularly leads workshops on finding your spiritual gifts and goal setting in San Francisco and Paris. She is a life coach and mother.

“Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God, serve on another with whatever gift each of you has received.” - 1 Peter 4:10

Here’s what we cover:

- Say goodbye to 2015 so you have closure on the past and are fully ready to take on 2016.
- Look at the BIG ROCKS in your life to figure out how to ensure these are your main focus and you don’t drown in the daily details (emailing, texting, social media, etc.).
- For each BIG ROCK, establish your #1 goal for 2016—where do you want to be at this time next year? Make sure your goals meet the SMART criteria: specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and timely.
- Develop a daily ACTION PLAN FOR SUCCESS—incorporating 5 key habits that make a difference.
What’s going on? Tune in: ACP Today

Have you tuned in to ACP Today, the American Church in Paris’ radio show yet? Join us on Mondays at 20h45 - this month on 4 and 18 January. 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. Faith Talk from Paris - ACP chat at your fingertips. Want to get involved? Contact acptoday@acparis.org.

Knitting Group
Mondays at ACP, 16h00-18h30

For beginners and experts alike, the Knitting Group meets every Monday from 16h00 until 18h00, in Room F1 of the Church House. We knit for ourselves and/or Church missions. We recently began participating in the American Cathedral’s “Love in a Box” project, knitting hats and scarves for orphans and children who would not otherwise receive Christmas presents.

While our fun and diverse group is primarily a knitting group, crochet, embroidery, needlepoint, etc are also welcome. Come learn to knit, perfect skills, exchange patterns! For further information please contact Susan Owens, knitting@acparis.org

Paris Newtown commemoration service & roundtable on gun violence: Recording now available online

In December, the ACP hosted a special service to commemorate the lives lost in the tragedy at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut, on 14 December 2012, and other gun violence in the United States.

The service was followed by a roundtable discussion in the Thurber Room on gun violence. Roundtable participants included Alex Blumrosen (attorney at law), Mira Kamdar (author, blogger), Christopher Dickey (Daily Beast), Nathalie Paton (author of just-published School Shooting), Celeste Schenk (President, American University of Paris), and Mark Ulfers (Head, American School of Paris).

It was an unforgettable experience for the participants. Watch the video recording now on the ACP website, at acparis.org.
Four years ago, I had a dream in which I was dead. In the dream, God invited me to return to Earth - if I would use my journalistic training for His Kingdom. I accepted His offer.

Prior to the dream, I had written hundreds of news and magazine stories from a secular perspective. My new calling directed me to use my writing skills to chronicle accounts of God’s presence in contemporary life. Eventually I launched a book project about couples who had survived various marital crises through God’s intervention. The entire undertaking was fueled by prayers for guidance; for one thing, I had to find couples who had overcome serious obstacles and were willing to share their personal stories in order to help others.

In mid-November last year, Jesus Street Press published Hope & Healing in Marriage, in which the reader is invited to walk in the shoes of eight couples. The book touches on topics such as adultery, loss of affection, verbal and physical abuse, alcoholism, chronic illness, childlessness, and the death of a child.

The testimonies of healing in the book are not meant to judge anyone struggling in a marriage or who has been divorced; the stories are meant to inspire people to see that, however they may have erred, God remains very close at hand. In fact, He is waiting for an invitation to act. That principle is demonstrated in a couple’s story from a chapter called “His & Her Secrets”: the wife is embracing another man when she hears the voice of God saying, “Lynn. What are you doing?”

For years, Lynn had searched in vain for a Higher Being...now Lynn had no doubt: the One who had spoken into her soul was the God of the Bible. How strange that Lynn would encounter God during the primitive act of adultery. During her most vulgar and despicable moment, at the time when she was least worthy of His concern, God had cared enough to call her by name.

Throughout the stories in Hope & Healing in Marriage, God acts consistently within His perfect character, and yet His actions are enormously creative and unpredictable. We cannot always fathom His plans or the events of our lives, but we can rely on God to draw near to those who cry out to Him, as in this excerpt from “Her Tiny Casket”:

It happened on a Saturday afternoon. A secretary interrupted our class and told me: “Your daughter has had an accident.” I was to leave immediately and head straight for the children’s hospital. I rushed out, hurried into my car, and drove back to Paris, gripping my steering wheel until my knuckles turned white.

My husband was waiting for me, in tears. What you read about with horror in the newspapers actually happened to us: our daughter Axelle, not quite four years old, had leaned out the kitchen window, lost her balance, and fallen rapidly. She had landed on the pavement below. Was there any hope? Jean could not bring himself to tell me dreadful news, but by the anguish on his face, I understood.

Veronique would learn that her daughter’s death was due to her husband’s poor judgment. She did not know if she could forgive him, let alone carry on as a loving wife. Veronique’s story is extreme, but the need to forgive a spouse applies to countless situations. After reading Veronique’s story, one can’t help but think: if she could forgive her husband for this tragedy, how can I hang onto my small grudge?

These true stories demonstrate that healing begins with letting go of one’s self and focusing on God. Remember, intimacy means you and your spouse share a deep physical, emotional, and spiritual bond. Don’t settle for less. God is offering more.

I will be teaching from Hope & Healing in Marriage at two Thurber Thursdays, on 10 and 17 March. Copies of the book will soon be available at the ACP book sales table during the coffee time after Sunday services, as well as on Amazon. If you are interested in reading additional stories of faith, please visit my blog, Living on Jesus Street, http://livingonjesusstreet.com.
Benefit Concert
Saturday 30 January 20h00

Piano concert with Patricia Heidsieck
Schumann, Ravel, Debussy, Bach, etc. autour de Thérèse de Lisieux

If Rembrandt and Bach share a special place in your soul, if Debussy’s music evokes the sounds and smells that fill the evening air, if the fantasies of Gustave Moreau respond in kind to the moodiness of Chopin’s imagination, if the lightness of Schumann corresponds to the fantasy of Chagall, then you will love this program.

Patricia Heidsieck will tell the story of Thérèse de Lisieux with her manuscripts, aided by images of paintings of Sargent, Sorolla, Morisot, Redon and others. She will perform the « Scènes d’enfants » of Schumann, interspersed with movements from « Children’s corner » of Debussy, of « Scènes de la forêt » and « Pièces de fantaisie » of Schumann, « Oiseaux tristes » of Ravel, the first partita partita (« Allemande ») de Bach. This poetic performance will be accompanied with images projected on a screen.

A free-will offering will go entirely to the Association “Les amis de tous” for their charity work in Egypt, Haiti, Ethiopia and Madagascar. [http://amisdetous.free.fr/](http://amisdetous.free.fr/)

Welcome to Anjlo and Lubna’s daughter Mojza, born 19 November 2015
“The 9am service is the middle of the night for many Parisians,” jokes Senior Pastor Scott Herr, “so not surprisingly it is our smallest gathering.” While the sermon remains the same for all three services, at each 9h gathering, we celebrate the sharing of communion.

“It is quieter and more intimate at the 9am service, and seems more reverent and worshipful, fostering a deeper, personal experience of God,” says Marilyn Dikkers, who has attended the American Church for 35 years. The service boasts beautiful organ music prepared by Fred Gramann which, coupled with the smaller attendance, provides for worship that is sharply focused on the word of God. While getting up early may be a pitfall for some, Elodie Lasserre says she prefers the early service as it is the most peaceful, and with fewer people it means you can feel more comfortable. She also points out the upside of having lots of time after the service to enjoy the rest of your Sunday in Paris.

While also traditional, the 11h service fills up the sanctuary with over 500 people hungry for God’s word, and latecomers often find it difficult to find an open seat. The musical aspect of the worship plays a big role, usually with a procession of the choir and often special choral, bell choir and instrumental or voice solos. The music is an event in itself, says Camilla Radford Furman: “Being able to sing such meaningful hymns and participate in the singing to our Lord touches my soul.” This service also offers children’s worship, as it is attended by many young families.

The 13h30 service, also called the contemporary service, is described by Kawa Banda as “modern and very accessible for even non-Christians, to have a first approach.” The music is loud and youthful and performed by the dedicated volunteer band, Still Point, led by Natalie Raynall, assisted by Holly Nugent. Started in 2008, the service now fills up the sanctuary; with an informal liturgy, it includes images projected on slides, making it easier for the congregation to follow. Anyone who has attended this service can attest to the feeling of openness among and simplicity of the service.

Having attended ACP for the past six years, I can honestly say that it is difficult to choose which of the three services to go to, as each has its unique merit. Camilla commented that “Everyone is different, and I appreciate that ACP offers something for everyone.”

Since getting married, my commute to Paris takes between one and a half to two hours, so it is safe to rule me out of waking up at “silly o’clock” for the 9h service. However, for all those of you who have yet to experience all of the services at the American Church, Pastor Scott entreats you to check them out: “I encourage you to try each one so that you know your brothers and sisters from the different worshipping communities that make up the one congregation of the American Church in Paris!”

Each service offers the identical sermon, a children’s nursery for all three services, and post-service coffee hour meet-and-greet.
Serve The City
Monday to Friday mornings – 8h15
Meeting point either Neuilly Prêt à Manger at 8h15 or Concorde metro stop at 8h45.
Contact ParisServeTheCity@gmail.com

Serve the City Mission Project
The Serve the City Mission Project is distributing food donated by Prêt à Manger to the needy. There are now nearly 20 American Church volunteers serving up to 150 meals five days a week to the less fortunate in and around Paris. Additional volunteers are needed to help pick up sandwiches from the Prêt à Manger’s Neuilly-sur-Seine shop at 8h and distribute them to homeless people. Come join the team and help us Serve the City!
Contact parisservethecity@gmail.com.

Tuesday Morning Women’s Bible Study
Tuesdays – 10h30-12h30 - in the Catacombs
The Tuesday Morning Women’s Bible study will continue their study of Genesis.
We meet every Tuesday from 10h00-12h30 in the catacombs and childcare is available. All are welcome. For more information please contact womensbiblestudy@acparis.org.

Quilting Group
Tuesdays- 13h00-16h00 - G2
The ACP Quilting Group meets every Tuesday in a member’s home. Contact quilting@acparis.org

Men’s Bible Study Group
Thursdays - 07h30
Contact: Dominique at mensbiblestudy@acparis.org

Mindfulness Meditation Group
Saturdays - 12h00 to 13h15 - Room G7
For those who already have a meditation practice as well as for those who are interested in beginning a practice, mindfulness meditation is a way of learning to pay attention to our life as it unfolds moment by moment. Open to church members and to the larger community. Facilitator: Norma Jean Deak, a longtime practitioner and teacher of Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction. Questions? Contact Norma Jean: normajeandeak@gmail.com

Filipino Fellowship
Sundays - 12h45 - Thurber Room
The ACP Filipino Fellowship is continuing with its weekly luncheons and bible studies. The study begins at 14h00 and all Tagalog speakers are welcome! Contact Virginia Jacinto at 01 45 38 92 17 or filipinofellowship@acparis.org

African Fellowship
Sundays – 12h45 – G7
Luncheon on first Sunday of month; Bible study on other Sundays.
Contact Zainab Taylor at africanfellowship@acparis.org
Please check www.acparis.org/whatson for updates and weekly schedules

**Breakfast Ministry**
Friday 4 February - Preparation – 19h30 meet in ACP Reception  
Saturday 5 February - Distribution – 08h00 meet in ACP Reception  
For more information, please contact Jurie Ane Feleo  homelesssandwich@acparis.org

**Friday Mission Lunch**
Friday 8 January - 10h00 to 14h00  
The American Cathedral - 23 Ave. George V  
Each Friday a hot, nutritious meal is prepared for the homeless and needy. Volunteers are needed each week for cooking, serving, and cleaning up. The American Church is responsible for providing the meal on the second Friday of each month, but we are grateful for volunteers and helping hands every Friday.  
If you are interested and available, please contact Kristie Worrel at fridaymissionlunch@acparis.org

**Sandwich Ministry**
Friday 15 January - Preparation – 19h30 meet in ACP Reception  
Saturday 16 January - Distribution – 13h30 meet in ACP Reception  
For more information, please contact Jurie Ane Feleo  homelesssandwich@acparis.org

**Multicultural Couples Potluck Dinner**
Friday 15 January - 20h00 - contact organizers for location  
Calling all multicultural couples. You are warmly invited to bring a dish to share and join the fun. There is always great fellowship and fascinating cross-cultural discussion. For more information contact Monica Bassett or Anja Wyss at multicultural@acparis.org

**Writers’ Group**
Saturday 9 January - 14h30-16h30 – G2  
Contact Tendayi Chirawu writers@acparis.org

**ACP MOPS** (mothers of children ages newborn-6)
Friday 15 January - 10h00- 12h00 - Catacombs  
Childcare available. Come “flourish fiercely” with us. More information: mops@acparis.org

**The Movie Discussion Group**
Thursday 21 January - 19h30 – G2  
Movies to see in advance for discussion: The Big Short, Joy, Arrêtez-moi là, and Carol. See any or all at your convenience in the cinema, then join the group for discussion. Room G2.  
Contact: movies@acparis.org
BONNIE BROWN
Piano

BEETHOVEN
Sonate no. 21 en do majeur Opus 53
(Waldstein)

VILLA-LOBOS
Bachianas Brasileiras
No. 4: I. Preludio (Introdução)
Ciclo Brasileiro:
II. Impressões Seresteiras

et

KANAE ENDO
Piano

RACHMANINOFF
Dances Symphoniques . 45
(deux pianos, quatre mains)

Dimanche 31 janvier 2016 à 17h

à l’Eglise Américaine
65, quai d’Orsay
75007 Paris
Métros : Invalides, Alma-Marceau

Entrée Libre (vat) Free Admission (free-will offering)