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Thoughts from
The Rev. Dr. Scott Herr
Senior Pastor

Dear Members and Friends of the ACP, “Be patient, therefore, beloved, until the coming of the Lord.” This verse is a classic Advent text from James 5:7. Advent begins the Christian liturgical calendar. The first Sunday of Advent is New Year’s Day for the Church. As we light candles and sing, “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel” and as we see the city decorated with Christmas lights and greens, we are tempted to think this poignant season is only about preparing to celebrate what happened long ago with the birth of Jesus. Well, yes and no.

I love what Peter Gomes, former Harvard Plummer Professor of Christian Morals and Pusey Minister in The Memorial Church, writes:

“The Lord is coming, not in retrospect, not in a rehearsal of things that happened once long ago. The Lord is coming in a way and in a form that we have not yet experienced. We wait for that which we have not yet seen. We work for that which has not yet been accomplished. That is the Advent agenda, and it is so often thrown off course by Christmas as simply a recollection of something that happened long ago and far away…”*

Perhaps we hear so many ominous prophetic lectionary texts that indicate change is coming as we begin the Advent season so we are not “thrown off course by Christmas!” God is doing something new, and we must confess that we have not yet seen it...

It’s not as though we are unaware of change... We will be bidding farewell to Tim, Maija, Noah, Sophia and Ezra Vance on Sunday, 15 December. This is a bittersweet change for our congregation, as we have enjoyed four years of Pastor Tim’s leadership, delighted in the singing of Maija, and enjoyed the Vance children’s participation in Children’s Worship and the children’s choir over the years. But the First Presbyterian Church in Santa Monica has called Tim to serve as their Pastor and he has accepted that call. Sweet for them; bitter for us. And so we pray for them all the best in this time of significant change and transition, and for ourselves as we grieve the loss of a friend, colleague, and beloved members of our church family.

So we light a candle and reflect on what it means to be patient in this time of transition. And what does “the coming of the Lord” look like for us in the coming weeks and months ahead? It’s interesting that the next verse of James 5:7 is this: “The farmer waits for the precious crop from the earth, being patient with it until it receives the early and late rains…”

The promise is that a harvest will come from learning patience and trusting in God’s faithfulness. There are practical instructions that James gives: “do not grumble against one another…” We are called to show “endurance.” We are reminded of the Lord’s compassion and mercy. Interestingly, we are to “let your ‘Yes’ be yes and your ‘No’ be no.” In other words, live with integrity, and follow through on your commitments. Indeed, these are all practical instructions for community, and transition is an opportunity for our congregational leadership to be strengthened and encouraged!

I look forward to the Christmas Eve services when we will light a lot of candles (and/or glowsticks!) as we remember the One who is the Light of the World, the One whose light continues to shine in the darkness. Please note, thanks to Fran Michalek, we are holding a special Longest Night service on 19 December for those who are less than joyful in this “holiday season.” However you are feeling through all of the changes coming up, may this season be a time of hope and trust that the Lord is coming toward us full of grace and truth, love, and peace!

In Christ,

*Peter Gomes, Sermons: Biblical Wisdom for Daily Living
100 Nights of Welcome, reprise
by Daniel Tostado

Our 100 Nights of Welcome (100NOW) mission is starting up again for its second season. The American Church in Paris provides an overnight shelter during winter for refugees in Paris, operating out of the gym. During the 100 coldest nights of winter, starting at the beginning of Advent, we open the church house doors to those who have fled persecution and now find themselves homeless in Paris.

Last winter (2018-2019) was the first season of 100NOW, and it went so well. We housed overnight sleeping facilities for 10 "gentlemen" (the term used for our guests, so as not to stigmatize our guests by labelling them as homeless or refugees). They were mostly young men from sub-Saharan Africa, and were all very polite. The nights rolled out smoothly with no negative incidents, just 10 gentlemen and two church volunteers sleeping in the gym. In fact, there were many highlights: several of our guests obtained refugee status while staying with us, and were able to transition to housing or living with host families afterward. The gentlemen attended ACP cafés hosted in the ACP theatre, led spontaneous dance sessions, participated in sports ministry, and joined French integration programs.

For this new season, which started on 1 December, we need more volunteers, including men willing to sleep overnight in the gym to ensure everyone is safe and sound. We could also use donated shoes (sizes 40-43), t-shirts, and pants, as well as food – preferably individually wrapped – that does not require additional preparation by guests or volunteers.

If you are interested in volunteering, please reach out to Daniel Tostado at danieltostado1@gmail.com.

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.

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, weekly communion, and live band accompanying sung worship
A pastor’s reflections on trust, transitions and murder

by Rev. Tim Vance
Associate Pastor

Every ending comes with some measure of grief and some measure of relief. The amount of each will depend upon the circumstances. Well, that’s what a hospital chaplain once told me. If we’re talking about the death of a loved one, then grief, obviously, outweighs any small sense of relief that might come. In fact, any honest talk of relief might sound callous and inappropriate. What kind of a pastor are you anyway?! Ok, so maybe a different example might be easier to handle.

When I was a student, the end of term included a huge amount of relief. No surprise there. But if I’m honest, the end of exams also meant the end of sitting in class with my friend Erik. The new term might mean that Michelle and I wouldn’t get to share again a quick hello every morning as we both ran late to our first class of the day. These may not be significant losses, but those enjoyable parts of each day are lost to a new term and a new schedule. Yet who cares about grief when everyone is celebrating the end of term?

I guess in both of these situations you can see how life more often than not allows room for only one part of our complex human experience at a time. This feels especially problematic for me at the moment as we prepare to move back to the United States. If I’m really sad to be leaving ACP (which I am), there are voices (internal and external) that ask, “does that mean you’re not excited about moving to Santa Monica?” And if I’m excited about our new church in Santa Monica (which I am), does that mean that I’m glad that we’re leaving Paris? Is there room for us to be both sad and happy at the same time?

A friend once told me that a pastor leaving a church is like a very bizarre funeral. At this funeral I (the pastor) have just died because I’m leaving the church and you (the congregation) are grieving this loss (well some of you, at least). But I’m still here as your pastor so I’m also presiding over my own funeral trying to offer comfort and encouragement during this sad time. Personally, I’m also feeling a deep sense of loss so at this funeral I’m sitting with all of you in the pews with a box of tissues looking for some comfort and encouragement. And if that isn’t complicated enough, since I’m the one who made the choice to take a new job, I’m also the one who murdered your beloved pastor. Yikes. I’m in the casket, the pulpit, the pews and presumably a jail cell awaiting trial for murder all at the same time. Oh, and to complicate things even more, this funeral is also a party because everyone is supposed to be happy for me that we’re moving to a beautiful place. I guess all funerals are sort of bizarre in this way. So how are we supposed to navigate through life holding all these complex feelings and experiences?

Well, first of all, I don’t know. Proverbs 3:5 says, “Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding.” My guess is that the phrase, lean not on your own understanding, is a fancy way of saying, ‘I don’t know’ is a perfectly valid answer.

The phrase trust in the Lord, however tends to be a line that we use to cancel out any emotions that feel inconvenient, uncomfortable, or negative. If we are sad or anxious or mad, we might hear a voice (internal and/or external) saying “Yeah, but trust in the Lord!” This line in a text (SMS) message would likely be punctuated with a smiley face emoji to help drive home the point. There’s no room here for your sadness, depression, grief, anger or doubt.

But in the ancient world, our heart is a way of talking about our whole inner life (emotions, intellect, personality, desires and will). And if the whole of our inner world includes these complex and confusing emotions, thoughts and desires are we allowed to hear this proverb inviting us to trust God not just with our joy, but also with our grief? Can we hear God inviting us to trust her with our doubt, depression and anger as well as our faith and hope? Is there space in the presence of God for more than one piece of our complex human experience at a time?

If so, perhaps such vulnerable trust in the Lord can lead to the what Proverbs 3:8 describes as “healing to our body and refreshment to our bones.”
### Bible readings for January

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### Reading time

**by TL Valluy**

*I love the Bible...and sometimes I wrestle with it.* This statement is true for me; it’s likely true for many of you, and it’s also a direct quotation from the book, *Making Sense of the Bible: Rediscovering the Power of Scripture Today,* by Adam Hamilton.

Hamilton says he’s writing as if talking to the reader on his porch with a glass of iced tea, and that’s exactly what he does. Easy to read, *Making Sense of the Bible* breaks down issues, such as how the Bible came to be and what people in various parts of Christendom believe. The author posits that Scripture can be put into three “buckets”: one that reflects God’s timeless will for humanity, one that reflects God’s will for a particular time, and one that reflects the cultural and historical circumstances but not God’s timeless will.

He looks at theological perspectives, historical facts, and his own spirituality to both answer and invite questions about God’s Word. Emphasizing that Jesus is the Word, the book tackles issues like homosexuality and women in the church, presenting ideas in a non-judgmental fashion, encouraging the reader to think about these and other questions for him or herself.

Wow, where can I find this book? you might be asking yourself. The ACP library has copies you can borrow. In fact, the church is recommending everyone read it.

And there’s more. The ACP library has loads of new books! Feel like doing a short Bible study? I’ve just published a three-part study series, entitled *Women of the Old Testament,* which covers over 110 women. Also new in the library are *The Humor of Jesus,* a historical book that discusses humor in Biblical history, by Earl F. Palmer, and *The Giving Tree,* a wonderful children’s book about love, by Shel Silverstein. The library also has DVDs and CDs.

The library is free to all members. Located on the basement level directly across from the elevator, it is open on Sundays, around 10h30 before the 11h service and then after both the 11h and 13h30 services too. Loans can be turned in to library itself or to the ACP reception desk. Library volunteers are always available to help you find just what you might need.

So come and browse; come and borrow! Whether you’re looking for a good story, probing theology or seeking a children’s book, the ACP library has something for you.
Mighty God, it’s too easy. It’s way too easy to recite the slogans, affirm the creeds, and walk away empty-handed. But on Christ the King Sunday, we affirm the most important reality in the universe, and may we live as if we truly believed what we say.

In him all things in heaven and on earth were created, things visible and invisible...all things have been created through him and for him. (Colossians 1:16)

Forgive our not being shaken by that. All things.

He himself is before all things, and in him all things hold together. (verse 17)

Planets, stars in the sky, my heart and soul. All things.

Through him God was pleased to reconcile to himself all things...by making peace through the blood of his cross. (verse 20)

Reconciliation. Healing. All things.

"And soul by soul and silently, her shining bounds increase. And her ways are ways of gentleness, and all her paths are peace."

May it be so.

ACP Community Book Study

Here’s a great gift to give and receive: Adam Hamilton’s book Making Sense of the Bible: Rediscovering the Power of Scripture Today.

“I can think of no one more adept at bringing out the beauty and authority of scripture while also shedding light on the Bible’s most controversial teachings than Adam Hamilton,” says Jim Wallis, president and founder of Sojourners.

As a congregation, we will be reading and discussing this inspirational book from 12 January to 29 February, via small group discussions.

Get your copy from the ACP Book Table on Sundays after worship while they last. Also, digital and paperback copies are available from online booksellers. We are excited to embark on this journey as a church, and all are welcome!

To sign up for a small group, contact John Price at jpygmalyon@gmail.com
Sunday Women’s Fellowship
Sunday, 19 January
12h15-13h30, ACP

All women are invited to join us on 19 January in the Thurber Room for our monthly fellowship meeting. Our guest speaker will be Alison Benney, talking about Secrets of the Sanctuary, learning about the hidden corners of the American Church building. ACP docent tour organizer, Alison has been active in the church since 1992 in various roles. Currently editor of the Spire, she has passionately collected historical ACP tidbits for the last 20 years, and hopes to sign up more volunteers as docents.

As always, we appreciate any sweet/savoury contributions to our snack table. We will provide coffee and tea. Childcare will be available on the ground floor of the Church House. We hope that you can join us. Contact Kim at women.acparis@gmail.com for more information.

Thurber Lecture, 4 February
Rev. Jacqui Lewis
“Liberating God”

“Just Faith” gathered diverse voices in a conversation about justice, healing, and faith.

When Jacqui was just eight years old, the assassination of The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. both traumatized her and catalyzed her calling to work against racism and poverty in America. Jacqui earned her Master of Divinity from Princeton Theological Seminary and earned a M.Phil. and a Ph.D. in Psychology and Religion from Drew University. Her doctoral studies focused on racial and gender identity development. She has been adjunct professor at seminaries across the country, including Princeton Theological Seminary, Union Theological Seminary, and the Drew Theological School, where she is currently co-teaching a Doctor of Ministry program in Public Theology with her best friend and spouse, the Rev. John Janka.

Ordained in the Presbyterian Church (USA), Jacqui is the first African American and first woman to serve as senior minister in the Collegiate Church, which was founded in New York City in 1628. She is the author of The Power of Stories: A Guide for Leading Multi-racial, and Multi-cultural Congregations; The Pentecost Paradigm: 10 Essential Strategies to Grow a Multiracial, Multicultural Congregation; and the children’s book, You Are So Wonderful! She is writing a book on fierce love and its power to heal our souls and the world, and a memoir about finding a grown-up God.

Thurber Lectures is an adult community gathering and growth time that is open to all. A meal is served at 19h00, and the presentation is from 19h45-21h15. All are welcome.
If you often find yourself thinking fondly of our interim youth pastors, the Fondells, then we have good news for you; Pastor Jodi’s voice, stories, and teaching are now available in book form! Sadly, neither the words to the Swedish birthday song nor Pastor Doug’s uncanny chicken imitations are included, but if like me, you’ve missed Pastor Jodi’s warmth and directness in calling the church to faithfulness in ministry, you will find that in her book *I Was a Stranger: Encouraging the Church to Welcome and Embrace the Foreigner* (Wipf and Stock, 2019).

The book kicks off with a basic study of the primary biblical texts regarding God’s heart for welcome that have guided her in her ministry, and ends with a guide to help readers explore and apply these texts themselves. In between, Jodi shares example after example of how she’s seen churches transformed when they take seriously the scriptural refrains of loving our neighbors and entertaining strangers.

Before their stint at the American Church in Paris, the Fondells spent 16 years pastoring an international fellowship in Stockholm where, along with a vast repertoire of stories, Jodi also picked up the Swedish habit of *fika*. Reading *I Was a Stranger* feels like sharing one of those cozy coffee breaks with her. This is no ivory tower treatise on the theoretical effects of Christian hospitality, but time spent in the presence of an imminently approachable veteran minister.

Jodi shares candidly not only the joys of relationships formed outside of comfort zones, but also the insecurities and misunderstanding that come along with sharing life with people who come from very different backgrounds and contexts. She offers her experiences both of uplifting connections made and heartbreaking disconnects as she urges churches to open their doors wide to the world that God so loves. In the face of such a lofty calling, Jodi insists on keeping it real, citing the potential rewards for congregations who do so as well as counseling churches to count the costs before undertaking the mission.

Jodi devotes significant time to exploring the difference between integration and assimilation, proffering models of ministry in which we create space for each other’s true selves rather than demanding that others change in order to belong. Believing that understanding breeds compassion, she shares her own and her former parishioners’ stories of relocation, examining the various motivations people have for becoming strangers in a strange land and providing insights into the particular needs of people on the move.

Welcoming them well, she counsels, constitutes a source of blessing for the established community of faith and for those new to it, as all experience the gospel in action. In true Fondell fashion, there is an entire chapter on planning events and parties that both foster and celebrate this radical togetherness. Ultimately, in *I Was a Stranger*, Rev. Jodi Mullen Fondell calls and equips readers to live their faith, whether at home or abroad, in such a way that becomes visibly good news for the whole world.

The American Church welcomes the return in February 2020 of Jodi and Doug Fondell as Interim Associate Pastors for Congregational Ministries

Jodi and Doug have been active in International Church ministry since 1998. Their first call abroad was to Immanuel International in Stockholm, Sweden where a 3-year call yielded 17 years of fruitful and meaningful ministry. Since then they served at the American Church in London, at the ACP, and at All Nations Church Luxembourg.

Prior to moving to Europe, Doug served as associate pastor in the Chicago area where his responsibilities included ministry to youth and young adults along with preaching, leading worship, working with the Christian Education board, teaching Sunday School and directing Vacation Bible School programs. Jodi served as Chaplain of North Park University, a Christian liberal arts college in Chicago where she was engaged with college-age students through pastoral care, leading and planning chapel services, and building campus ministry teams. Both Jodi and Doug have extensive experience in leading mission trips both in the US and abroad.

Listen to their interview broadcast on ACP Today, on Monday 6 January, here: [https://acparis.org/acp-today-53329/](https://acparis.org/acp-today-53329/)
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 12 January 17h**  
Tomohiro HATTA - piano

Liszt  
Transcendental Etude no. 12 ("Chasse Neige")

Schumann  
Kreisleriana Op. 16

Chopin  
Andante spianato et Grande Polonaise brillante Op. 22

**Sunday 19 January 17h**  
Marina GROZDANOVIC - piano

Chopin, Debussy et Scriabine  
et une œuvre pour piano à quatre mains de Rachmaninov  
avec la pianiste invitée Sasha Bajcic

**Sunday 26 January 17h**  
Denis GROTSKY - piano;  
Thierry BARBÉ - double bass

Denis Grotsky  
Thierry Barbé  
piano  
double bass

Beethoven  
Piano Sonata No. 23, Op. 56 « Appassionata »  
Chopin  
Ballade No. 4  
Rachmaninoff  
Piano Sonata No. 2, Op. 36  
Grieg  
Cello Sonata op. 36  
Grotsky  
« Urban Movements » for Double Bass and Piano

**Sunday 2 February 17h**  
Tien HSIEH - piano

Tien HSIEH  
pianiste

BEETHOVEN  
Sonata No. 32 in C Minor, Op. 111

SCHUBERT  
Sonata No. 21 in B-flat major, D. 960

SCRIABINE  
Douze Préludes Op. 11
The Community Life committee is the gateway to the American Church in Paris. For many years, this committee has served as part of the hospitality branch of the church, attracting new members and visitors through fellowship activities, holiday events, Thurber lectures, and other outreach activities.

The word “community” is very representative of us. We bring people together by providing food, and organizing games and various outdoor meetings. We are often present in the ACP kitchen, providing meals on average for around 50 people during Alpha and Thurber lectures. During the bi-annual congregational meetings, we serve sandwiches to the entire assembly.

We also serve the church during Christmas and Easter, not forgetting the popular Thanksgiving dinner at which we welcome 200 guests for a family-style meal. The Community Life team enjoys organizing events where young and old members and friends of the congregation come together, creating a bonding opportunity.

The committee takes pride in making people feel welcomed and included when visiting the ACP, especially for the first time. We get positive reviews when people attend a Thurber lecture at the church for the first time and are welcomed with delicious food. As the saying goes, *the way to a man’s heart is through his stomach*, and the Community Life team is made up of dedicated professional and amateur chefs who make it their priority to come up with delicious meals to reach the hearts of our congregation and visitors of the ACP. All this we could not do without the help of many volunteers who step in, when and where needed.

The Lay Care ministry, and the African and the Filipino Fellowship groups also fall under our ministry. These fellowships contribute to the rich diversity of our amazing church, provide a feeling of what diversity truly means, and help immigrants to integrate faster in France and to get relevant help.

Leftovers from our events are given to the homeless, and we are happy and proud to be feeding the hungry as they are God’s children. Unity and inclusivity are key to Community Life, and for the development of the church, the body of Christ.

We humbly take this opportunity to welcome all interested persons who would like to join us and serve the ACP community. Please contact us at communitylife@acparis.org.

**Serve the City**

Are you feeling the urge to help those less fortunate around you, but not sure how? Serve the City Paris meets five days a week at La Cafététhèque (75004) at 8h30 to deliver food to the refugees and homeless throughout Paris.

For more information, visit the site www.servethecityparis.com or write to info@servethecity.paris. You will find great opportunities to become a part of the Serve the City movement of volunteers, seeking to show compassion and kindness to the most vulnerable in our city.
There is this idea that ‘sans-papiers’ deserve to lead a hard life because they are illegal. This judgment is ungrounded and offensive because I see residents doing illegal things all the time: illegal parking, speeding, cheating on taxes and social charges. Furthermore, they boast about it.

When I was undocumented, it felt like I was expected to feel ashamed and considered worthless. I was humiliated, and taken advantage of by employers, well-off professionals who had no problem with the lack of legality in allowing me to work for them. My illegality was a cross I had to carry. I have always resented being seen as a criminal, when everything about my personal life was decent.

The procedures at the prefecture can be humiliating, having to wait in line at 6h in the morning to join those for an appointment to renew their annual carte de séjour. Even having to wait once a year can’t be compared to living five years with this awful knot twisting my stomach night and day. Just going to the appointment at the prefecture makes one nervous. When I went there the first time to submit the regularization request, I could barely move, I was so stricken by fear. The odds were real that I could end up handcuffed and sent back to my country. Imagine what it takes to get the employer’s French tax documents that prove that they have the means to pay my salary. Nothing was easy.

When I was waiting my turn at the Cité prefecture, knowing my request for regularization had been approved, I felt equal to anyone sitting in that same room. Now that I am applying for my carte de résident, I feel integrated and safe. From the day I realized I had been fooled by my employers who brought me to Paris from Hong Kong, and made me a ‘sans-papiers,’ I have remained the same – a decent woman and a practicing Christian. This is what defines me then and now.”

The Immigration Clinic is not only about offering solutions and providing legal aid, it is about caring and helping, giving love and support to people in great need and under immeasurable duress. By providing a compassionate ear, the Immigration Clinic team helps carry the burden and lighten the load of those living in fear.
What’s up in Paris  
Events in December/January  
by Karen Albrecht

Food for thought

Long before our current obsession with “eating local,” plenty of effort had to go into finding ready sources of fresh nourishment for the metropolis. Visit the Bibliothèque Forney, hidden inside a storybook castle in the Marais, for “Nourrir Paris,” a fun (and free) look at how the city has been fed, from medieval vegetable plots to the La Villette stockyards, the old central market at Les Halles, and today’s bustling Rungis complex. Gorge on fun facts while you savor the quaint, food-themed shop signs and deliciously evocative photos.  
*Until 1 Feb, quefaire.paris.fr*

Da Vinci lode

Painter, inventor, and quintessential Renaissance man Leonardo da Vinci died 500 years ago, leaving behind some of the world’s most highly prized artworks — and Paris’s most iconic painting. No surprise then that the mandatory reservations for the Louvre’s blockbuster show are going fast. The museum’s first-ever virtual reality feature allows the impossible fantasy of a tête-à-tête with “La Joconde” herself, getting up close and personal with Leonardo’s enigmatic Mona Lisa.  
*Until 24 Feb, reservations mandatory, www.louvre.fr*

Hans on

The wonderfully geometric premises of the just-renovated Musée d’Art Moderne de Paris are hosting a retrospective of Franco-German painter Hans Hartung (1904-1989), acclaimed for his strikingly geometric “gestural abstract” style. The museum’s freshly rehung permanent collections are a star-studded “who’s who” of 20th-century art. Ready to sample a newer, more out-there vibe? Check out “You,” uber-contemporary video, sculpture, installations, and more from Lafayette Anticipations, through 16 February.  
*Until 1 March, www.mam.paris.fr*

Hobbit-forming

Libraries have always been a place to open one’s imagination, but the Bibliothèque Nationale de France takes it to a whole new level: the middle-earth. J.R.R. Tolkien (1892-1973), a brainy Oxford don who specialized in medieval languages and literature, dreamed up an elaborate fictional universe, complete with its own landscapes, peoples and languages. The show features original drawings, manuscripts and installations designed to plunge visitors deep into the mythical realm of the Lord of the Rings.  
*Until 16 February, bnf.fr*

Opposites attract

The vintage Palais de la Découverte science museum, nestled behind the Grand Palais, has for generations been the place for hands-on science experiments that serve as a tantalizing peek, inviting a deeper delve into the secrets of the universe. The current show “Magnétique” is no exception, exploring the mysteries and marvels of magnetism, starting with the humble refrigerator magnet and ranging on up to the North Pole, right on down to nanoparticles.  
*Until 3 May, www.palais-decouverte.fr*

Fair play

Been cooped up inside for too long? Take a welcome break from art shows, power shopping and holiday merry-making for a stroll through the outdoor funfair at La Villette. Try your hand at winning a plush prize at the carnival booths, then brace for a very brisk ride on the giant rollercoaster, or a gentler spin on the colorful merry-go-round. Just remember to take your mittens off before you sample the sticky cotton candy.  
*7 December-4 January, lavillette.com*

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© The Tolkien Estate Ltd 1937, 1992  
© Ph Levy-EPPDCS1  
© Forney/CHVP
ACP property development work, 2nd phase
by Daniel Grout

Plans for the big church building renovation project are moving forward. In October, the American and Foreign Christian Union (AFCU) held a development meeting in the US, in Minnesota. The ACP Property Committee presented the property development plans as proposed and submitted by the architects from Pei Partnership – Cortes Associés.

Before leaving for the US, the Property Committee met with the architects to discuss their proposed development plan for the church building and the cover over the court yard. The committee had asked for some revisions which they received in time for the AFCU meeting.

The vision of the architects is to develop the attic into apartments for the senior pastor and the music director in order to free up the space on the third floor for more meeting rooms.

It is envisioned to enlarge the current lift for people with disabilities, so that it conforms to the norms, and also to extend its reach to the top floors.

The staircase on the side of rue Jean Nicot would also be extended to reach the attic. The proposal includes creating a new stairwell at the back of the building with a lift to carry goods and people. It would replace the current dumbwaiter.

The AFCU team listened very carefully to the presentation by the Property Committee, and the decision was made to go ahead with further thinking, as the congregation would need to decide what to do with the space that would be freed.

The AFCU is also concerned about the funding of the project, and what the ratio would be between space for the church and its committees and rental space.

A commission has been set up to reflect on those questions. The next AFCU development meeting is scheduled to be held in May 2020 and the church hopes to provide some answers by that time. The Property Committee will organize further meetings with the congregation to present the development plan.

It is all very exciting! A suivre...

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
Paris to Chartres in slippers
by Carol Mundinger

Last September, a group of 10 ladies from the ACP, as well as from other parts of France and the world (the US, Switzerland, Jerusalem), started out on a pilgrimage from Paris to Chartres. We walked down the Seine from the church to Notre Dame, where we threw all our troubles and worries into the water. From there we started south out of Paris and into the banlieue.

It was a rather nice day at the beginning, but by lunchtime it was pouring down rain. We ate our lunch in a woods, some using picnic tables and others sitting on the ground under dense trees to try to keep their sandwiches from getting too soggy. We ended up laughing about the situation, since what else could you do?

We spent the first night in an Abbaye in Vauhallan, after walking about 28 kilometers that first day. I had good sports shoes that I had bought a year earlier and had done quite a bit of hiking in the mountains of Colorado in the summer, so I figured my shoes were well broken in. It turns out that 28 kilometers is not at all the same as 15 to 20. A few kilometers before arriving in Vauhallan, my shoes had started digging into the back of my left heel and causing more and more pain, since they rose up higher than any of my other shoes.

When we got to the Abbaye, I took off my shoes and put on my slippers to great relief. They rode down below the point that was hurting, so as long as there was nothing touching that point, there was no pain. When we went down to dinner, I mentioned how my heel had been hurting and pulled down my sock to show someone and gasped at the severe bruise and swelling. I also realised that it was so tender that I couldn’t even touch it. Great. How was I to walk the remaining 90 kilometers?

Kim suggested I should wear other shoes, but I only had dress shoes with a bit of a heel which wouldn’t do on wet and rocky ground. How about those slippers? They’re Mahabi slippers which are very firm and have a detachable rubber sole, but I didn’t think that walking 90 kilometers in slippers would be possible. Well, I ended up doing just that, since I didn’t really have a choice. Those slippers ended up being a Godsend.

My feet felt great and I had not even put a dent in the rubber soles, even after tramping through fields, forests, asphalt, and rocky terrain. God’s presence was among us, guiding us all along the way, giving us determination and protection.

With great emotion, we arrived five days later at the Chartres Cathedral, and received a personal guided tour of the stained-glass windows and labyrinth from Chartres resident and scholar Jill Geoffrion, who happened to be one of our fellow pilgrims.

As we parted ways, after five days of a tight bond between the nine walkers and three helpers, it was suggested that I contact the Mahabi company and recount the story. So I did that when I got back, letting them know what a great product they have. I immediately received a response from them, congratulating me for the undertaking and offering me a new pair free of charge. They even suggested their deluxe leather model, which was twice as expensive as my original pair!

They arrived in the mail last week, just in time to hear about them on the ACP Today radio show, where fellow pilgrims Monica, Kim, Kate and Carrie shared their experiences (and mine) about our pilgrimage, as well as Kim’s much greater experience walking the Camino St.-Jacques-de-Compostelle. Now, I wonder if that pilgrimage could be done in Mahabi slippers?
Search process for an Interim Senior Pastor
by Valentina Lana

A successful transition is a transition that is carefully planned. With the term of our Senior Pastor coming to an end in July 2020, the AFCU and the American Church in Paris Human Resources Committee have been hard at work since the fall of 2018, aiming to achieve a smooth transition for the ACP. For one year, our congregation will be served by an Interim Senior Pastor.

The first actions of the process for us at the ACP was to draft a job description, and to create a search committee whose makeup reflects the diversity of our congregation. Meanwhile, the AFCU created a search committee that received the applications and performed a thorough screening of the applicants’ credentials and experience. Now it’s up to the ACP search committee to interview the AFCU’s shortlisted candidates.

The interviews of the shortlist of candidates sent to us by the AFCU will take place between the end of 2019 and the beginning of the new year, the goal being to have a final decision made by March 2020. Members of the Search Committee would appreciate the prayers of the congregation during the process.

The seven members of the ACP Search Committee are:
- Teteh Atikpo, for the congregation at large;
- Daniel Grout, for the ACP’s HR Committee;
- Kerry Lieury, Secretary of the Council;
- Lela Losq, for the ACP’s HR Committee;
- Savannah Saunders, for the congregation at large;
- Ashleigh Searle, for the congregation at large;
- Marleigh White, Moderator of the Council.

We are very grateful to the AFCU and to the ACP’s Search Committees for their service to our congregation in this indeed crucial process, and we can’t wait to see what the future holds for our congregation.

Sunday Women’s Bible Study
12 January, 12h15 – 13h15, room F2
Continuing with our study of “Focus on Forgiveness,” we will be reflecting on the older son in the Parable of the Prodigal. This study is led by Teri Lee Valluy and all women are welcome to attend.

The Kids’ Bible Study is also at this time, and the nursery is available. For more information, email sundaywomensbible@acparis.org

The Movie Discussion Group
19h30, Thursday, 16 January
ACP, Salle G5

This month’s movies to see beforehand:
- A Hidden Life/Une vie cachée
- Little Women/Les Filles du Docteur March
- Echo
- The Farewell/L’Adieu

Contact: movies@acparis.org
Tuesday Women’s Bible Study
10h30-12h30, ACP Catacombs
We are beginning a study of the Life Change Bible Study Series: Colossians & Philemon. All women are welcome to attend this bible study. Childcare is available but please notify us a week in advance so we can schedule an attendant. Contact: Jenn at jennshinn13@gmail.com.

January schedule
7 Jan: Book distribution, fellowship, towel washing, and prayer
14 Jan: Overview of Colossians
21 Jan: Thanks and Concerns
28 Jan: ACTS prayer and brunch

New Member Orientation
Interested in learning more about the American Church in Paris, perhaps in becoming a member? Come along to the New Member Orientation, 26 January, at 12h15, or drop us a line at membership@acparis.org
Sandwich-making and Sipping
29 January, 13h30-15h30 in the Thurber Kitchen

Join us to make sandwiches to be delivered to homeless and refugee populations. This event is financially supported by the ACP and the food will be distributed by Serve the City volunteers. Feel free to bring a few bags of sliced bread if you would like. We will make fresh sandwiches together and share conversation.

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 2 and 16 December. The 45-minute program is an exciting and inspiring mix of music, interviews, sermon highlights, and discussion on hot topics.

Tune into 100.7 FM, Radio Fréquence Protestante. 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.

On Monday 6 January, Ashleigh Searle hosts, with Senior Pastor Scott Herr. They speak with Jodi and Doug Fondell about their arrival at the ACP for the Interim Associate Pastor position, discuss Epiphany and the New Year, Carolyn Bouazouni, prison ministry, shares the joy of sharing Christmas with those in prison, and Josh Veit talks about his participation in the 100 nights refugee ministry.

On Monday 20 January, Alison Benney hosts, with Visiting Pastor Dan Michalek. The theme is Bible study, with Teri Lee Valluy speaking about her ongoing Bible Study series on Forgiveness, and John Price on the six-week study groups on the book Making Sense of the Bible. Thurber speaker Rev. Jacqui Lewis will join to describe her upcoming talk on “Liberating God.”

Friends and visitors, what better way to keep in touch with the ACP family and learn about the latest ACP news? If you want to catch up, all our shows are available on the ACP website. 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.
Stewardship & the Friday Mission Lunch
by Ashley Hafer

The arms of community at ACP are far-reaching and have been for decades. One of our long-standing missions at the church is the Friday Mission Lunch (FML). In conjunction with other community and religious organizations, it has operated for over 26 years! The lunch was started by a canon at the American Cathedral in Paris. Soon thereafter, the ACP began to participate in this tradition of inclusion.

The FML as it is referred to, is a weekly lunch held primarily at the American Cathedral of Paris. Each Friday, one of several local teams (one being the ACP team) spearheads a fantastic gourmet menu and assembles a four-course meal that is served in a formal dining room over an hour. This long-standing fellowship has served over 1,400 meals in its duration. The meals are served 52 weeks of the year. Since its inception, only two Friday meals were redirected to box lunches due to fire or ash damage. Otherwise, it’s business as usual for the volunteers even on Christmas and other holidays!!

Mission lunch guests enjoy a hot meal, consisting of a main dish and sides, frequently comprised of a traditional French main. This is followed by a salad course, then a lovely cheese and bread option. Dessert is often a homemade seasonal cake or fruit dish. The guests are then offered hot tea and coffee. Holiday meals are especially festive with traditional turkey at Thanksgiving, Halloween autumn offerings in late October and of course a sumptuous Christmas meal on the week preceding Noel. At Christmas time, the guests are given a gift from the FML community that is thoughtfully wrapped and presented.

The meal commences with a prayer (in English), well actually, two prayers! The volunteers pray for the service quietly in the kitchen, thanking God for the ability to serve our guests in community and joy. The guests and volunteers then pray together in French, offering gratitude for the hot meal and remembering those who could not join in that day.

The 64 guests at the dining tables include a wide spectrum of situations. Some have homes, but not adequate resources for nutrition. Others are new to Paris and just getting settled in a housing situation. Many do not speak English, but the community finds many ways to communicate. There are men, women and often children at the table. The group changes a little each week, although many of our guests have been attending for years. The guests form a special bond as they take their spots at their favorite table and reconnect with one another as well as the volunteers, sharing the news of the week. The discussion at lunch is always meaningful, often energized and never dull!

Stewardship at ACP is the tool that allows this fine tradition to survive. Our various mission projects require your support each year to continue. The benefit of stewardship to our ACP donors is huge! As you walk around the city that you love, you can be confident that this mission as well as countless others carry the message of God’s love and concern to our community.

There are opportunities for you to volunteer at the FML as well, cooking, serving, and cleaning. Register (even just once) as a volunteer with the relentless team of chefs that show up each week. If you are interested, please contact: Kristie Worrel at fridaymissionlunch@acparis.org

Come along to the Adult Fellowship Group

The Adult Fellowship Group started as a 30Plus group and has grown to an all-church, all ages, children included, friends-invited monthly event.

We meet each month for an activity, to be determined by the group, and ideas are welcome. Get to know your ACP brothers and sisters (better). Talk, listen, play, be yourself!

Contact Daphne at 30plusfellowship@acparis.org
Kids' Bible Study

in French and English

12 January, 12h15 – 13h15

For more information contact Allison Wheeler at childrensworship@acparis.org.
The women’s monthly Bible study is also at this time.

Please help keep our children healthy

Because we want to keep the ACP nursery and toddler rooms safe and hygienic places to play and rest, children who are sick will not be admitted to the nursery and toddler rooms. This is to protect all of our children from communicable illnesses. We also assume that a child who is unwell will prefer to be at home with their parent(s) or caregiver(s) rather than at Sunday nursery. Thank you for your consideration and cooperation. If you have any questions, please email Allison Wheeler at childrensworship@acparis.org.

DOCENT TOUR VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Love history? Proud of the American Church in Paris? Learn the history and architecture of our church sanctuary, and lend a hand on the weekend of the Journées du Patrimoine in September. We need you to help welcome the community into our church! Contact Alison at Spire@acparis.org.

Rainbow Connection Grief Support

A support group for those mourning the loss of a loved one. All meetings are free and facilitated by a therapist who specializes in grief therapy. The meetings take place in the Catacombs. Contact: RainbowConnectionGS@gmail.com

e-Stewardship

In response to your feedback, we are trying to make it easier to give, and provide options or those who do not carry cash or checks. You can now use your bank card to donate to ACP.

We pass around “electronic baskets” along with the regular offering plates during the offertory at worship services. They are easy to use, requiring only two steps (see the instruction cards in the pews). Your donation will show up in your bank statement as “Quete demat CB.”
Paris is currently in the throes of the worst transportation strike in years forcing Parisians and tourists alike to walk more than ever. It is somewhat ironic that at this time the Musée des Arts Décoratifs is hosting *Walk this Way*, a temporary exhibit dedicated to the shoe and how it evolved from the Middle Ages to today, across Asia, Europe, Africa and the Americas.

Initially, shoes were designed to be functional. They were suitable for the terrain, the lifestyle, and the climate, and even centuries ago, regardless of the continent, shoe designs were quite similar. Design elements had a purpose. Turned up toes, for example, prevented dust and sand from getting inside the shoe. However, shoes created for geishas, concubines, courtesans and the harem, aimed to elevate the wearer and make her visible above the crowd. Both the Renaissance *chopine* and the Japanese *geta* rose as high as 20cm off the ground, meaning someone had to be there for support. There are several examples of these shoes in the exhibit, as well as an area where visitors can test out the shoes themselves, complete with railings for balance.

Mid-exhibit is a special room dedicated to the Chinese practice of foot-binding, a deforming and painful process that inhibited a woman from walking. Dating back to the 11th century and originally only seen among the aristocracy, the bound foot, no longer than four inches, resembled a lotus blossom, and was supposed to guarantee a fine marriage. Tiny feet were appreciated in the West as well. In the 17th century small feet were considered a sign of virtue – just think of Cinderella and her dainty feet compared to her evil stepsisters who couldn’t cram their feet into the glass slipper!

By the 17th century in Europe, decorative elements such as embroidery, beading, and leather trim embellished simple designs and indicated the elevated social status of the wearer. While hard-working peasants were shod in heavy dark boots, the nobles wore delicate cloth shoes. For those who had to venture out into the dirty streets, it was customary to wear a wooden overshoe – almost like an open-toe platform clog – into which a more delicately clad foot could slide. Slipper-style “at-home shoes” proliferated in the 18th century and are the precursors to mules, slip-ons, and cozy fireside shoes. By the 19th century, walking became a pastime as *flaneurs* strolled the grands boulevards in Paris and other European capitals, so comfort became important, necessitating the rise of the master shoemaker.

Prior to modern times, the only way to get a pair of shoes was to visit the shoemaker for a made-to-measure product. It wasn’t until the mid-19th century that arch support came into being, and not until the late 1800s that shoes were made with specific right and left designs. Generally, men’s shoes emphasized the toe whereas for women, the highlight was on the heel, and normally the height. While men’s shoes still resemble a foot, women’s shoes are often a far cry away, sometimes not even designed to allow the wearer to walk. Examples include elevated platforms, platforms, towering stilettos, and fetish shoes which force the wearer to watch her step. It would be so easy to lose balance and come tumbling down. An amusing selection of such shoes are on display, some even lurking behind peek-a-boo curtains.

Myths speak of Hermes and Perseus walking on air with wings on their heels. If only a master shoemaker could create such a shoe, it would be easier for Parisians to deal with the transportation strike!

*Marche et démarche. Une histoire de la chaussure*, Musée des Arts Décoratifs, 107 Rue de Rivoli, 75001, through 23 February.
2020

4 February
Jacqueline Lewis

10 March
Odette Lockwood-Stewart

21 April
Keri Day

thurber conversations

The American Church in Paris
Food, Lecture and Conversation | Tuesday’s 19h00 - 21h15
### Special Events and Monthly Meetings and Concerts

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<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Location</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Atelier Concert</strong></td>
<td>Sunday 5 Jan</td>
<td>17h</td>
<td>Sanctuary</td>
<td>Fred Gramann</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Jorge HERRANZ - piano</strong></td>
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<td><a href="mailto:music@acparis.org">music@acparis.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>ACP Today: Faith Talk in Paris radio show</strong></td>
<td>Monday 6 Jan</td>
<td>20h45-21h30</td>
<td>100.7 FM, Radio Fréquence Protestante</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Monthly All-Church Fellowship</strong></td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>From 20h email contact for location</td>
<td>Daphne 30plusfellowship @acparis.org</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Jorge HERRANZ - piano</strong></td>
<td>Sunday 5 Jan</td>
<td>17h</td>
<td>Sanctuary</td>
<td>Fred Gramann</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>ACP MOPS (mothers of children ages newborn-18)</strong></td>
<td>Friday 10 Jan</td>
<td>10h-12h</td>
<td>email contact for location</td>
<td><a href="mailto:mops@acparis.org">mops@acparis.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Friday Mission Lunch (volunteers needed)</strong></td>
<td>Friday 10 Jan</td>
<td>10h-14h</td>
<td>The American Cathedral</td>
<td>If you are interested, please first contact: Kristie Worrel <a href="mailto:fridaymissionlunch@acparis.org">fridaymissionlunch@acparis.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Writers Group</strong></td>
<td>Saturday 11 Jan</td>
<td>14h30 - 16h30</td>
<td>email contact for location</td>
<td>Tendayi Chirawu <a href="mailto:writers@acparis.org">writers@acparis.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>ACP Community Book Study of Making Sense of the Bible: Rediscovering the Power of Scripture Today</strong>, by Adam Hamilton begins this week.</td>
<td>Groups are meeting on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursday, Saturdays and Sundays.</td>
<td>John Price <a href="mailto:jpygmalyon@gmail.com">jpygmalyon@gmail.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Women’s Monthly Bible Study - Focus on forgiveness</strong></td>
<td>Sunday 12 Jan</td>
<td>12h15-13h15 F2 (first floor)</td>
<td>Teri Lee Valluy</td>
<td><a href="mailto:sundaywomensbible@acparis.org">sundaywomensbible@acparis.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>All women welcome to study what the Bible says about forgiving and being forgiven. Free childcare is provided.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Kid’s Monthly Bible Study</strong></td>
<td>Sunday 12 Jan</td>
<td>12h15-13h15</td>
<td>G7 (English); Catacombs (Fr)</td>
<td>Allison Wheeler <a href="mailto:childrenworship@acparis.org">childrenworship@acparis.org</a></td>
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<td>All children ages 7-12 welcome to study the “Who’s Who” of Bible Characters. The course is taught in English and French.</td>
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<td><strong>Tomohiro HATTA - piano</strong></td>
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<td><a href="mailto:music@acparis.org">music@acparis.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>The Movie Discussion Group</strong></td>
<td>Thursday, 16 Jan</td>
<td>19h30</td>
<td>Salle G5</td>
<td>Rebecca Brite, <a href="mailto:movies@acparis.org">movies@acparis.org</a></td>
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<td>This month’s movies to see beforehand: A Hidden Life, Little Women, Echo, and The Farewell</td>
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<td><strong>ACP Café</strong></td>
<td>Friday 17 Jan</td>
<td>20h</td>
<td>Theater</td>
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<tr>
<td>Come celebrate the New Year with music featuring the Orsay Jazz Quartet and more. Drinks and dinner for purchase, Open to all. Free entry.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Women’s Fellowship</strong></td>
<td>Sunday 19 Jan</td>
<td>12h15-13h30</td>
<td>Thurber Room</td>
<td>Kim Herr / Kate Snipes <a href="mailto:women@acparis.org">women@acparis.org</a></td>
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<td>Alison Benney will speak on Secrets of the Sanctuary: Learning about the hidden corners of the American Church in Paris. All women are invited. Childcare provided.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Atelier Concert</strong></td>
<td>Sunday 19 Jan</td>
<td>17h</td>
<td>Sanctuary</td>
<td>Fred Gramann</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Marina GROZDANOVIC - piano</strong></td>
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<td><a href="mailto:music@acparis.org">music@acparis.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>ACP Today: Faith Talk in Paris radio show</strong></td>
<td>Monday 20 Jan</td>
<td>20h45-21h30</td>
<td>100.7 FM, Radio Fréquence Protestante</td>
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<td>Tune in for inspiring music and interviews.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Atelier Concert</strong></td>
<td>Sunday 26 Jan</td>
<td>17h</td>
<td>Sanctuary</td>
<td>Fred Gramann</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Denis GROTSKY - piano; Thierry BARBÉ - double bass</strong></td>
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<td><a href="mailto:music@acparis.org">music@acparis.org</a></td>
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<td>Free admission, with free-will offering</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>New Member Orientation</strong></td>
<td>Sunday 26 Jan</td>
<td>12h15</td>
<td>Library</td>
<td><a href="mailto:laycaregivers@acparis.org">laycaregivers@acparis.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Please RSVP to <a href="mailto:laycaregivers@acparis.org">laycaregivers@acparis.org</a> to join the class. All are welcome.</td>
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STILL POINT PRESENTS

ACP CAFE

FEATURING
ORSAY JAZZ QUARTET
AND MORE

17 JANUARY 2020 • 20H
THE AMERICAN CHURCH IN PARIS
THEATRE

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