Thoughts from
The Rev. Dr. Scott Herr
Senior Pastor
June, 2013

Dear Members and Friends of the ACP,

As the summer Equinox comes upon us on 21 June, you may be wondering, “What ever happened to Spring?” Apparently it’s been the gloomiest winter in Germany in 43 years... The British Telegraph newspaper had a piece today as I’m writing this entitled, “When will this Winter end?” It feels like it’s been the long winter of our discontent in France as well. I suppose the farmers are glad for all of the rain, but I’m just hoping that when summer actually is official, that it will start to feel a little warmer and sunnier! All of the rain can affect even the most resilient personalities.

With the recent tragic incident at the school on rue Cler, a rather dreary but important article in the International Herald Tribune, entitled “All the Lonely People,” caught my attention. The sad part is that suicide rates have gone up sharply in the United States, particularly among middle-aged men. That’s my demographic, so I got focused as I read the article. Strangely, weather wasn’t a main factor, even though I know very well (having grown up in the Great Northwest: aka, the Land of “Indirect Lighting”) that weather does have an effect on one’s mental well-being. The recent study highlighted how sociologists made a strong link between depression and weakened social ties. People become seriously depressed and even suicidal “when they get disconnected from society’s core institutions (e.g., marriage, religion) or when their economic prospects take a dive (e.g., unemployment).”

While we pray for those who are out of work and searching for employment, as a church we can provide immediate refreshment and encouragement simply by opening the doors and welcoming people to spirit-filled and dynamic worship every week, and by providing loving community opportunities such as fellowship hour, Thurber Thursdays, Bible studies and small group meetings where people can connect with other people in meaningful ways. Perhaps you read David Brook’s article, “What Our Words Tell Us” in the New York Times about Google’s newly released database of 5.2 million books published between 1500 and 2008? In the past 28 years, there has been a severe rise in Individualism (See Bowling Alone, by Robert Putnam). Individualism has its upsides, for sure, but increasing isolation is a big downside. And isolation is compounded when a student or family moves to a foreign country. Part of the hardship of living abroad is the extra effort to break out of isolation which results from losing the normal family and friend network back home, especially when you aren’t even comfortable saying hello to someone in a foreign language!

Indeed, the mission of the American Church is spiritual, but part of our spiritual “health” has everything to do with our sense of belonging and being a part of a community. This is as true today as it was almost 200 years ago when the first English-speaking Christians started having services together here in Paris. This is as true today as it was 2,000 years ago when Jesus commanded his disciples to “love your neighbor.” Even the casual passerby is sometimes blessed by the fact that the American Church exists and is a welcoming community.

Alert reader Jerome Lieury saw in a recent airline magazine an article about the American Church by someone who was blessed to just walk by and visit. Anjlo Ajmal provided warm hospitality and the man found here a place “filled with calm and spirituality.”

Perhaps the best way to bring a little sunshine into someone’s life is to share with them the grace and love of God. Anyone of us can share good news with a guest through offering the world-wide welcome of Jesus. Especially this summer when we welcome so many visitors. Take a moment. Smile. Shake someone’s hand. Ask them how they’re doing. You may literally save their life.

In Christ,

http://www.spiegel.de/international/germany/germany-weathers-darkest-winter-in-43-years-a-885608.html
http://www.telegraph.co.uk/topics/weather/9948524/When-will-this-winter-ever-end.html
http://www.nytimes.com/2013/05/21/opinion/brooks-what-our-words-tell-us.html?ref=global-home&r=0
Dear Friends,

This year our family will enjoy our first summer together in Paris. The summer season has always evoked good memories for me – of beauty, rest and play. I think of summer as beautiful flowers, home-grown vegetables, long days, and (hopefully) time to rest, rejuvenate and enjoy the many gifts God’s creation offers: singing birds, lush grass, the hum of the bumble bee, gentle evening breezes and starlit night skies dotted by the glow of the firefly. I am certain that my list will change a bit this year, but that it will include: summer picnics on the Champs de Mars, sailing boats in Luxembourg and gelato!

This summer I encourage you to take time to reflect upon God’s good creation, in whatever form it might take and wherever you might be. Maybe even take some time to enjoy a cone filled with gelato that you have to consume extra fast because it drips endlessly away in the summer’s heat. There’s nothing like the lure of gelato to help one feel like a kid enjoying the bounty of a summer’s day.

As you’re slurping away at your gelato remember that there are many opportunities for fellowship, worship and mission here at ACP – even in the summer! So bring the gelato and join us for upcoming activities like the End of Year Family Ministry Event, the Father’s Day BBQ, the 4 July celebration, Vacation Bible School, the August Habitat Trip…. (you get the picture)! Keep your Spire handy, check the website and your bulletins for activity updates – these great resources will keep you informed about life at ACP.

As we enjoy the Lord’s good creation and we participate fully in life together at ACP, I am certain that we will grow during this summer. I pray that we might find new ways of praising God during this season – that our enjoyment leads to real joy and, perhaps, renewed ways of hearing and understanding the story of faith. Maybe our new eyes will even be a bit more “childlike,” as our hearts are opened to what God has to offer us. I offer you these words from Henry Wadsworth Longfellow as a model for your summer:

"That beautiful season the Summer!

Filled was the air with a dreamy and magical light;

and the landscape lay as if new created in all the freshness of childhood." (Henry Wadsworth Longfellow)

May you be blessed with Sabbath rest. May you have the opportunity to enjoy God’s good creation this summer. And may you be opened to an even deeper joy, that you might praise God in new ways!

Bénédictions,

Michelle
We all have choices to make: choices about how to spend our time, our talents and our treasures. Let me be more precise. We do have choices to make but perhaps not about anything we possess. As Christians, we believe that all we have is given to us by our gracious God. We are stewards of everything we own, the time we have and even life itself. So the question becomes... what are we doing with our life? Are we living for ourselves or others? Is our life making a difference in the world around us?

Nelson Mandela said, “What counts in life is not the mere fact that we have lived. It is what difference we have made to the lives of others that will determine the significance of the life we lead.”

Volunteering is a powerful way to make a difference and be the change we want to see in the world. This does not have to be a two-week trip to remote parts of an African jungle! Giving a Friday morning to help serve with the Friday Mission Lunch or volunteering with refugee relief services in Paris are other ways to offer your time.

For more information about local and global missions here at ACP, please visit the following link: http://www.acparis.org/worship-mission/missions

Through service opportunities, both global and local, it is our prayer to positively impact others through our presence and resources. This happens whether we are physically constructing a home or school, providing medical aid, feeding the hungry, teaching, or bringing laughter and smiles of joy upon the faces of children.

I believe that opportunities exist for everyone to use what time (great or small) that they have and match it to a passion. When this occurs, the power of volunteering impacts the volunteer as well. Team members and volunteers return with their hearts touched and changed. Jesus said, “It is better to give than to receive.” By volunteering you discover that by giving, you receive!

You may never know the power of your volunteering, but every single act of kindness and generosity does make a difference. Regarding her work with the Missionaries of Charity in Calcutta India, Mother Theresa once said, “We ourselves feel that what we are doing is just a drop in the ocean. But the ocean would be less because of that missing drop.”

This reminds me of a story:

One day a man was walking along the beach when he noticed a boy picking something up and gently throwing it into the ocean. Approaching the boy, he asked, “What are you doing?” The youth replied “Throwing starfish back into the ocean. The surf is up and the tide is going out. If I don’t throw them back, they’ll die.” “Son”, the man said, “don’t you realize there are miles and miles of beach and hundreds of starfish? You can’t make a difference!”

After listening politely, the boy bent down, picked up another starfish and threw it back into the surf. Then, smiling at the man, he said, “I made a difference for that one.”

I believe God is moving and that He is moving towards reconciliation and restoration. It is God’s desire to partner with his people in this dream. Our world is beautiful and yet broken.
Hearts and lives are in need of repair, as are our physical surroundings. By God’s grace you can make a difference. With God’s help, we can change the world. Volunteering is a powerful way to join with God in bringing hope and healing to our brothers and sisters... our “neighbors”, whether they live next door, in the next arrondissement or half-way around the world. Strangely, it will be your life that is changed the greatest as a result.

In Christ,
Dan Haugh

Cookbook for comfort

Some travelers like doing things the hard way. They careen from one adventure to another, enjoy making mistakes and relish the times it goes right. Then there are those who don’t want to waste time, bumper-car style, on trivialities; they want to understand how things work and get on with the fun.

These are the people who attend the American Church’s orientation program for expats, Bloom Where You’re Planted, this year taking place on 5 October. For over 40 years, Bloom has been illuminating Paris’ obscure little mysteries – bakery etiquette, work visas, brittle nails – and easing expats into its joie de vivre of the city. The Bloom guidebook, which a recent International Herald Tribune blog called “as homey as a garden club cookbook,” is a compendium of priceless tips on cultural differences such as school vacations, cuts of meat, or hooking up the utilities. Registration is open; save you or a friend a lot of bumbling, and bloom where you’re planted.

For more information please visit: http://www.acparis.org/community-activities/bloom-where-youre-planted or read the IHT blog on the book: http://rendezvous.blogs.nytimes.com/2013/05/10/if-you-knew-then-what-you-know-now/

Father’s Day Celebration

Celebrate Dad's Day with Grilled Burgers and Hot Dogs, served with all the trimmings! Join us in the ACP Courtyard on Sunday, 16 June. We will be serving after both the 11h00 and the 13h30 services so all the dads and families can enjoy a Father's Day luncheon celebration!
Painting with the Spirit

by Camilla Furman

On Saturday, 27 April the spirit flowed and we reached inside ourselves and truly expressed ourselves with Monica Basset’s encouragement! The paints came alive and our canvases took on life as we created our feelings and our thoughts, as well as our dreams and ambitions.

It was really an amazing journey to go from a blank white canvas, knowing you can create ANYTHING, and then suddenly realizing that you don’t even know where to start! To putting together an idea and build on that idea, until something emerges, is exhilarating, and you realize that indeed you had created something that says something about who you are and what you are about. It is a very personal moment, and there is something so very cathartic about it.

Each person participating had a unique and creative streak that was just yearning to be expressed. Monica’s presentation helped us each to understand that it really isn’t about what you create, but the process of creating it, and expressing yourself. This was an important concept that really allowed us to become free, and not be so critical of ourselves as we delved into this process of letting the spirit guide our inner being, to become a tool of outlet of our emotions, thoughts and dreams.

At the end of our session, a very nice gentleman came to pick up his wife, and he started to try to guess which painting was hers. He tried his best, but chose everybody else’s painting over hers, not being able to recognize her work. We had some good laughs at his “interpretations” of our works, and then we each had a chance to explain our masterpieces. Each had an important and even profound story and we were all impressed by each other’s creative talent. The paintings were all just amazing, and became even more amazing when the story and the feelings behind the paintings were discussed.

I hope that everyone will get a chance to discover this wonderful exercise of letting out your inner artist, with the help of the Holy Spirit which guides us in a powerful way. You don’t have to “know” how to paint, or think of yourself as a “creative person”, to really benefit from this incredibly spiritual experience.

I thank Monica and her husband Lionel, for sharing their gifts with us so we could have the chance to explore this creative way to express ourselves. We will be doing this again soon, so I encourage you not to be shy when you see the announcement! Come and Paint with the Spirit, and share in fun and fellowship and really feel how God blesses us by allowing us to have the opportunity to be expressive.
From Your Council ~ What’s Going On!

Thoughts from Your
Moderator and Vice Moderator
Radford Laney and Pamela Bohl

May was an important month in the life of the ACP. Not only were there inspirational services, like Pentecost and fellowship opportunities, like Africa Night, but during May there was also a lot of “behind the scenes” activity. This month the nominating committee completed its work and provided the slate of Council members for the 2013-14 year, including the nominating committee itself. This slate was presented for a vote during the congregational meeting this on 26 May. We want to thank the Nominating Committee for their dedication to the important task of identifying qualified lay leaders.

This month the Council also approved the funds for a number of important property and development projects which have been under consideration for some time. These include spire, roof and drain repairs, cleaning and restoration of the building exterior and installation of a handicap access. We have a wonderful facility and these projects will help ensure we can continue to “bless the city” by providing a well maintained place of worship.

To help manage the wonderful trend of growth at ACP, the Human Resources Committee, at the request of Council has begun the search for a Christian Education Coordinator. This is an important role that will help ensure, among other things, that the Children’s Worship is managed effectively. We expect this to be filled by September, in time for the new school year.

A lot has been accomplished this month at the ACP. We are very blessed to have committed professionals and a talented pool of volunteers who oversee the broad range of activities at ACP.

Respectfully,
Radford and Pam
Children’s Worship

"Let the little children come to me and do not hinder them for the kingdom of God belongs to them" Luke 18:16

SAVE THE DATE: End of Year Family Party for Children’s Worship, 9 June from 12h00 to 13h30 in the Courtyard and garden-level rooms.

Godly Play Bible Stories for 3-8 year olds:

9 June: Peter Heals a Lame Man in Jerusalem (Acts 3:1-16)
16 June: Philip Goes to Samaria (Acts 8: 4-25)
23 June: Dorcas Helps the Poor in Judea (Acts 9:36-42)
30 June: John Goes Throughout the World (Revelation 21: 1-4)

ROOTED Bible Stories: 9-10 year olds

2 June: Feast/Communion, Jesus Challenges the Rich Young Man (Matthew 19: 16-30)
9 June: Peter Denies Jesus (Luke 9:18-27, Peter 1:3-9)
16 June: Jesus Teaches Us Not to Worry (Matthew 6:25-34; 10:26-30)
23 June: Jesus Teaches Us How to Pray (Luke 11:1-13)
30 June: Jesus Tells of a Son Who Returned Home (Luke 15: 11-32)

**30 JUNE IS LAST DAY OF SUNDAY SCHOOL **

If you need any more information or would like to be involved with CW, please contact Jeanette at childrensworship@acparis.org

Vacation Bible School

Do you enjoy arts and crafts? Enjoy being a part of a summer activity?

The Christian Education team is looking for a coordinator to help lead VBS this summer, 26 to 30 August. If this is something that would be of interest to you, please contact Pastor Michelle at associatepastor@acparis.org
Worship and Music
Anna Zweede and Chad DuBose

The Weekly Atelier Concert Series

Sundays at 17h00, free admission (with free-will offering)

2 June
Clarinet Recital
Julia Heinen (clarinet) and Dimitri Rachmanov (piano)

9 June
Violin, Cello and Piano Recital
Sophie Ayako Girard (violin), Laura Van Kempen (cello) and Charlotte Pailhes (piano)

16 June
Voice Recital
Tony Boutte (tenor) and François Germain (piano) with Michael Alec Rose (composer and pianist)

For more information on the concert programs, please visit the ACP website

Special Concerts in June

2 June
Voices Choeur International and Shine (ACP Youth Choir) Concert. (15h30 at Eglise St. Louis-en-l'Ile)
Adult and youth choirs, directed by Bonnie Woolley, will give an outreach concert to benefit the ARAM (the Association Régional des Aveugles et Malvoyants de Paris et d'Ile de France).

7 June
ACP Café (20h00 in the Theatre)
Join the musicians of Still Point for a relaxing evening of great live music
Christian Education
Anne Speicher and Lori Kolodziejczak

A Call to Live—Small Group Studies

To further the aim of widespread participation in Christian education, small groups are being organized throughout the city, on different days and times at individual homes or at the church. The groups combine Bible study, community, and everyday application. To join a group, please contact the leaders directly.

Saturday Morning Brunch Circle led by Felicia Henderson.

Community Bible Study International will continue an in-depth study entitled God's Amazing Book, led by Ariel Brown, meeting on Sundays until 2 June at 15h30 in the Library, 2nd Floor. Register for the new study on 9 and 16 June at Coffee Hour with meetings re-starting on 23 June.

Would you consider being a Group Leader?
If you would like to be a group leader, please contact Anne at christianeducation@acparis.org or Pastor Wahila at associatepastor@acparis.org

All group leaders will be given a short training by Pastor Wahila.

ACP Filipino Fellowship Bible study on Sundays at 14h00 in the Thurber Room. Contact Virginia Jacinto for more details.

AFACP Bible Study meets on Sundays in G7 at 12h45 (Please note, there is no Bible study on the first Sunday of the month)

ACP Tuesday Morning Women’s Bible Study will be continuing our study of Hebrews. The study runs from 10h30 to 12h30 every Tuesday morning, in the catacombs of the church building. Childcare is available for a minimal fee. Join us for our end-of-year brunch on 25 June. For more information please contact Jennifer Jourlait.

Volunteers needed!
- A coordinator for the All-Church Fall Retreat
- A material coordinator for Children Worship
- A coordinator for the Vacation Bible Study for children (VBS)

For further information, please contact Lori or Anne at christianeducation@acparis.org

Women's Ministry Monthly Gathering
Join us for our last meeting until the Rentée on Sunday, 16 June from 12h30 to 13h30 in the ACP Library on the second floor. Our guest speaker will be Monica Bassett who will talk to us about "Painting in the Spirit" and share with us about her faith journey through art. We hope that you will be able to join us for this time of fellowship.

Contact Kim Herr at women@acparis.org for more information.
Special Screening of ‘It’s a Girl’ Documentary Film
Thursday 27 June in the Thurber Room

In India, China and many other parts of the world today, girls are killed, aborted and abandoned simply because they are girls. The United Nations estimates as many as 200 million girls are missing in the world today because of this so-called “gendercide”.

Girls who survive infancy are often subject to neglect, and many grow up to face extreme violence and even death at the hands of their own husbands or other family members. The war against girls is rooted in centuries-old tradition and sustained by deeply ingrained cultural dynamics which, in combination with government policies, accelerate the elimination of girls.

Shot on location in India and China, ‘It’s a Girl’ reveals the issue. It asks why this is happening, and why so little is being done to save girls and women. The film tells the stories of abandoned and trafficked girls, of women who suffer extreme dowry-related violence, of brave mothers fighting to save their daughters’ lives, and of other mothers who would kill for a son. Global experts and grassroots activists put the stories in context and advocate different paths towards change, while collectively lamenting the lack of any truly effective action against this injustice.

*Please note: no dinner will be served in conjunction with the screening of this film.*

ACP Men’s Group
Come for coffee, conversation, prayer, and fellowship. Any men interested in further information should contact Ed Hyslip.

Young Professionals
Are you between 25 and 39 years old? Experiencing the corporate world in Paris and surrounding areas? Then come and share your experiences with us on Wednesdays in the Catacombs from 19h30 to 21h30.

Our topics for June include stress at work and anxiety.

For more information, please go to the ACP website www.acparis.org/yp or join our Facebook group ACP Young Professionals.

If you have any questions, feel free to contact Elodie.
At Rafiki Village Uganda, we were thrilled to receive twenty more reconditioned used laptop computers for a new lab for our students. But “Teacher Patti’s” computer knowledge is limited to user’s skills. In an e-mail she casually mentioned to Destiny, “…wish we could clone you and have you here to help…. It seemed like an impossible wish. But with God, all things are possible.

Destiny happened to be free just when she was needed at Rafiki. A few e-mails later, she was ready to hop on a plane and come right away. Mike, Rafiki Village director, enthusiastically pitched in to help make her trip possible, knowing that his computer skills don’t go far enough to get the job done, either.

Destiny arrived on Friday, 17 May. She and Patti worked all day on Saturday and were amazed to see how much was accomplished in just that one day. The pressure was off. The job would get done. They spent a wonderful Sunday starting with worship at Watoto Church, the Ugandan version of a “mega” church with fantastic music, a great sermon, and full house of about 2,000 worshipers. Lunch “in town” was followed by a visit to the local craft market - a relaxing Sunday.

On Monday it was back to work for Patti and Destiny finished configuring all 18 laptops for the students’ use. A little more testing and we will be able to say “Mission Accomplished.”
It’s been so much fun to be together again after nearly two years. We met about four years ago at Laurie Wheeler’s training for Children’s Worship story tellers. We became the “One Thirty” crew and good friends. Neither of us had the faintest inkling at the time that God would lead us from twenty-five international children in Paris to one hundred (each!) in Ghana and Uganda. We feel so blessed!
Habitat For Humanity

From 4 to 12 May, a team of 13 Young Adults traveled to Portugal, where they helped to build a new home for families in need. Christina, Elodie and Andry share their thoughts on their H4H experiences.

My First Day in Portugal

by Andry Rakotoarimanana

“What do we have for breakfast?”

At 4h00 the team emerged after a night of games, fellowship and preparation for the trip. I was so excited but my mind was still in Morpheus’ kingdom. After several cups of tea, dried fruits, brioche and croissants, we packed our luggage and asked the Lord to bless our mission trip in Portugal in the unusually quiet ACP reception. No one was missing, we were all present, ready and waiting for the taxis to the airport. When coming out of the church, my skin was shivering, not only due to the fresh and wet weather of the city but from the growing emotion that I was feeling. Paris was silent as we were in the car and with the drizzle pelting down on Boulevard Malesherbes, we left the city behind us as.


The tiles of the chapel located close to Bolhão station were shimmering under the clear and sunny sky of Portugal’s second city. “Your hotel is very close,” announced the woman from Habitat for Humanity who welcomed us at Porto airport and guided us to the hotel. Flowers. Red. Shorts. We were enjoying strolling together in the streets of the old part of the city after having exchanged trousers, pullovers and coats for our summer clothes. Oh yes, we definitely looked like tourists with our sunglasses and loud laughs as we explored Porto. We also took the opportunity to get to know each other better, which would be really important for the work we would be doing during the week. When passing by the Cordoaria garden, we caught sight of the cathedral, standing proudly on the hill and surrounded by the very old historical quarter. We took a boat trip and were stunned by the beautiful red–yellow–blue facades of the houses along the Rio Douro. At this time of the afternoon, we were feeling the effects of our late night and early morning so we headed back to our hotel to check into our rooms. The stairs from the river to the Bentão station seemed endless and during a break to buy fresh drinks a man was advertising a visit to a Porto wine cellar.

Some of our team stayed at the hotel whilst some of us walked around the empty streets of the old Porto Wine quarter. After having climbed up to the monastery of Da Serra do Pilar with its unique round cloister, a UNESCO world heritage building, I left the former convent now guarded by the army and went down to the quiet quarter of the cellars…and I succeeded in getting a place on the last guided tour of the day to visit the “Offley cellar,” in French, with Porto wine tasting!

That evening, we had dinner at a Portuguese restaurant (“recht’ourant” as they say) and tried octopus, cod fish meals and other delicious dishes, whilst looking at many groups of students with long black cloaks and three-horned hats for the annual Porto student celebration starting at midnight. My first day in Porto was so amazing. I fell in love with Portugal.
My Habitat Experience

by Christina Achomuma

I have been a Catholic Christian since I was born, but my real adventure and walk with God only began two and a half years ago. Initially, I wanted to go on this trip because I wanted to learn how to Trust God more. When Teteh invited me on this trip, I knew that God was calling me to go. I could have decided not to; money, what will my parents think? Is this really for me? Can I really build a home? Eventually, after praying about it with Elizabeth Jung, I made up my mind to trust God and go! But trust God in what? I wanted to trust Him to provide the funds and to teach me anything else He wanted me to learn in Portugal. He did! And I am super excited to share this with you!!

We arrived in Porto on a beautiful Saturday morning. We were all tired, but still excited to be there. On Sunday, we left Porto for Braga - the city where we were to work that week. We were warmly received by a member of H4H in Braga. He was our team’s guide throughout our stay. The next day, we went to the construction site for the first time. After calming my nerves with team prayer, we all got to work. Our task throughout the week was to paint two houses and grout tiles in another.

While painting the houses, I learned how to dismantle and set up scaffolding. All instructions given by the construction expert were clear and easy to follow. We also met the family who was to live in the house. The lady was always smiling and opened her garage to us whenever we needed to use the bathroom. She lived in this garage with her children following the death of her husband.

The second house was to be owned by a family of three; a father, a mother and a 17 year old son. They had lost a daughter a few months ago and were impatient to move into their new house so that they could start to move on after this tragic event. This encouraged me to work even harder and, within a few hours, we completed the task given to us. Unfortunately, we weren’t able to do as much on this house as with the first because the rain prevented us from painting outside. We trust that the next Habitat team will do a great job on this project!

All in all, God taught me two vital messages. Firstly, I learned how to appreciate our differences. Every member of the team came from different parts of the world, with new ideas and amazingly different ways of thinking. I learned that there is not always a right or wrong way to do something but that every person should follow the convictions of his heart. I was most especially moved to talk with Christians of different denominations and realize that we are indeed all one body in Christ. Secondly, I also learned that “small is never small.” No matter what little task I was given, it was never little because otherwise the house would not be what it is today. I truly thank God for all He has taught me during this trip. Do I trust Him more than I did before? Honestly, I don’t think so! But I am glad He taught me other lessons. GOD IS GOOD and He will provide. If you want to go on the next trip, just give your name to Teteh, Trust in the Lord and Go!!
My Habitat Diary
by Elodie Lasserre

Friday 3 May, 11h00: phone call from Teteh....
"What are your plans for next week? We have a last minute issue and need an extra volunteer to join our trip. Can you call me in 20 minutes with your answer?"

11:20am: I never thought I would say that but I am glad that I was laid off a couple months ago; it gave me the opportunity to join the Habitat team for an amazing experience! I called Teteh back and rushed to ACP to fill out the volunteer's documents, switch passenger names on the tickets...

Saturday 4 May, 5h00:
Yes you read it correctly: we left ACP at 5am!! Pretty difficult for not an “early bird” like me!
The team quickly connected, we started joking about the fact that I had planned several things for the forthcoming week, but joining a mission trip was not part of my plans! God works in mysterious ways!

Sunday 5 May
We worshiped at the St James Anglican Church of Porto. It is a beautiful church and we were able to talk with the members of the church who were really interested to hear more about our trip.

Monday 6 to Friday 10 May
Work time! We went to our main site and met up with the site manager, Bernardino. He didn’t speak English and we don’t speak Portuguese, so we had quite a few great moments of "Portuglish"!
Thanks to our volunteers’ coordinator, Joao, and his translations, we managed to understand the instructions. We had arrived a couple weeks before the house was supposed to be finished and were in charge of painting inside and outside walls, grouting tiles and digging a trench (then men’s work!). This site was going to be the house for a widow and mother of 4 children. After losing her husband, she decided to send her kids to school, even if it meant not being able to provide them with a decent house. She did so, hoping that she could break the circle of poverty and “bad luck” that they were in. They lived in a garage for years before H4H heard about their situation and came to help. But this super mother managed to reach her goal: her kids are good students or interns and now they are all going to live in a beautiful, decent and safe home.

Thursday 9 May
We could not work on our main site (walls needed to dry and they were doing the tiling) so we went to a new building site to do some wall 'scrubbing and painting'. We met a new family of four and got to hear their story. They started building their house in 2004 with the help of the local government. After elections, the program supporting them was stopped and they could not finish their house. H4H started to help them a few months ago and their home is scheduled to be finished in mid June. The family told us that they were looking forward to leaving their temporary house as soon as possible because they had a very sad event happen there. Their daughter passed away a few months before we came and they explained us it was extremely difficult for them to stay in their current housing and see her empty room. It was a very emotional moment for us, to realize that we were not only building houses but warm homes to help families, like this one, move on from a sad to a hopefully happier time.

I had a lot of fun doing this work with my teammates and the workers from H4H, I never felt like it was “hard work.” Of course you are a bit sore at the end of the day (especially our male teammates who dug the trench!), but you look at the family and you just forgot about any physical pain! What I loved the most about this trip was realizing that Christians are a big family. Even if we don’t know each other, we can help each other. Being able to pray with these 2 families, reassuring them that they were not alone and that they would soon be able to have a decent home was a blessing.

If you are inspired to get involved, another team from ACP will be going on a second H4H trip in August. Contact Teteh for more information.
**From our 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.

James 5:13-16 (NIV)

"13 Is anyone among you in trouble? Let them pray. Is anyone happy? Let them sing songs of praise. 14 Is anyone among you sick? Let them call the elders of the church to pray over them and anoint them with oil in the name of the Lord. 15 And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise them up. If they have sinned, they will be forgiven. 16 Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective."

If you would like someone to pray WITH you after services, there will be a Prayer Team member available. Meet under the chandelier in the sanctuary.

**From the Lay Caregiver Ministry Team...**

On Pentecost Sunday, the Lay Care Giver team started a new tradition of anointing those who wish for it, along with prayer. Anointing is a very powerful addition to prayer and blessing. We are reminded of Christ's anointing before his death and reminded that we, too, are risen to new life. Therefore, a Christian anointing always points toward the newness of life found in Jesus and the “wholeness” that is given through him.

Anointing also means consecrated or a sacred act, which is why the young confirmation class members were also anointed with oil.

When we anoint in his name we are acting in his power and love to share his gifts of peace, forgiveness and wholeness. Our Lay Care Giver team members receive training from our pastors and are commissioned to represent the pastors to our congregation.

The Lay Care Giver team members will be anointing after the worship services on the first Sunday of each month, starting on June 2. All are welcome to be anointed.

**Look for our new Lay Care Giver cards in the pews!**

Do you need prayer or a listening ear? Fill in the new card for the Lay Care Givers, put it in the offering plate and we will contact you. We are trained to come alongside people in times of difficulty. Let us share your joys and your sorrows. You can also contact us by email at laycaregivers@acparis.org.

We follow training to be equipped to be the hands and feet of Christ in our community. We are always looking for more members and are happy to receive requests for visits or calls. All of our requests are confidential. If you know of anyone who could use a visit or call from us, or would like to become a member of our team, please contact Pastor Michelle or Yoshiko Okubo laycaregivers@acparis.org
ACP Celebrates Pentecost

Photographs by Kémi Komolafé and Coleen Shaw
ACP Council 2013-2014

Following the Congregational Meeting on 26 May, the ACP Council for 2013/2014 is as follows:

Moderator: Radford Laney
Vice Moderator: Pam Bohl

Finance and Stewardship Chair: Stanley Marcello
Finance and Stewardship Vice Chair: Chris Pruszko

Human Resources Chair: Pascal Berger
Human Resources Vice Chair: Lela Losq

Council Secretary: Bleu Bettencourt
Council Assistant Secretary: Ginny Power Jestin

Christian Education Chair: Anne Speicher
Christian Education Vice Chair: Lori Kolodziejczak

Communications Chair: Alison Benney
Communications Vice Chair: Marta Hobbs

Community Life Chair: Camilla Furman
Community Life Vice Chair: Nathaniel Akujuobi

Development and Property Chair: Eric Sadoux
Development and Property Vice Chair: Daniel Grout*

Mission Outreach Chair: Carolyn Bouazouni
Mission Outreach Vice Chair: Paula Taquet Woolfolk

Worship and Music Chair: Anna Zweede
Worship and Music Vice Chair: Chad DuBose

ACP Nominating Committee 2013-2014

Chair: Tom Johnson
Vice Chair: Marie-Laure Lauverjat

Member: Grace Laxa
Member: Eliane Kapko
Member: MaryClaire King
Member: Chris Cinosi
Member: Nancy Mungai
If you had walked into the theatre of the church on Friday 24 May to attend AFRICA NIGHT 2013, you would not have recognized what most of us have come to know as the Coffee Hour hall. The walls were decorated with Malian women, immortalized in the colorful paintings of Frank Vescio who generously decorated our theatre by turning it into an exhibition space. The 140 guests attending Africa Night 2013 witnessed a feast for the eyes and the belly with traditional African food on the menu accompanied by dance and music from the four corners of the continent. This event was the culmination of year-long fundraising by ACP Youth for their mission trip to Gabon.

Swaany started off the night with some smooth soul creole music, enchanting everyone with her calm elegant voice, setting an after-work groove that allowed people to wind down after a full day’s work. Djeudjoha & Lieutenant Nicholson sent out vibes of energy and nostalgia with their afrobeat, taking people back to the 1960s when people spoke out for change through music. Boubacar Kafando and the Zaama-Nooma Band played traditional music from Burkina Faso, reminding people of African history and heritage. Compagnie DK-BEL and Rebman Wambaa turned up the heat with their energizing modern and traditional African dances.

The highlight of the event was the fashion show by stylist and designer Aurelie Lamini, who started Pareva Creations in 2007 in Paris, where she has been living for the past 13 years. She tapped into her French and Congolese origins to create her line, and achieved immense success by managing to find the perfect balance between African print and European design. Guests had the privilege of viewing her newest collection, being shown for the very first time at the ACP.

There was also a special guest appearance by Serge Noukoue, the co-founder and Executive Director of NollywoodWeek, a Nigerian film festival that showcases the best of Nollywood cinema productions around the world. He gave away 2 free tickets to the opening week of the event. People were also able to win various tombola prizes which included jewelry, a night in Villa la Riante, tickets for 2 to the next concerts of the participating artists, a dinner for 2 at Africa Kitchen, books from Libraire Congo among others.

It was a great evening which showcased African culture, highlighted the diversity of the church and welcomed people from all over Paris to discover ACP and its missions. Organized by a lay-leader of the Mission Outreach Committee (MOC), the evening complemented the aim of the MOC by seeking to increase awareness of missions and provide opportunities for members of the congregation to get involved through prayer, fundraising and participation in mission trips. It was a fantastic chance for the MOC and other groups such as the African Fellowship (who were instrumental in supplying and cooking the starter), Filipino Fellowship, Youth Group and the
40 Young Adults (who served as volunteers with willing hearts and smiles to donate ingredients, cook, serve food, sell drinks and clean up!) to work together for the glory of God. The event was also supported by business from within the local community, who kindly donated tombola prizes, and the NGO Association Femmes de Kivu which helps victims of violent rape in Kivu, a conflict-ridden region in the Congo.

The proceeds from Africa Night, totaling nearly €3,000, will support the 15 or so youth, led by Pastor Dan and Daniel Grout, who travel to Gabon in July to volunteer with Envision Culture. The team will be helping at a Vacation Bible School (teaching English and spreading the word of God) and working in a mobile health clinic. They will also have the opportunity to revisit the Pastor they met last year, as they help him to build a new house for around 50 orphans, aged between 3 and 18 years old. The team are still raising funds for this project and would be very grateful for your continued support at forthcoming bake sales and other fundraising events until they leave in July.
# Young Adult Activities in June

## Young Adult Events (18-30yrs)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sunday 2</td>
<td>15h00</td>
<td>Sunday Social after the 13h30 service</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday 4</td>
<td>19h30-21h00</td>
<td>Bible Study</td>
<td>Catacombs</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Prayer Room open from 18h30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday 11</td>
<td>TBC</td>
<td>Quiz</td>
<td>St. Michael’s Church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday 17</td>
<td>19h30</td>
<td>Pub Theology</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday 18</td>
<td>19h30-21h00</td>
<td>Bible Study</td>
<td>Catacombs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Prayer Room open from 18h30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday 21-</td>
<td>19h30</td>
<td>Young Adult Retreat</td>
<td>Château de Villebon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunday 23</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday 25</td>
<td>19h30</td>
<td>Pizza in the Park</td>
<td>Champs de Mars</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday 28</td>
<td>20h00-22h00</td>
<td>Faith in Film</td>
<td>Catacombs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday 29</td>
<td>10h00-18h00</td>
<td>Mosaic Conference</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Book online now to join us on the Young Adult Spring Retreat!**

21-23 June at Château de Villebon

For more information about who we are and what we do at **ACP Young Adults**, please visit our group page on the church website:

[http://www.acparis.org/acp-groups/young-adult-ministry](http://www.acparis.org/acp-groups/young-adult-ministry)

We also invite you to connect with us online for community and updates on all young adult activities and gatherings:

- [http://www.facebook.com/groups/ACPyoungadults/](http://www.facebook.com/groups/ACPyoungadults/)
- [You can also follow us on Twitter (www.twitter.com/danhaugh)](https://twitter.com/danhaugh)
“My Health, My Mind, My Environment”

ACP Young Adult Retreat

1 Corinthians 3:16 “Do you not know that you are a temple of God...”

A time to rest
A time for friendship
A time for YOU!

Location: Château de Villebon (Lazarist center), Villebon sur Yvette
Date: Friday 21 June to Sunday 23 June
Cost: 35 euros

To reserve your spot, please email youthpastor@acparis.org

Le Projet MOSAIC organise une:

Samedi
29 juin 2013
à 10 h
PIXELLISE TA FOI!

à l’Eglise américaine
65 quai d’Orsay
Paris 7ème

Où ?
...à PARIS
à la découverte des autres...

Informations :
06 48 75 76 61
projets.mosaic@federationprotestante.org
www.protestants.org
(par le Projet MOSAIC)
The Mosaic Project and Pixelate your Faith: Youth and Young Adults Conference

by Ilinca Mreana

Many of you are probably wondering what the Mosaic project is about. Mosaic is part of the Protestant Federation of France in partnership with the Protestant Missionary Service (DEFAP) and the Community of Churches in Mission (CEVAA). It was created in 2006 and its purpose is to collaborate and develop meetings among Christians of different cultures and races. Mosaic represents an open-minded diversity founded on Christ. Their goal is to grow and shape Christian youth and young adults through lectures and conversations from different cultural perspectives, having the Bible as their foundation.

Last year I was part of this project and I enjoyed it so much! It was an awesome experience and I had the opportunity to meet Youth and Young Adults from different churches. Seeing them worship the Lord, made me think about what heaven will be like! It was a meeting of different cultures and races from all over the city, gathered in one place to learn more about their faith.

This year the Mosaic Project has decided to continue this amazing experience and to organize another gathering and this time our church is hosting it. It is a great opportunity for our Young Adults to work with Mariane Guerault, Pastor at the Federation Protestante, and her dedicated team of leaders and Pastors from different churches in Paris.

The goal of our Young Adult Conference “Pixelate your Faith” is to glorify God through relationships, diversity, fun activities, meals shared together and unity. I am inviting you to come and meet your brothers and sisters in Christ and to experience the joy of the Lord through our different activities. We will have picnics, theatre workshops, intercultural games, a presentation from the “Christians and HIV” association and a crash course on Braille. In the afternoon there will be a worship festival and everyone is invited to sing and share their favorite songs. We will end with a service in the main sanctuary and a message presented by Guy-Bertrand Ngougo. If you are between 15-30 years old, come and join us on Saturday 29 June and let’s celebrate the Lord in our diversity together!


Stay in touch with our Young Adult community for more information about the Mosaic Project and the conference coming up on 29 June and share this link among your friends: https://www.facebook.com/events/104809116358820/.
Youth Activities in June

Youth Events (13-18yrs)
Please feel free to bring friends along – they are always welcome at ACP events!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sunday 2</td>
<td>15h00-17h30</td>
<td>Youth Group “Lycée”</td>
<td>Catacombs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>15h00-17h30</td>
<td>Youth Group “Collège”</td>
<td>Gym &amp; G2</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Inter-religious dialogue: Other religions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sunday 9</td>
<td>12h30 &amp; 14h30</td>
<td>Parent Meet and Greet</td>
<td>ACP Courtyard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>15h00-17h30</td>
<td>Youth Group “Lycée”</td>
<td>Catacombs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>15h00-17h30</td>
<td>Youth Group “Collège”</td>
<td>Gym &amp; G2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunday 16</td>
<td>15h00-17h30</td>
<td>Substance abuse and self-control (Part 1)</td>
<td>Catacombs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>15h00-17h30</td>
<td>Substance abuse and self-control (Part 2)</td>
<td>Gym &amp; G2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunday 23</td>
<td>15h00-17h30</td>
<td>End of year party</td>
<td>Catacombs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunday 30</td>
<td>15h00-17h30</td>
<td>Oscars Ceremony</td>
<td>Catacombs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For more information about who we are and what we do at ACP Youth, please visit our group page on the church website: http://www.acparis.org/acp-groups/youth-ministry, or contact Rev. Dan Haugh at youthpastor@acparis.org.

Join our Facebook group and stay connected with our online community: http://www.facebook.com/groups/acpyouthgroup/
Opportunities to Serve the Community

CHILDREN’S WORSHIP:  Children’s Worship Needs You!
Volunteers are asked to commit to serving approximately two Sundays every 6 to 8 weeks. For more information, please contact Jeanette at childrensworship@acparis.org.

GREETING AND USHERING:  We are seeking new members for this group. If you are interested in participating during the services, please contact Anna Zweede at worshipandmusic@acparis.org.

FRIDAY MISSION LUNCH at the American Church in Paris. Each Friday from 10h00 to 14h00, a hot, nutritious meal is prepared for the homeless and needy. The American Church is responsible for providing the meal on 14 June (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.

WELCOME TABLE ATTENDANTS and COFFEE HOUR GREETERS: Be a MEETER GREETER! We are looking for happy, cheerful people to help at the Welcome Table after every service, as well as roaming coffee hour greeters. This is a ministry that we can ALL share in, and if you can share 20 minutes of your time, once a month to participate in welcoming guests, you are sure to find more joy than you can give. A smile and a handshake is all that is needed! Teams are being formed so that each team serves one Sunday per month at each service. Please contact Camilla Furman at communitylife@acparis.org if you can be counted on to spread some joy and welcome a newcomer!

SANDWICH MINISTRY will take place on 15 June at 13h30, when we distribute sandwiches to hand out to the hungry and homeless. You can also come and help make the sandwiches on 14 June at 19h30. Contact Jurie Ane or Dan Haugh at youthpastor@acparis.org if you would like to get involved.

For other volunteering opportunities, check with Mission Outreach at missionoutreach@acparis.org, Community Life at communitylife@acparis.org, or Dan Haugh with Youth and Young Adult Ministries at youthpastor@acparis.org

ACP Today: Faith Talk From Paris

Have you tuned in to ACP Today, the American Church in Paris’ radio show yet? Join us on Monday 3 and 17 June at 20h45. The 45-minute program is an exciting and inspiring mix of music, interviews, sermon highlights, and discussion on hot topics.

Tune to 100.7 FM on the radio dial, Radio Fréquence Protestante! And please invite others to listen—friends who may be housebound or who would simply like more devotional time on a Monday evening. Missed a show? Don’t worry, you can catch up online at www.acparis.org/acptoday.

If you have any questions or comments, be sure to contact us at acptoday@acparis.org.
ACP Groups and Additional Activities

ACP WRITER’S GROUP meets on the second Saturday of the month at 14h00 – 17h00 in room G2. Contact Laura Kerber at ApollinarisPatera@gmail.com.

MULTICULTURAL COUPLES GROUP meets in the Thurber Room on Friday 28 June at 20h00. 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.

KNITTING GROUP is on summer recess and will start meeting again on 2 September. Whilst we are primarily a knitting group, we have several new members who crochet, cross stitch and embroider. We knit for ourselves and/or church missions. We welcome all to our fun and diverse group. Please contact Susan Owens for more information.

QUILTING GROUP meets on Tuesday afternoon at members houses. We welcome quilters of all levels. Some of us work on our own projects while others of us learn new techniques. For more information please contact Bonnie Smith.

MOVIE DISCUSSION GROUP: The movie group's choices for June are: Le Passé by Asghar Farhadi, La Grande Bellezza by Paolo Sorrentino, Ginger & Rosa by Sally Potter and Shokuzai by Kiyoshi Kurosawa (in 2 parts, opening 5 and 12 June). See any or all in the cinema at your convenience, then join the group for discussion on Thursday June 13, at 19h30 in basement room G2.

Independent Christian Prayer Groups and Bible Study Activities

MOMS IN PRAYER INTERNATIONAL has come to Paris! Are you concerned about your kids? Would you like to join with other moms as we lift up our cares and concerns for our children and their schools to our loving Father? Experience the joy of replacing anxiety with peace and hope when we pray together. Contact Caroline at MomsInPrayerParis@gmail.com for information and join us Tuesday mornings at 9h30 in G2. See also MomsInPrayer.org.

BIBLE STUDY FELLOWSHIP (BSF INTERNATIONAL): What a great way to discover the gift of God’s Word through BSF’s interdenominational and international Bible studies! This Paris class brings together 50 or so women for in-depth Bible study every Monday evening from 19h00 to 20h50. Contact Thelma Fuchs for more information.

MINDFUL MEDITATION: This group, being offered on Saturdays from 12h00 to 13h15 in G2, is 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. It is open to church members as well as to the larger community. Norma Jean Deak, a clinical social worker, has taught Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction for 14 years. Contact Norma Jean with any questions.
The American Church in Paris is a member congregation of the Association of International Churches in Europe and the Middle East. If you are traveling and looking for a place to worship, please consult the AICEME website for our sister congregations: http://aiceme.net/.

Clergy and Staff of the American Church in Paris

Ministers
Senior Pastor Scott Herr seniorpastor@acparis.org
Associate Pastor Michelle Wahila associatepastor@acparis.org
Visiting Pastor Bruce Morgan visitingpastor@acparis.org
Dir. Youth and Young Adults Dan Haugh youthpastor@acparis.org
Youth Intern Hanna Woodhead youthintern@acparis.org
Music Director Fred Gramann music@acparis.org
Contemporary Music Director Natalie Raynal cmusic@acparis.org
Youth Music Director Bonnie Woolley youthmusic@acparis.org
Business Manager Chira Rosen bizadmin@acparis.org
Accountant Jean-Michel Bollecker acctg@acparis.org
Administrative Assistant Ilinca Mreana secretary@acparis.org
Daytime Receptionist Emily Claudio reception@acparis.org
Evening Receptionist Kithsiri Fernando reception@acparis.org
Saturday Receptionist Martha Gachoka reception@acparis.org
Sunday Receptionist Boryana Dimitrova reception@acparis.org
Building Maintenance Tom Padden maintenance@acparis.org

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Secretary Bettina Chehab councilsecretary@acparis.org
Assistant Secretary Paul Grayson councilassistantsecretary@acparis.org
Stewardship & Finance Chair Stanley Marcello financeandstewardship@acparis.org
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Communications Co-Chair Alison Benney communications@acparis.org
Communications Co-Chair John Newman communications@acparis.org
Community Life Chair Camilla Furman communitylife@acparis.org
Community Life Co-Chair Nathaniel Akujuobi communitylife@acparis.org
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Mission Outreach Chair Carolyn Bouazouni missionoutreach@acparis.org
Mission Outreach Vice-Chair Ann Mildred Gontard missionoutreach@acparis.org
Worship & Music Chair Anna Zweede worshipandmusic@acparis.org
Worship & Music Vice-Chair Chad DuBose worshipandmusic@acparis.org