Spire

The Beacon on the Seine

June 2014

What not to wear in church
Growing pains
In gratitude: Francis Cobbinah
Jane Goodall saving the world

Still Point
More of You

The American Church in Paris
www.acparis.org 65 quai d’Orsay, 75007 Paris, France
In this issue

Thoughts from the Rev. Dr. Scott Herr 3
Painting with the Spirit 4
The AFCU, by William Johnston 5
Fathers as mentors, by Femi Abidoye 6
What not to wear to church, by Rev. Brent Anderson 7
Up next: Visiting Pastor Bruce Morgan 8
Jane Goodall: saving the world a piece at a time, by Alison Benney 9
D-Day + 70 celebrations, by Amit Pieter 10
200th anniversary, by Alison Benney
   Boy Scouts of America in Paris 11
   Growing pains 12
   Paris in the Great War, by Rebecca Brite 13
Six months earlier: John the Baptist, by Tim Brown 14
Pentecost: the Feast of Weeks, by Rev. Dan Haugh 15
ACP Council 2014-2015 16
Spring retreat 18

Music Notes
   Fête de la musique, by Amit Pieter 19
   Atelier Concerts 20
   More of you, by Natalie Raynal 21
   ACP Gospel Worship Service, by Joan Minor-Grayson 22

In gratitude: Francis Cobbina, ACP missionary, by Carolyn Bouazouni 23
ACPWriters Group 24

ACP missions
   Keeping up with Patti Lafarge 25
   Following our Destiny, by Destiny E. Ryales 26
   Sandwich Ministry update, by Jurie Ane Feleo 27
   An update from JoAnn Neal 28
   A message from Michael Beeman 29

June calendar 30

On the cover:
A new album by Still Point will be released on 21 June at a special Fete de la Musique ACP Café in the courtyard.
Musicians, from left to right, back row: Jurie Ane Feleo, Daniel Herr, Il-Woong Seo, Laude Bigirimana, Natalie Raynal. Front row: Chris Herr and Young Woong Seo
Read the article, page 19.

Photo by Jonathan Russell
On 8 June, we will be celebrating the feast of Pentecost. It is always a beautiful Sunday with the Language Choir that Fred Gramann organizes for the 11h00 service. We always read Acts 2 and remember how the Holy Spirit came upon all of the apostles and “all of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability” (Acts 2:4). I can’t wait to hear again the day’s text read in over 20 languages.

But in fact, every Sunday at the ACP feels a bit like Pentecost Sunday to me, as there are so many nationalities and language groups in our midst! Part of the gift of our fellowship is the visual reminder that God’s Spirit is moving among all peoples and allows us the privilege to worship together as one congregation “from every nation under heaven” (Acts 2:5)!

I was reading recently from an excerpt of J. Richard Middleton’s book The Liberating Image about the radical development in the biblical understanding of the imago dei in humanity. Middleton argues that the writer of Genesis radically democratized the image of God compared to the writers of other near eastern texts from Egypt and Mesapotamia (such as the Enuma Elish, or Gilgamesh Epic). In other ancient texts, the image of God was reserved for kings and queens, but Genesis 1:27 asserts that “God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.”

Middleton concludes his discussion of the ancient Near Eastern background for the image of God by stating, “the author of Genesis 1 (whenever he lived) was acquainted (in either oral or written form) with the Mesopotamian notion of king as the image of a god (as a particular crystallization of royal ideology) and that he intentionally challenged this notion with the claim that all humanity was made in God’s image.”

Although we are an amazingly diverse gathering of people, we have the gift of calling one another “brother” and “sister” in Christ here at the ACP. But as soon as we go back out into the world, we are pressured to see others in stereotypical or profiled categories (African, Asian, European, Latino, Male, Female, Rich, Poor, Educated, Ignorant, Local, Foreigner, etc.). While much of the emphasis at Pentecost is on the miraculous manifestation of the Spirit (both in speaking and hearing), I am just as amazed by the surprising sociology of the Spirit!

Perhaps another Pentecostal text for us to consider is II Corinthians 5:16-19a: “From now on, therefore, we regard no one from a human point of view; even though we once knew Christ from a human point of view, we know him no longer in that way. So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself...”

Not only does the Holy Spirit send us out into the world, but empowers us for the ministry of reconciliation that has cosmic dimensions. We can see the face of God in everyone, and affirm that we are all “children of God” needing to be reconciled with God. The good news is that “in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself.” We have but to give witness to this good news, noting that Jesus himself said the “work” to accomplish this reconciliation was “finished” on the cross.

Do we remember that the Holy Spirit has been given to us that we might be witnesses of God’s love “to the ends of the earth”?

Do we see in each person traces of the divine image? Do we realize that the ministry of reconciliation has been entrusted to each of us? Do we remember that the Holy Spirit has been given to us that we might be witnesses of God’s love “to the ends of the earth”?

May the Holy Spirit help us! And may this season of Pentecost open new opportunities for ministry and mission, remembering that we are called to “proclaim in word and deed the love of God as revealed in Jesus Christ” here in this great city “and to the ends of the earth.”

In Christ,

Most artists feel a connection with Spirit on a very deep level. Painter Jackson Pollack said, “The painting has a life of its own, I try to let it come through”. This is essentially the definition of painting with the spirit. It’s about allowing the Holy Spirit to guide us in a creative direction by being a channel.

Finding the spirit is a very personal thing. Some people find the Spirit through prayer, meditation, dancing, singing, playing music or simply walking in the woods, being quiet and breathing deeply. Once we are in touch with this special place inside ourselves, we can use it in order to express ourselves through a creative process such as painting.

How do you use this process in your own art?
My work is my play and I have the feeling that I weave a unique energy into everything I create. To be truly creative is to be in touch with the Spirit which dwells in me. If each stroke of my brush/palette knife is like a prayer then I consider that as my painting unfolds in all its movement, color and texture, I am infusing my work with prayers of love, joy, peace, friendship, simplicity, compassion, gratitude on a very subtle level.

How did Painting with the Spirit: India begin?
I shared the experience of Painting with the Spirit with the women and children at Deep Griha Society in Pune, India. It was a wonderful opportunity to share this process and have them share their way of dancing to Indian music. By dancing together, we were more connected with the intuitive brain instead of the logic brain, which makes creating easier because we are thinking less and allowing the movement to carry us in the flow. Together we used that specific movement and spontaneity in order to “dance on the canvas” with palette knives full of color in order to create a series of collaborative paintings.

I asked the women and kids in India to use this experience as a way of letting go of their joy, expectations, hopes, fears, dreams, anger, gratitude — whatever their feelings or emotions — by translating those feelings through color on the canvas. Afterwards, I named what we were doing a Prayer Painting. Letting go of all these feelings and giving them to God helps us find “the next step” or even find solutions. By using this process, we are physically expressing our faith and trusting that He knows best what to do with our joy or our burdens.

Painting is empowerment and each painting represents a voyage that tells a story and connects us with our spirituality. And when art becomes a bridge that unites us together, we experience a kind of joy and love that is not only remarkably transformative but like a “coming home”. Art in any form is definitely a mystery as well as a gift of grace.

Continuing this project that started in India, additional paintings were created, inspired from the experience combining dancing & painting. Including the original 4 paintings created in Pune, that were finalized in the studio, a total of 10 pieces of art will be exhibited in the ACP sanctuary on Tuesday 10 June. Plus, an art video will be projected.

I will create a collaborative Prayer Painting with the audience at the opening, as we did in India, by dancing together and by translating our feelings on canvas, using stokes of palette knives loaded with paint and color.

Painting with the Spirit on Tuesday, 10 June, or enjoy the paintings, which will remain on exhibit in the Sanctuary through 10 July.
Tell the congregation: How do you stay cool?

With summer just around the corner we’re looking for your suggestions of the best things to do to stay cool during the hot Parisian summer months!

In 2 sentences and/or a photo tell us your ideas on where and how to spend July and August in Paris. Send your top tip to spire@acparis.org and then pick up a copy of the July Spire for a list of ways to enjoy a cool, hot summer.

The AFCU

Annual meeting held 1-3 May in Denver, Colorado

Pastor Scott recently returned from a meeting with the AFCU. What is the AFCU? William Johnston explains.

The American & Foreign Christian Union is the parent organization of the ACP and has a board of directors of some 40 members, essentially alumni of the three American Churches located on foreign soil which they support:

American Church of Paris          American Church of Berlin          American Church of Vienna

It holds title on the property of the ACP, pays the property taxes and insurance but charges no rent, and in exchange the ACP assumes all maintenance costs of the Church buildings.

It participates in the selection of the Senior Pastor and ensures his salary and welfare benefits, collects donations from the alumni based in the US and benefits from 501K status (tax-free recognized charity).

It also manages the existing endowment which partially generates the funds required to pay the above expenses. As of 31 December 2013, its value is $1.67 million and a maximum draw down of 5% is applied. It has averaged a 15% growth performance over the past 5 years before draw down.

The AFCU meets twice a year to review the wellbeing of its member Churches and propose new initiatives to support them, such as creating partner relationships with their local Churches. Initial steps have been made with the Bethany Lutheran Church of Denver. Meetings are held in different cities depending on which board member hosts the meeting. Expenses are kept at a minimum as each board member pays his own and the meeting room is generally provided free of charge.

It is a very special & dedicated group of believers in Christ which I always enjoy meeting with and for which we can be thankful! If you are interested in becoming a board member, please contact our Senior Pastor Scott Herr, who will give you further information.

Yours in Christ,
William H. Johnston
Time and again I hear my children say to me; “I want to be like you when I grow up”. This statement exposes the stark reality that fatherhood carries with it enormous responsibility, one that places a demand on the need for fathers to be conscious of how their actions, reactions, words, opinions and disposition to every issue, whether spiritual, relational, political, shape the way their children perceive God, themselves, and what purpose He’ll have them fulfil on earth.

Perhaps one of the most critical responsibilities of, and expectations from fathers is the mentoring of their children. A mentor is defined as a “wise and trusted counselor or teacher”; and since for children, learning is achieved more by what they see, the ‘teaching’ component of mentoring is therefore more about what children see their fathers do. Paul the apostle captured this succinctly in his expression to his children to “Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ.” (1 Corinthians 11:1).

It is important at this time that we fathers remember that one of the potent ways of gaining access to depth of God’s knowledge, is through the willingness and disposition of an individual to fulfill purpose. God’s choice of revealing His secret things to Abraham (Genesis 18:17) was premised on His trust that Abraham will command (teach/train/mentor) his children and his household “that they keep the way of the LORD, to do righteousness and justice...” Fathers are vessels through whom God impacts and empowers succeeding generations.

Today, society has devised and continues to devise innovative ways of occupying, imparting and impacting children with various knowledge that shapes their perception of themselves, the world they live in, and God. The movies, games and the internet, among others, have taken over the mentoring role of children in some cases. Fathers must be careful in guiding children to ensure that as they seek to do great works, they acknowledge and submit to the great God.

Fathers must pick lessons from the example of Eli the Priest (1 Samuel 1-3), an accomplished priest, acknowledged and celebrated in the land, yet in 1 Samuel 2:12 it was reported, “the sons of Eli were corrupt; they did not know the LORD.” Eli was father and mentor to three children – his biological children (Hophni and Phinehas), and Samuel. While he succeeded in mentoring Samuel, it was the reverse in the case of Hophni and Phinehas. God held him responsible for the behavior of his children, and subsequently punished him. “For I have told him that I will judge his house forever for the iniquity which he knows, because his sons made themselves vile, and he did not restrain them.” (1 Samuel 3:13).

Fathers must make themselves available to their children - leading them, and being imitators (mentees) of God so they can lead their children to be champions on earth, and at the same time lovers of God.

Father’s Day is a time to celebrate fathers, as well as a time for fathers to deeply reflect on how their living shapes the life of the children whom God has graciously kept in their care.

Happy Father’s Day!

Father’s Day, 15 June: equal opportunity

- First celebrated in the US on 19 June 1910 in Spokane, Washington, thanks to Sonora Louise Smart Dodd who was inspired to honour the work of fathers following a Mother’s Day sermon that she heard. She was supported by her local YMCA and the Spokane Ministerial Association.

- President Wilson and President Coolidge both approved of the idea of a Father’s Day, but it wasn’t until 1972 that a national day was officially established, by President Nixon.
In the US there is a reality TV show called “What Not to Wear” in which friends, family, or co-workers nominate someone to participate in the show because of their lack of a sense of style or appropriate wardrobe. The participant receives professional fashion advice, a makeover, and a $5,000 shopping spree in New York City if they agree to have their “fashion sense” critiqued and their old wardrobe discarded.

The show is interesting in the sense that, for some participants, their whole outlook on life and sense of self can be radically changed as a result of this experience and this update in their appearance.

I mention the show not because I have anyone to nominate for the show (except myself), but because of its name... “What Not To Wear”. In the church, is there an unwritten dress code? Should there be? What is appropriate apparel for worship?

Having served congregations in the four corners of the United States (Georgia, New Jersey, Washington State, and California), one thing I have noticed is how regional dress norms can be, regardless of denominational affiliation or bias. In the California beach community of Santa Barbara, attending church in Bermuda shorts, t-shirts, and sandals was the norm for many. In Washington State, the elders of the church encouraged me (quite unsuccessfully) to dress more casually. They wanted the Senior Pastor (me) to wear blue jeans and a button-down dress shirt. I never did.

In Georgia, the women normally wore dresses while the men either dressed in coat and tie (some wearing bow ties) or “casual Friday/golf attire” (wearing khaki trousers and golf shirts or button downs). In New Jersey, the men and women typically dressed more formally for church (dresses for the ladies and suit and tie for the men).

As a pastor and church leader, I have heard both sides of the wardrobe issue; those who think we should always wear our “Sunday best” and those who think everyone should be free to come as they are. Which side is right? Should we dress up for church? Or is it okay to come in whatever makes you comfortable—even shorts, t-shirts, and flip-flops?

As a child, I learned several life lessons that might be applicable:

- I learned that it is never good to judge a book by its cover. It’s not our outward appearance that matters most; but what’s on the inside that counts.

- I also learned not to let the judgments or comments of others dictate who I am or how I behave. Sometimes they are helpful and sometimes they are hurtful. They often come from a variety of motives. So some are worthy considering and some aren’t.

- I learned the importance of making a good first impression. Often, people do judge by appearance and so taking the time to make sure you look clean, nice and presentable can be helpful.

- And finally, I learned that when you care about someone or something, the way you dress can be a way to show them honor and respect. Our dress can reveal the importance we attach to a person or an occasion.

If asked my opinion on the topic, I would have to say that I agree with both sides. But I would never want to make a hard and fast rule for the church or impose some sort of dress-code.

I do think people should consider God, and the opportunity to join the community in the worship of God, important enough to get dressed up. But I also think that people should be able to come as they are, feel comfortable, and never feel judged.

Wasn’t it Jesus who criticized the scribes for walking around in long robes and being concerned about their appearance (Mark 12:38-40)? Didn’t Jesus criticize some of the
Pharisees because they sought the honor of others and liked to show off their “religious wear” (Matthew 23:2-7, 12)? When it comes to clothing, favoritism and people’s judgment, James chapter 2 has something to teach us.

Having said this, however, is it okay to come to church in a bikini... or in your pajamas? I wouldn’t recommend either as the clothing of choice each and every Sunday. But if you were lying out in the sun along the Seine and someone from the church happened to strike up a conversation with you and they invited you to come join us for worship, then by all means... come as you are!

If you were lying in bed and suddenly sensed a nudge to go to church and you realized that you had nothing to wear and that the service was starting in five minutes, then by all means... throw on some slippers and come in your pajamas! If you are working in your garden covered in dirt and mud and the spirit nudges you to go to church, forget the shower... we want you here! Everyone is welcome!

Don’t we care more that a person comes to church, than we care about what that person wears to worship? Don’t we care more about the welcome and treatment people receive at church — that all are treated with the same love, respect, honor, and dignity — than we care about what they are wearing? Don’t we want every person who walks in our doors to feel loved and accepted and encouraged? Of course we do.

If you need a wardrobe change, Galatians has their new “Fruit of the Spirit” summer collection. And there is no law against that!

Galatians 5:22–23

22 By contrast, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against such things.

Up next: Visiting Pastor Bruce Morgan

Aren’t we blessed? Our six-month Visiting Pastor program allows us to meet amazing pastors and make new friends. It’s bittersweet, of course — we will miss Kit and Terry Schooley when they leave on 2 July. But then we have friends returning, for the next six months.

The American Church in Paris welcomes Bruce and Nancy Morgan

The Rev. Bruce W. Morgan is a retired American Baptist pastor, from Kansas City, Missouri. He served four American Baptist congregations over his 40 years of active ministry. In retirement, he’s also served as Interim Pastor of five ABC Congregations in Kansas and Missouri.

Bruce was born in Salem, New Jersey and graduated from Topeka High School, Topeka, Kansas, where he met and began dating his future wife, Nancy. He graduated from William Jewell College, Liberty, Missouri in 1963, and the American Baptist Seminary of the West in Berkeley, California in 1967.

He was ordained at the Calvary Baptist Church of Denver, Colorado in 1967 and began his ministry in that church. He served churches in Colorado, Indiana, Ohio, and New Jersey, and retired in 2004 from full-time pastoral ministry.

Nancy retired from her position as biostatistician with Johnson and Johnson Pharmaceutical Corp. in 2004. The Morgans have two adult children, David Morgan, Dayton, Ohio, and Elizabeth O’Rourke, Kansas City; and two grandchildren, Garrett Morgan and Morgan O’Rourke.

In retirement, Nancy devotes her time to recorder playing and reading. Bruce is a tennis player and both he and Nancy play bridge regularly. Both enjoy theater, choral music, and travel. Bruce has volunteered for United Way, treatment programs for alcohol and drug abuse, the Board of Trustees of Central Baptist Theological Seminary, and the Ministers Council of his denomination. The Morgans were dear personal friends of Dr. Edwin Tuller, former pastor of ACP and highly respected American Baptist leader.
If you missed Jane Goodall’s presentation at the American Church last month, get yourself to her website and find out where she’s speaking next. Since she travels 300 days a year, it should be easy to do, and it will be well worth it.

The Sanctuary was packed, and the 4-hour program included not only three different presentations by Dr. Jane, but an introduction to the Jane Goodall Foundation and her Roots & Shoots network, a few short videos and two beautiful songs by our own Alexia Rabé on the piano.

The anthropologist celebrated her 80th birthday with us, but she was able to slide to the floor like an AUP student, to act out a scene with the Foundation “chimp” at the altar. Her upbeat focus is on youth, and conservation. She said that since youth are the future we need to encourage them to follow their dreams, and to save the diversity of species for them. “Imagine”, she said, “if the chimpanzees had been allowed to die out and children would not be able to see these creatures.”

She described the pessimistic view of the world as a ship headed by unstoppable momentum for catastrophe, but she disagrees, thinks we can still change its course.

“This generation has left youth a mess [of a world]”, she said, asking us to imagine the world as a jigsaw puzzle with a million little pieces all connected, and lots of them black and broken. “If you pick out one of those little pieces and fix it, you will encourage others to pick up pieces as well and fix them, and little by little we will all be united and the world will get changed.”

Citing Ghandi’s quote “The world has enough for everyone's need, but not enough for everyone's greed”, Dr. Goodall linked consumerism to climate change, describing the carbon sinks in our forests and oceans that are rapidly being destroyed. She also pointed out the happiness factor, in which those who work to get more than they need are generally unhappier than those who stop with basic needs.

The most touching part of the evening was her story and video of an older chimpanzee named Wounda, who had been nearly killed by hunters, was rescued, healed and was being released in a refuge forest. Dr. Goodall was invited along for the release, and although she had never met this chimpanzee before, when Wounda left her cage, she embraced the anthropologist with a big affectionate hug, an act rarely shared even among chimps.

Inspired by the talk, many in the audience bought a book during the reception in the Theater and - after the presentation of a birthday cake and a copious cocktail reception - Dr. Goodall graciously stayed until almost 11pm signing each one of them, with a brilliant smile and the inspired stamina of an 18-year-old.

Thanks to the AUP for sharing its event with us, and to Marta Hobbs for her excellent organization. For more information on the Jane Goodall Foundation, see www.janegoodall.org; the AUP’s Roots and Shoots group can be found at www.aup.edu/student-life/community/clubs-organizations/roots-shoots.

Seventy years ago on Friday, 6 June, the Normandy D-Day Allied landings signaled the beginning of the end of WWII. Veterans attending annual celebrations on the beaches of Omaha, Utah, Juno, Gold, and Sword, are now in their 90s.

This year may be the last for many of them, but they will stand proudly next to the Allied heads of state, including the Queen, Presidents Obama and Hollande, and Chancellor Merkel, in an official ceremony at Ouistreham on Sword Beach.

While that event will be by invitation only, there are many public events organized in the area from now until September. These include a spectacular fireworks display on 5 June, which should be visible from 24 beachfront towns, according to the official D-Day site. There will be a massive picnic on Omaha beach, and an open air concert at Bayeux.

Most of us have seen “The Longest Day” or “Saving Private Ryan”, or are familiar with the history of the Normandy landings, but here are some facts and figures:

The mission was called Operation Overlord, planned by Lieutenant-General Frederick Morgan and led under the command of Allied Expeditionary Forces General Dwight D. Eisenhower, while ground forces were commanded by British General Bernard Montgomery.

It was the largest amphibious military invasion in world history, with over 160,000 men in the Anglo-American force. Eisenhower addressed this message to his troops: “You are about to embark on the Great Crusade toward which we have striven these many months. The eyes of the world are upon you... We will accept nothing less than full victory! Good luck! And let us beseech the blessing of Almighty God upon this great and noble undertaking”.

An excellent 3-D IMAX film, “D-Day, Normandie 1944”, is playing at La Geode, at Porte de la Villette through 27 June. It highlights the importance of air power for the Allied ground forces to consolidate their positions for the marches to Caen and Cherbourg. Over 5,000 Allied naval and merchant marine ships participated, with Navy guns hurling firepower over the heads of incoming troops.

The Nazi German command was taken by surprise thanks to radio signals designed for German interception that indicated false landing dates, and radar distractions via airborne metal-foil drops and small boats trailing dummy metallic barrage balloons. The impression was given of a military buildup in Suffolk and Kent, England so German forces maintained their strongest presence at Pas de Calais.

The French Resistance disrupted and sabotaged German rail lines, destroyed electrical facilities, and cut telegraph cables, delaying German backup troops. Communications to the Resistance went out via coded BBC radio broadcasts of poetry, with the final message that the landing was ready via a poem of Verlaine, "Chanson d'Automne" or Autumn Song: Blessent mon cœur / d'une langueur / monotone ("Wound my heart with a monotonous languor"). Broadcast on 5 June at 23h15, it signaled that the landings would start within 48 hours and that the resistance should begin sabotage operations.

The majority of troops who landed on the D-Day beaches were from the UK, Canada and the US, but troops that participated in D-Day and the Battle of Normandy also included men from Australia, Belgium, Czechoslovakia, France, Greece, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway and Poland. Figures from the D-Day museum indicate there were 2,499 American D-Day fatalities and 1,915 from the other Allied nations, for a total of 4,414 dead that day. The total German casualties on D-Day are estimated at between 4,000 and 9,000.

The Battle of Normandy eventually lasted three months and mobilized around three million soldiers, ending on 21st August. The liberation of Europe had begun, although the end of what is called the “good war” didn’t happen until almost a year later.

For more information about this year’s events, see www.the70th-normandy.com, with information in 11 languages. There are also a couple of apps to download, a Twitter account @D_Day70 and a Facebook page www.facebook.com/june1944.
Tuesday 10 June
*Painting with the Spirit*, performance with audience participation, 19h-21h30, be accompanied by poetry readings and texts, and musical accompaniment by the group Still Point. Exhibition in the Sanctuary from 11 June to 10 July.

Saturday 6 September
Garrison Keillor and Prairie Home Companion broadcasts live radio show from ACP Sanctuary

Saturday 11 October
Commemoration Service for all English-speaking churches with Dr. Mark Labberton, President of Fuller Theological Seminary, at the *église de la Madeleine*

28 – 30 October
ACP hosts the City to City Europe Church Planting Conference, featuring Dr. Tim Keller, Senior Pastor of Redeemer Presbyterian Church of New York

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**Boy Scouts of America in Paris**

International scouting was almost 10 years old in 1918, when the American Church organized the first American Boy Scout troupe in Europe. Earlier, however, in June 1913, a troupe of 47 boy scouts from San Francisco had visited Paris, where they were interviewed by *Le Figaro*.

The boys, from 11 to 20 years old, were asked to describe three things about Paris: What they enjoyed the most, what they admired the most, and what surprised them the most.

In addition to the monuments and the outdoor cafés, they were impressed by the number of cars in the road and - guess what - by the order in the streets and the cleanliness of the thoroughfares. One of the boys admired the gargoyles on the Notre Dame, another the crucifix in Napoleon’s tomb at Invalides.

They appreciated the food, and all enjoyed attending the Theatre Sarah Bernhardt (now Théâtre de la Ville), where they saw “Le Bossu” (“The Hunchback of Notre Dame”). But they were surprised and amused by the traditional three loud knocks that preceded the raising of the curtain. They thought it odd how many young men had moustaches, that men would occasionally kiss each other on the cheeks, and noted that women were smoking in public.

*To read the Figaro article online, simply google the title: Paris et les Parisiens vus par des boy scouts américains*

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Boy Scouts had important roles during World War I. They served as messengers, coast guards and hospital orderlies, guarded railway bridges and raised money for ambulances.

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Thank you to the Scouts for ushering and collecting the offering on Memorial Day weekend, Sunday, 25 May!
This chapter kicks off with the ending of the Dreyfuss affair, the importance of which still reverberates in the French conscience, and eventually had fiscal consequences for the ACP. The separation of church and state resulted in the law of 1901 that regulates non-profit organizations, and then the 1905 law that was narrowed even further to define religious non-profits.

The American Church in Paris celebrated its 50th anniversary in October 1907. Reverend Edward G. Thurber returned for the event, giving an eloquent sermon that is recorded in "Friendly Adventurers" by Reverend Cochran.

The new pastor, Reverend Chauncey W. Goodrich, continued to expand the church's activities, despite the constraints of our small building at 21 rue de Berri. Sunday school was moved from the afternoon to the morning, resulting in an increase in attendance, and a Juvenile Circle took its place on Sunday afternoons. A hall had already been hired for the use of the Ladies Benevolent Association and in 1910, a church office was rented at 19 rue de Berri for administrative use.

Despite the transient nature of our congregation even then, we did have long-time members. The organist, Fidèle Koenig, had served for over 25 years. Church sexton Edward Jeanmonod started in 1910 what would be a lifetime of service until 1959, followed by his son for another 20 years.

We also had prestigious visitors. Reverend Goodrich recalls ex-President Theodore Roosevelt's visit in 1909:

"I met him at the Embassy on a Saturday. Taking my hand in both of his with a tremendous grasp he said, ‘I shall be in church on Sunday.’ And in church he was, flanked by the Ambassador and the Consul General. The heartiness of his participation in the service, I could observe and hear from the pulpit."

Reverend Goodrich fell ill and returned to the US in 1910, and Dr. Caspar W. Hiatt took his place. But he had a difficult time—when World War I erupted in 1914, he felt he had to represent US policy and remain officially neutral in the face of high emotions in the city, “with trumpets announcing the Zeppelins in the dead of night, bombs crashing and cannons booming”.

Dr. Goodrich returned to the congregation in 1917, just as America entered the war. The church on rue de Berri became “filled with service men and women of the American Expeditionary Force, the Red Cross, YMCA and YWCA, so that it became known as the ‘khaki church’.” Before heading to the trenches, young soldiers often slipped a note to the minister asking him to “Please write to my mother at this address and tell her I was in church today and that you saw me.”

This year marks the 200th anniversary of English-language worship in Paris. Each month we will tell the history in 20 to 25-year increments, from the point of view of the American Church in Paris, the first established American church overseas. This month: 1905-1925. By Alison Benney

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**History in context**

1905—Einstein proposes his theory of relativity
1905—Freud publishes his theory of sexuality
1906—Finland first European country to give women the right to vote
1908—Ford Model T appears on the market
1908—Federal Bureau of Investigation established
1909—Plastic is invented
1910—The Great Flood of Paris
1912—RMS Titanic sinks
1912—Oreo Cookies first introduced
1913—US 16th Amendment, establishing an income tax
1914—Charlie Chaplin first appeared as the Little Tramp
1914–Wrigley Field baseball park opened in Chicago
6 April, 1917 - US declares war on Allied side (WWI)
1917—First Pulitzer Prizes awarded
1917—Russian Revolution
1918—Treaty of Versailles ends World War I
1919-18th Amendment, establishing Prohibition
1920—US 19th Amendment grants women the right to vote
1922—Merger of the *New York Herald* and *New York Tribune* creates the *Paris Herald Tribune*
1922 — Insulin discovered
1921—Tomb of King Tut discovered
1923—Charleston dance becomes popular
1923—Talking Movies invented
1925 — Hitler’s *Mein Kampf* published
1925—Josephine Baker performs for the first time in Paris, at the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées

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**Growing pains**

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12 ACP Spire, June 2014
Paris in the Great War
by Rebecca Brite

Although the city was relatively unscathed physically during the war, it felt the effects of the conflict immediately as refugees flooded in. On 3 September 1914, with the Germans just 15 miles away, the government relocated to Bordeaux. Two days later, the first Battle of the Marne began, driving the Germans back with the help of 6,000 French troops conveyed by Paris taxis on 7 September.

While rationing, bereavement and a 1916 flu epidemic—foreshadowing the catastrophic 1918 outbreak—would take their toll, direct human and physical loss was scattered and relatively limited. It was inflicted at first mostly by aircraft, especially Zeppelins. The eastern arrondissements were the hardest hit.

In March 1918, the Germans deployed a new weapon against Paris. Capable of shelling the city from 75 miles away, the “Paris Gun” (often confused with Big Bertha, howitzers used in the north earlier in the war) nevertheless inflicted minimal damage on most occasions. US Ambassador William G. Sharp reported on one notable exception, the “appalling destruction” in the 4th arrondissement at St. Gervais-St. Protails church on Good Friday, March 29, which left 88 dead.

Just over seven months later—the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month—flags were unfurled at the Élysée Palace and bells across the city rang as the armistice was signed in Compiegne.

For a rare look at how the war affected daily life, see “Paris 14/18: la guerre au quotidien (the war day by day),” an exhibition of photos by Charles Lansiaux. Galerie des bibliothèques, 22 rue Mahler, 75004, Métro Saint-Paul, to June 15.

Fine tuning the ACP

The ACP music program has always been of high quality, and from 1910 to 1912 the American Church was reputed to have the top quartet choir in the city. It certainly helped that world-renowned baritone Oscar Seagle (right) was invited to sing on a regular basis. Dr. Cochran tells this story about how the congregation would send requests to the choir when he sang:

“One selection from the Oratorio of ‘Elijah’ was in great demand, especially after an extended sermon. On such occasions irreverent smiles broke over the faces of the congregation when Mr. Seagle launched forth in the prophet’s lament ‘It is enough! O Lord, take away my life…’

One of this group had the unusual gift of absolute pitch ... she would, during the service, note a cough, the sneaking of a chair, or other semi-musical noise, and whisper the key to the organist, who would forthwith sound it on a pianissimo stop, much to the amusement of the other singers. Especial delight was had when a well known lady of title sneezed. It was found to be always on the same key – B flat.”

St. Gervais-St. Protails church, 1918

ACP Spire, June 2014 13
Six months earlier: John the Baptist

By Tim Brown

Each 24 June the Church pays tribute to John the Baptist, whose remarkable life is chronicled throughout the gospels. In Luke, he is introduced as the son born to Zechariah and his wife Elizabeth, who was previously thought to be barren but became pregnant as a result of the couple’s deep faith. John the Baptist leaps for joy in his mother’s womb when Elizabeth greets Mary, the mother of Christ.

In Mark, John is praised as a prophet crying in the wilderness who baptized many believers. Of course, John eventually baptized Jesus himself, after which the heavens proclaim of Jesus, “Here is my son, in whom I am well pleased.”

After John was imprisoned and beheaded by Herod, Jesus said, “Truly, I say to you, among those born of women there has arisen no one greater than John the Baptist.”

Gospel scholars selected 24 June as the feast day of St. John because they believe John the Baptist was six months older than Jesus and – allowing for differences in the way the days were counted in ancient and modern calendars – 24 June is exactly six months before 25 December. Furthermore, the significance of the feast falling around the time of the solstice recalls the words of John the Baptist with regard to Jesus: "He must increase, but I must decrease" (John 3:30).

The Nativity of St John the Baptist is one of the oldest festivals of the Christian church. During the late fifth and early sixth century reign of King Clovis, the first Catholic king of France, the festival was listed by the Council of Agde as one of that region’s principal festivals.

Bonfires were, and in some places still are, a central part of the celebrations, as fire was used to symbolize the purification that comes in baptism and with the coming of the new summer season. Especially in rural areas, villagers have long combined bonfires with dances, games, and outdoor meals to celebrate the feast day. Merriment is the order of the day (or more often evening), as people gather around, jump through the flames, and sing traditional songs in praise of the saint and/or of summer.

Saint Jean Baptiste Day

Did you know? The 24th of June is a public holiday in Quebec. Almost 200 years ago, journalist Ludger Duvernay took part in St Patrick’s Day celebrations in Montreal, and was inspired to create a similar event for French Canadians. In 1843 he established the Saint Jean Baptiste Society to promote the celebration of Saint Jean Baptiste Day.

The organization was supported by the Catholic Church, and in 1908 St John the Baptist was designated as the patron saint of Quebec, re-enforcing the connection between Saint Jean Baptiste Day and French-Canadian patriotism. In 1925 Saint Jean Baptiste Day became a provincial holiday in Quebec. Since 1977 Saint Jean Baptiste Day has been recognized as the “national” holiday of Quebec.

Bloom where you’re planted:

Getting on with the fun

Some expats like doing things the hard way. They arrive in Paris and 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 grasp the basics, understand an insider’s view of how things work and then 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 Saturday, 4 October. For over 40 years, Bloom has been illuminating Paris’ obscure little mysteries – bakery etiquette, work visas, laundry soap – and easing expats into its joie de vivre of the city.

With the entry price comes the new updated Bloom guidebook, a compendium of priceless tips on cultural differences such as school vacations, cuts of meat, or hooking up the utilities. Registration is open now; save you or a friend a lot of bumbling, and bloom where you’re planted.

For more information please visit: http://bloom.acparis.org/
On Sunday 8 June our church will celebrate both the Feast of Pentecost and Youth Confirmation. You may be wondering about both of these special days in the life of the Church and what their connection is.

Pentecost is the Greek name for the Jewish Shavuot or Feast of Weeks. When Greek was used extensively throughout the Middle East (circa 400BC) the festival was also known as Pentecost (Greek penta = fifty). The Feast of Shavuot is counted from the second day of Passover to 49 days or 7 full weeks from which the name of the Festival, Feast of Weeks, is derived.

The Apostle Luke records that during a gathering of Jews in Jerusalem for the Feast of Weeks, the Holy Spirit came upon the believers and the many visitors in Jerusalem at the time. Previous to this, the disciples had seen the risen Jesus amongst them for 40 days. He had eaten with them, spoken to them and had promised to send another helper from above. Now they were waiting in the city for the “promise of the Father”, just as He had asked them.

In Acts 2:1 we read, “When the time for Pentecost was fulfilled, they were all in one place together. And suddenly there came from the sky a noise like a strong driving wind.” You can read the complete story in Acts chapter 2. We learn that the Holy Spirit came upon the disciples in miraculous and powerful ways and gave the Apostles the courage and the ability to preach the Good News of Jesus to everyone in the crowd. That day there were 3,000 persons who were baptized, becoming members of the Church!

It should be noted that the ability of the disciples to speak in the languages of those present was a clear sign of the universality of the message of the Church; it was for all people - every nation, culture, gender, and language. We celebrate this miracle each Pentecost Sunday with our language choir; but in many ways, we celebrate the diversity of the Kingdom of God every Sunday as we gather to worship, with people from literally all nations and languages around the world.

Today we remember Pentecost Sunday 50 days after Easter and, as mentioned, it is also when the Sacrament of Confirmation is given. Confirmation is the renewal of baptismal promises, which in the case of infant baptism were made on behalf of the baptized infant by their parents. In Confirmation, those who were baptized “confirm” that they make these promises for themselves and want to be members of the Church, the universal or “catholic” Body of Christ. As a congregation, we affirm their faith and confirm their decision to follow Christ as members of this family.

St. Thomas Aquinas said, “Age of body does not determine age of soul...This preparation should aim at leading the Christian toward a more intimate union with Christ and a more lively familiarity with the Holy Spirit in order to be more capable of assuming the apostolic responsibilities of Christian life.”

Four members of our youth will be confirmed; we rejoice in their decision to follow Christ, and pray for an outpouring of the gifts of the Holy Spirit upon each one. Praise be to God for the continued work of the Spirit, empowering believers in truth, grace, and unity from that first Pentecost Sunday until now!
Members and Friends of ACP,

Blessings from your Church Council – both the outgoing 2013-2014 Council and the newly appointed 2014-2015 Council – as we rapidly approach the end to another busy term and begin to think about a bit of summer calm.

Before we head off though, we have lots of planning to do to set the stage for la Rentrée. In early June the outgoing Council will get together to thoughtfully and prayerfully consider how best to hand off the “baton” to the incoming Council. It’s a time when we look at how the year has gone and what advice we can give to the incoming Council to consider in preparing to serve ACP in the next year and onward.

Later in June we have our joint Council meeting during which we bid farewell to our outgoing members and welcome new members to the team. This is when the 2014-2015 Council members that our ACP membership appointed at the May Congregational Meeting officially assume their roles. We will then look forward to getting together in September for our working retreat to kick off the new term and also our installation during worship service.
On behalf of the Council, I wish to thank the Nominating Committee for their prayerful discernment in seeking members to fill the vacancies of outgoing members. Their work was critical to our success in presenting a full slate of talented and enthusiastic individuals to serve on the 2014-2015 Council.

Please join me in thanking our outgoing colleagues for their tireless service. Every member of the team has been vital to the many missions and programs of ACP and serving together with them has been a blessing and a privilege.

THANK YOU to:

Anne Speicher  Christian Education 2011-2014
Alison Benny  Communications 2011-2014
Camilla Furman  Community Life 2011-2014
Nathaniel Akujuobi  Community Life 2011-2014
Anna Zweede  Worship and Music 2011-2014
Femi Abidoye  Worship and Music 2014

And finally, thank you to all the members who participated in the May Congregational Meeting either in person or by proxy. The voice of each of you, the members of ACP, is hugely important to the governance of our church.

In Christ,

Pam Bohl
Spring Retreat for Adults

20-22 June 2014

ACP’s annual Spring Retreat for adults takes place the weekend of 20-22 June 2014. We will be returning to the Abbaye-Fleury, an historic Benedictine monastery on the banks of the Loire about two hours from Paris. The meeting will be led by Dr. Martha Robbins.

Dr. Robbins will teach us some basic principles of the spiritual life and guide us through various ways of praying with Scripture, keeping a spiritual journal, and attending and responding to God’s leading in times of silence, praying with the Monks, and group sharing.

Cast your net on the other side: A deeper discipleship through spiritual practice

Have you been searching for something more in your life, in your relationship with God? Have you ever wondered how you might develop a more vital and intimate relationship with Christ? Do you want to learn how to attend more faithfully to the Spirit’s leading? If so, this retreat is for you! You are invited to join with other Christians to learn about and experience spiritual practices that have been taught for centuries which will help you encounter our risen Lord in new ways, ways that transform your way of seeing and being in the world.

Dr. Martha A. Robbins is director of Pneuma Institute and the Joan Marshall Associate Professor Emerita of Pastoral Care, at the Pittsburgh Theological Seminary. She is a graduate of Maryville University (B.A.), St. Louis University (M.A.), and Harvard University (Th.D.). A licensed clinical psychologist, Dr. Robbins is also an Episcopal Lay Eucharistic minister, spiritual director, and retreat leader.

Before she came to Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, she was Dean of Students at Villa Duchesne High School, and director of Campus Ministry and the Human Development Program at Maryville University in St. Louis, MO., and has given workshops and retreats on various topics related to Pastoral Care, Loss and Transformation, and Christian Spirituality in Africa, Australia, Brazil, Canada, Israel, New Zealand, and the US.

She has published poems, articles, book chapters, and a book: Midlife Women and Death of Mother: A Study of Psycho-historical and Spiritual Transformation. She authored a series of professional CD’s: Guided Meditations on Sacred Scripture, to help others pray with Scripture and deepen their Christian discipleship for mission. She is currently working on a manuscript on the transformation of faith during times of transition, and continues to explore the relationships between cosmology, evolution, and Christian spirituality.

Our program will begin with supper Friday evening, and end after lunch on Sunday. It will include discussion, meditation and prayer time, perhaps a question and answer period with a monk, and some free time to relax. We are offered a special option to attend any or all of the six daily services with the monks.

Do not miss this exceptional opportunity to learn from Dr. Robbins. Places are limited to 34. If you wish to go on this retreat or if you have any questions, please contact Pastor Michelle at associatepastor@acparis.org as soon as possible to make a formal reservation.

Don’t miss the Atelier Concert Series Finale

Americana Gala: Broadway on the Quai

Sunday July 6 at 17h

Hear some of your favorite Broadway tunes sung by ACP talent.

Featuring:

Caroline Knight-Drury
Laurana Mitchelmore
Carol Mundinger
Debra Takakjian
Jennifer Young
John Bernard
Hadi Fakhreddine, and more

Get me to the church on time!
The mood of the night is effervescent, original, creative and, above all, festive. There is an overall embrace of cultures, undeniably a cultural and artistic phenomenon.

You will want to be ready with your smartphone camera. During and after the event your favorite photos can be shared with others via the festival’s website at www.fetedelamusique.culture.fr/.

Click either “Echos de la fête” or “Medias” for instructions on uploading to the site. Bonne fête!

and is free and open to the public. Donations gratefully accepted. 65, quai d’Orsay, Paris 75007
Atelier concerts in June

Join us on Sundays at 17h00 for great music from artists from around the world. Admission is free with a free-will offering taken to support the Atelier series.
In September 2013, the worship team decided to begin a second recording project. From a list of 50 or so songs that we play in worship the band picked their top 20. There were 10 or so songs we easily had in common, ones that we felt were meaningful to us and to the congregation. About half the list were songs that Danny (vocalist) leads. So the first logistical challenge was: could we work around a lead singer attending Oxford University and scheduling rehearsals, demos, and recording on his breaks? We all decided it was worth the effort, and happily, Daniel Herr is back with us, including his arrangement of the great old George Matheson hymn, *O Love That Will Not Let Me Go*.

In November and December we rehearsed Danny’s five songs in the hope that over his Christmas break we could add him in and record the demo. Lead and back-up vocals would then come over his Spring break. We’ve faced many a scheduling hurdle with this project: a trip to the Philippines for our bassist Jurie Ane, senior exams for our drummer Chris, unexpected weeks in the States for me. But we pulled together and I hope that the end result will be worth the labor of love that it’s been. We’ve certainly learned an enormous amount.

Our arrangement of *Deliver Me* was born from one such hurdle. I was really keen to record our funk version of this David Crowder favorite. It started out years ago with Etop Esen crafting an acoustic guitar bit while accompanying me; never having heard the original. To that, Chris added a slap bass line that we all instantly loved. We performed it a fair amount with Maher Mekahel on drums and when Maher wasn’t available to record it, plan B was for Chris to play both drums and bass. But final exams made that a near impossibility. So Il-woong created an electronic demo that Chris would record over at a later date. The demo was so good and so much in the spirit of the original that we kept it!

We received an amazing gift from Jonathan Russell, our favorite photographer, who flew from Chicago to shoot the album, donating his time and enormous talents. We were so blessed by his work on the Savior of the Nations, Come project but I never dreamed that he would take such a leap of faith to come and give us this beautiful art in which to wrap our work. God provides in extraordinary ways and I’m so grateful. Amazingly, Jonathan Randall Grant was also in town at the same time and helped with styling.

Several songs now take on special significance for me with the passing of my Mom this Easter Monday. Danny’s *O Love That Will Not Let Me Go* closed her memorial service and was an enormous comfort to me; like having the team there, surrounding me. *Revelation Song* feels very different as well now that the grandmother and mother who raised me are both with the Lord.

Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty who was and is and is to come.
With all creation I sing: Praise to the King of kings!
You are my everything and I will adore you!

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**More of You**

By Nathalie Raynal

*A new album by Still Point will be released on 21 June at a special Fête de la Musique ACP Café in the courtyard. Natalie shares a look behind-the-scenes.*

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You are my everything and I will adore you!

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**ALBUM LAUNCH**

Join the band at the special Fête de la Musique café at 19h30 on 21 June in the ACP courtyard.
Fried chicken and salads will be available from Kent’s Catering.

Photos by Jonathan Russell
When I was asked to share my thoughts about the Gospel Service, I felt that this would be easy enough since I had had such a good time. But I find that it is actually more complicated to describe than I thought. The Holy Spirit reigned so mightily that evening that I am reminded of John 3:8 "The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going." The night was like that, God's presence so strong that you couldn't explain it. You just felt Him there.

The service included scriptures read by the entire congregation of 80 - praise, worship, music and personal testimonies. This service was different, not only because it included music and prayer in different languages (Punjabi, Tagalog, French, several African languages and English) but also because attendees were invited to move forward in the sanctuary so that we could all sit closer together, like family, which created a different dynamic. We participated together, even literally, since we didn't use the pulpit. “Passing-the-peace”, which we routinely celebrate, somehow took on more intimate meaning that night.

The principal concept was to glorify God, with new spirit - doing a “new thing” (Ezekiel 36:26). The hope was to incorporate more of the diverse worship traditions represented in our multi-cultural, international, multi-lingual congregation. We all sang and participated, after some instruction, using languages unfamiliar to many of us. We also sang traditional hymns, like "Amazing Grace".

The service was seen as a “first” at the ACP. This was partially because none of us knew exactly what to expect. Normally, especially in France, when the word Gospel is mentioned, the next word is often "concert". From the onset the objectives were much broader: total worship, not just music. I struggled because people wanted to know what the event would look like and I didn't have all the answers! I now realize that from concept through fruition, the job was not mine to define or direct, but the Holy Spirit’s.

The Biblical theme of the service was: "Christ is Risen, Hallelujah, He is Risen Indeed...Now What?”. This seemed quite appropriate for a service taking place on the Friday following Easter. Three laypersons gave short personal summaries of Daniel chapter 3, the story about the Hebrew boys hauled into the furnace. The idea was to witness how daily lives of Christians should reflect our faith beyond Easter, even when we find ourselves in fiery situations.

The role I was privileged to take during this first Gospel Service was, frankly, quite challenging for me on a personal level. This is mostly because I much prefer to always know where I am going! In this case, I seldom knew.

I had little idea whether anyone else was interested in such a service, which my heart has longed for a long time, having grown up in an American Black Church. I didn't know whether anyone would volunteer to help or participate. I didn't even know if anybody would come! Talk about feeling like being in a furnace.

Still, when the opportunity presented itself, God would not permit me to say no, and I'm so grateful that He is smarter than I am. I would have missed the fellowship opportunities with volunteers and the joy of experiencing multiple, diverse ways in which we worship the God of the Universe. There was also congregational prayer at the altar - beyond powerful. I was reminded anew of how God is Lord of all things, of every language and circumstance.

Thank you to everyone who came and who participated in this very special occasion. Didn't God bless?! I don't know where the wind blows... But I know who holds the wind and waves in His palm. Praise His Name!
Our dear brother and missionary in Ghana, Francis Cobbinah, went to be with the Lord on 11 March. Having suffered a massive stroke on 8 March, he was rushed to the hospital in his home town of Elmina and then transferred to the main hospital in Accra two days later. Despite the best medical care and many, many prayers, his soul slipped away from us peacefully on the evening of 11 March.

Francis and his wife, Anna, have been working in the prisons, schools and hospitals in the south central region of Ghana for the past 10 years, since Francis returned to Ghana following an eighteen-month stay in Paris. While in Paris, he told me the Lord led him to the ACP, and on entering the church he saw angels everywhere! Many, many angels - in the sanctuary, in the choir loft, in the balcony, in the basement...

During his time at the ACP, Francis was involved in numerous activities, and made many friends. He took the Disciple Bible Study class, and ALL the other Bible studies that were offered! Additionally, he started the African Fellowship Bible Study class. It was here at the ACP that Francis decided to become a missionary and serve the Lord full time in his home country of Ghana. On returning to Ghana in 2003, he and Anna founded The Living Truth Foundation, and they have been ACP missionaries since 2005.

Francis’ unexpected death on 11 March left all of us who were close to him in complete shock. It was a big blow to his family in Ghana, to his church family here in Paris, to those he worked with and those whose lives he touched in both places and many other places around the world, including the United States. Perhaps the most affected were the prisoners in the Maximum Security Prison who were waiting for him to lead their Disciple Bible study class several days later. They were devastated.

But it seems that Francis somehow sensed he would be leaving soon. In January, he told his daughters not to be distressed when he passed away and in the weeks before his stroke, he told his wife to give away most of his clothes, saying he didn’t need them anymore: “Give them to the prisoners,” he said. In the last message he preached at the prison the week before his stroke, he urged everyone to put their lives in order and to be ready, because we do not know when the Lord will come for us.

And then there were the phone calls he made to people in the last weeks and days: he called many friends here in Paris, (and undoubtedly elsewhere), asking how we were doing and offering caring words of encouragement. Lastly, the morning of 8 March, just a few hours before having his stroke, Francis told a man working in his yard, “Today I am going to heaven!” It appears that the Lord was preparing for Francis’ departure.

Pastor Michelle and I traveled to Ghana to attend Francis’ three-day funeral (11-13 April) with an estimated 600 people in attendance. In addition to family and friends, there were officers, inmates and former inmates from the prisons; representatives from the Elmina hospital; a class of school children who sang a beautiful tribute; and pastors from throughout Ghana and from several other African countries.

Among the many tributes given during the funeral, I was honored to read the ACP African Fellowship’s tribute. Few people in Ghana were aware of the strong ties that bound Francis and Anna to the ACP. Francis’ family was deeply touched and grateful for the ACP’s presence at the funeral, and for our prayers and support throughout this difficult time. Although the funeral was a solemn occasion, the sure hope in the resurrection and the strong faith of most of the attendees caused joy and peace to prevail.

Here in Paris, a memorial service and celebration of
In gratitude for the life of Francis Cobbinah, ACP Missionary (cont.)

Francis’ life was held at the ACP on Wednesday, 23 April, organized by Pastor Michelle and the Mission Outreach Committee. It was a wonderful memorial to our dear friend, Francis, and many people lingered on after the service to exchange memories and tell stories of Francis. His faith and service to the Lord impacted us all.

What is the future of The Living Truth Foundation? Francis’ wife, Anna, who has been working with him since TLTF was founded – and indeed was doing prison ministry before Francis became involved (she “prayed him in!”) – immediately told us she plans on continuing the ministry.

The week after the funeral, when all the family, friends and company had left, Anna spent a week of fasting and prayer, seeking the Lord’s guidance for her work and for the ministry. She is now back visiting the hospitals and prisons and is busy planning the next Disciple Bible study classes at each prison. So the TLTF ministry will indeed continue. We will keep you apprised of developments with this amazing ministry.

ACPWriters Group

ACPWriters Group comprises writers from different backgrounds and writing levels who meet monthly to discuss topics pertaining to the creative art of writing. The group supports and encourages its members to reach their writing goals to the best of their ability. It is the hope and aim of the group to grow and provide a platform for members to showcase their work.

One such member is Elizabeth James. Elizabeth is British and has lived in France for forty years, with a recent five-year hiatus in the United States. Her debut novel The Food Of Love, a Christian musician’s quest for Nashville success, is at present being translated ready for publication in French in the near future. Her passion is to know Jesus Christ and to share His story and His glory with the world. Through the ACPWriters group she says that she finds encouragement for her writing journey as well as friendship. Elizabeth feels that the meetings, open to both debutant and more experienced writers, enable exchange of ideas and expertise.

Another member, Tendayi Olga Chirawu is triply African from Zimbabwe, Zambia and Namibia. She has lived in France for almost five years and completed her Master’s degree in Global Communication and Civil Society at the American University in Paris in 2012. Since then she has been working on her first novel. She joined the ACPWriters Group to meet other writers and learn more about the craft. She took over as president of the group in February and continues, along with the other members, to expand the vision of the group which aims to be a valuable resource for everyone who joins or attends.

For more information about the group, please visit writers@acparis.org.
Keeping up with Patti at Rafiki Village in Uganda

In September 2011, Patti Lafage flew to Uganda to join the Rafiki Village

New territory for Rafiki

In 2003, Rafiki Village Uganda first opened its gates to young children in need of a home and family; the Rafiki family now counts 103 children between the ages of 4 and fifteen. In addition, 105 children from the immediate community attend Rafiki Schools as Day Scholars.

In Uganda, where 48.9% of the population (estimated at 34.7 million) is under 14 years old, both government and private schools are stretched to the limit. Classes of 50 to 100 or more children are the norm and many lack desks, writing materials, and basic school supplies. Teachers are struggling.

How can Rafiki bring quality Christian Classical education to more of the country’s children?

The answer is RICE, the Rafiki Institute for Classical Education. In four of the ten Rafiki Villages, Ghana, Malawi, Kenya and Uganda, the new RICE program trains young men and women to become teachers. RICE trainees include new high school graduates as well as experienced teachers. The program consists of modules of 20-week semesters during which computer aided instruction and classroom teaching cover subjects such as computers, literature and literacy, early childhood development, and classical methods of early childhood education. There is also a comprehensive course in English (the official language of Uganda) available to those who need to build up their language skills.

Currently, RICE participants can become qualified to teach the Pre-Primary grades (three- and four-year olds) but the program will be extended to train teachers for all the primary grades going forward. The business aspects of opening and operating a private Christian school are taught as well.

As part of the program, RICE participants observe and assist in Rafiki’s own Pre-Primary classrooms for part of the day. This practical experience prepares them to move quickly into roles as professional educators as soon as they complete the program.

Uganda’s first RICE program class began in September 2013. There are now twenty-four participants with another group scheduled to begin in July. We wish you all success!

Patti
Greetings to you all from my final days in Chicago. I thank God for the wonderful working vacation since April and I am excited to return to Ghana! This trip landed me in Paris for two beautiful weeks and Chicago for four busy, family filled weeks. Fundraising and fellowship time was the main focus of the agenda and I shall say mission complete.

In Paris, my housing was offered by a lovely ACP member and I must tell you that I would not want to be anywhere else. Her bed and breakfast is gorgeous, comfortable and in a beautiful suburb of Paris. If you have any friends in Paris for a visit then you must check out Villa La Riante (http://www.villalariante.com). I’m sure that you will not be disappointed at all!

Thanks be to God for the warm reception you all gave me and I pray that one day I will be able to give it back to you in Ghana! Big hugs, warm smiles, fellowship and fundraising kept me quite busy in Paris. I was very happy to attend the Memorial Service for Pastor Francis Cobbinah. He will be greatly missed in Ghana.

Also, the African jewellery fundraiser was a success and we thank you very much for your support. The funds raised will go towards starting a third IT center in Ghana this September. God bless you all.

On to Chicago where the weather was still quite cold but my family was ready to receive me with sweet laughter, delicious meals and peace that you can only find once you are home. My grandma had celebrated her 80th birthday so my brother and his family were able to drive in for a small gathering. The timing was so right that it could not have been planned by anyone other than God!

Jewelry sales continued to be quite positive and I was able to sell all the remaining items in Chicago. This allowed me to purchase beautiful lettering and poster board for the nursery program. Friends in Paris donated computer and school supplies so I will only need to supplement their donations with a large box of crayons, coloring books, mouse and mouse pads. My students are always requesting toys so I am trying to find room in my suitcase for them. Can you imagine growing up without any toys? My students do and I am going to change that.

As I write this I am preparing to return to Ghana will all the goodies for our students, rest, love and a couple of dress sizes bigger from all the delicious meals in Paris and Chicago! Praise be to God for the donation that made this entire trip possible. May He bless you all as He is amazingly blessing me during this season of my life.

Dr. Andrew Root
Youth Parent Forum and Thurber Thursday

Youth Parent Forum
Young People, Their Changing Identities, and Parenting
Sunday 15 June 15h00-18h45 in the 2nd floor Library

Thurber Thursday
Bonhoeffer, the Young, and the Future of the Church
Thursday 19 June 18h30 in the Thurber Room
Moving into action continues – an update from the Sandwich Ministry

By Jurie Ane Feleo

After the massive joint force of AUP and ACP for sleeping bags and sandwich distribution in February, the Homeless Ministry has been continuously moving forward in its mission during recent months. Many groups have joined our fortnightly mission. The SC Alumni Club in Paris, which ACP member Chris Pruzko has been involved with, joined and contributed money for the Sandwich Ministry to participate in the Global Day Service. It was a great day and fun to serve in this mission with them.

Another group has also joined us for the Breakfast Ministry: Kimberly Hunt brought her ACP small group to help make and distribute breakfast bags. Kimberly and her small group believe that it’s not just about feeding our souls within the small groups but actually feeding the hungry outside, in our community and that that should be living out what they have been talking about within their group.

We have also been blessed that a group from Western Carolina University of Undergraduate Studies is travelling around Europe and would like to do mission works while in Paris. They donated money and participated in the Sandwich Ministry on 21-22 May.

A student from the American School in Paris is also looking forward to partnering with The Homeless ministry as well. She would like to make a Club in her school that aims to raise money as well as making the sandwiches and helping to distribute them.

God is definitely at work! May He continue to stir us up and send us out! We must go!

If you appreciate this cartoon, you will love working on the Spire!

We need volunteers to help write, edit or proofread articles, provide photos or images, or distribute. Any help is appreciated, big or small. Drop us a line at spire@acparis.org
Towards the end of last month, on 29 April, Toby Lanzer, the UN Humanitarian Coordinator in South Sudan, called on conflicting parties to observe one month of tranquility during May. The month would permit citizens to move freely in the country, to tend to livestock or to simply shelter in neighboring communities, and it would permit citizens to plant seeds before the peak rainy season without fear of violence.

Although the call was not explicitly embraced (conflict persists in the northeastern third of the country), progress has been made politically. US Secretary of State John Kerry visited Juba on 2 May followed by UN Secretary General Ban Ki Moon on 5 May. It brought President Salva Kiir and opposition leader Riek Machar into an agreement for direct talks in Addis Ababa, where the Ethiopian foreign minister mediated an agreement to the cessation of hostilities.

Some question the sincerity in the progress. Some see a glimmer of hope. In any case, the consequences of the conflict have left 1.3 million people displaced and 4 million face-to-face with a potential famine. Where we work, we have successfully secured additional resources to bring life-saving supplies to our project area, where approximately 30-40,000 children and pregnant mothers will benefit. Some 6-10 flights per week for the last 2 months have flown ton after ton of project supplies to these areas ahead of the rains. When the rains arrive, the areas in which we work will only be accessible by helicopter.

According to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), another $1.26 billion is needed to meet all of the needs in 2014 (a total of $1.8 billion). Concern is growing that these needs will not be met, and the needs will only compound. The international community is looking to the South Sudan Humanitarian Conference in Oslo on 19-20 May 2014 to see new pledges from donor governments. At the time of writing, it is too soon to know the outcomes.

Please pray with me that tranquility will be observed in South Sudan and new resources will arrive in the hands that can help protect communities, save lives, and build for a better future. And that God will use the work of so many individuals and agencies to bring about His peace and comfort in the heart of so many.

“Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves. Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. Share with the Lord’s people who are in need. Practice hospitality.” Romans 12:9-13

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**South Sudan**

**A message from Michael**

Michael Beeman was an active member at the American Church in Paris from 2009 through 2011. He still calls it his “home church”. Michael currently works in South Sudan.

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**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)*

Is anyone among you in trouble? Let them pray. Is anyone happy? Let them sing songs of praise. 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. 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. 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, a Prayer Team member is available. Meet in the chapel next to the theater.
Greetings from Tanzania
An update from JoAnn

Rafiki buzzes with activity every day. Besides the five ROS (Rafiki Overseas Staff – the missionaries sent by Rafiki), we have a large national staff. Twelve dedicated women make up the childcare staff and care for the children as “mothers” (living here at Rafiki in a cottage with up to 10 children), four “aunties” who come daily to help the mothers and even sometimes at the school, and my assistant, who has a degree in social work. The kitchen staff of 7 ladies prepares more than 320 meals daily to feed the children and national staff.

We also have a school that includes pre-primary, kindergarten, and up to Standard Four (fourth grade). Next year we will add Standard Five to our school. There are 12 teachers who faithfully follow the Rafiki and national curriculum, also embracing Rafiki’s philosophy of firm, but gentle discipline. Most of the teachers need to be lovingly trained, as the “Rafiki way” is not the way they learned in school.

But the teachers all agree that the results of the Christian curriculum they teach are astonishing. The children are poised, eager to learn, with a minimum of discipline problems. We also have a grounds staff of four men and several day laborers who help maintain the property and work in our garden to help produce food for the Rafiki village.

Yes, Rafiki buzzes with activity... and with sounds of singing hymns, reciting Bible verses, laughter as the children play, as well as the sounds of hammers and saws as the new addition to our school is nearing completion. God has greatly blessed us in so many ways. Please pray that Rafiki might continue to grow, giving the glory to God for his bountiful grace.

JoAnn Neal has been working with the Rafiki Foundation in Africa for more than a decade with support from the ACP.

Journey to SonTreasure Island
Vacation Bible School
25-29 August

It’s a tropical paradise at the American Church this summer. Children ages 3-10 are invited to register for vacation Bible school from 25-29 August, where they will discover the greatest treasure of all: God’s love for us.

Registration will start soon, and we need lots of volunteers to staff the island, so if you would like to help dig for buried treasure, contact Allison Wheeler at childrensworship@acparis.org.

More information about the program can be found here: http://www.gospellightvbs.com/sontreasure-island/
Special Events and Monthly Meetings and Concerts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event Description</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Contact</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>African Fellowship Benefit Celebration</strong> Everyone welcome</td>
<td>Sunday 1 June</td>
<td>13h00</td>
<td>Thurber Room</td>
<td><a href="mailto:africanfellowship@acparis.org">africanfellowship@acparis.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Atelier Concert</strong> - Free admission, with free-wILL offering</td>
<td>Sunday 1 June</td>
<td>17h00</td>
<td>Sanctuary</td>
<td>Fred Gramann</td>
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<tr>
<td>Margarete Nüßlein - soprano, Ulrike Nüßlein - piano, Scott Rednour - piano</td>
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<td></td>
<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> Tune in for inspiring music,</td>
<td>Monday 2 June</td>
<td>20h45 - 21h30</td>
<td>100.7 FM Radio Fréquence Protestante</td>
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<tr>
<td>interviews, and sermon highlights.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Breakfast Ministry</strong></td>
<td>Friday 6 June,</td>
<td>19h30</td>
<td>Jurie Ane Feleo</td>
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<tr>
<td>Preparation: Friday 19h30 at ACP</td>
<td>Saturday 7 June,</td>
<td>8h00</td>
<td><a href="mailto:homelesssandwich@acparis.org">homelesssandwich@acparis.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Distribution: Saturday 8h00, meet at ACP</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Pentecost</strong></td>
<td>Sunday 8 June</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Atelier Concert</strong> - Free admission, with free-wILL offering</td>
<td>Sunday 8 June</td>
<td>17h00</td>
<td>Fred Gramann</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jung-A Lee - Organ</td>
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<td><a href="mailto:music@acparis.org">music@acparis.org</a></td>
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<td><strong>Pentecost Monday</strong> public holiday, church building closed</td>
<td>Monday 9 June</td>
<td>All day</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Painting with the Spirit (Monica Bassett art exhibit)</strong> Opening 10 June;</td>
<td>Tuesday 10 June</td>
<td>19h00</td>
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<td>Exhibition runs 11 June to 10 July</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Writers’ Group</strong></td>
<td>Saturday 14 June</td>
<td>14h30 - 16h30</td>
<td>Tendayi Chirawu</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Room G2</td>
<td><a href="mailto:writers@acparis.org">writers@acparis.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Father’s Day</strong></td>
<td>Sunday 15 June</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Youth Parent Forum</strong> Dr. Andrew Root, Young People, Their Changing Identities,</td>
<td>Sunday 15 June</td>
<td>15h00 - 18h45</td>
<td>Dan Haugh</td>
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<tr>
<td>and Parenting</td>
<td></td>
<td>2nd Floor Library</td>
<td><a href="mailto:youthpastor@acparis.org">youthpastor@acparis.org</a></td>
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<td>17h00</td>
<td>Fred Gramann</td>
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<td>Shuann Chai - Piano</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> Tune in for inspiring music,</td>
<td>Monday 16 June</td>
<td>20h45 - 21h30</td>
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<td>interviews, and sermon highlights.</td>
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You won’t want to miss this!

4th of July Country Fair at ACP

Check the website for details: www.acparis.org
ACP Spire Diary – June
events, meetings & concerts (cont.)
(please check www.acparis.org/diary for updates)

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Contact</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Council Meeting</strong></td>
<td>Tuesday 17 June 19h30 Thurber Room</td>
<td>Pam Bohl councilmoderator @acparis.org</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Thurber Thursday</strong></td>
<td>Thursday 19 June 18h30 Thurber Room</td>
<td>Dan Haugh youthpastor @acparis.org</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dr. Andrew Root, Bonhoeffer, the Young, and the Future of the Church</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Movie Discussion Group</strong></td>
<td>Thursday 19 June 19h30 Room G2</td>
<td>Rebecca Brite <a href="mailto:movies@acparis.org">movies@acparis.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Discussing <em>The Homesman</em> by Tommy Lee Jones, <em>Deux jours, une nuit</em> by Jean-Pierre and Luc Dardenne, <em>Maps to the Stars</em> by David Cronenberg and <em>We Are the Best</em> by Lukas Moodysson</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>All-Church Spring Retreat (Abbaye-Fleury)</strong></td>
<td>Weekend 20-22 June</td>
<td>acparis.org/springretreat</td>
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<tr>
<td>Led by Dr. Martha Robbins</td>
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<td><strong>Sandwich Ministry</strong></td>
<td>Friday 20 June 19h30 at ACP Saturday 21 June 13h30</td>
<td>Jurie Ane Feleo homelesssandwich @acparis.org</td>
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<td>Preparation: Friday 19h30 at ACP Distribution: Saturday 13h30, meet at ACP</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>ACP Café (Fête de la Musique, )</strong></td>
<td>Saturday 21 June 19h30 Courtyard</td>
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<td>Still Point band presents <em>More of You</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Guest Choir at 11h00 service</strong></td>
<td>Sunday 29 June 11h00 Sanctuary</td>
<td>Fred Gramann <a href="mailto:music@acparis.org">music@acparis.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Loreto Normanhurst Choir and String Orchestra</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Atelier Concert</strong> - Free admission, with free-will offering</td>
<td>Sunday 22 June 17h00 Sanctuary</td>
<td>Fred Gramann <a href="mailto:music@acparis.org">music@acparis.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>The Harvard Din &amp; Tonics</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Guest Choir at 11h00 service</strong></td>
<td>Sunday 29 June 11h00 Sanctuary</td>
<td>Kim Herr women @acparis.org</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sarasota Young Voices</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Sunday Morning Women’s Gathering</strong></td>
<td>Sunday 29 June 12h30 in the 2nd Floor Library</td>
<td>Kim Herr women @acparis.org</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dr. Martha Robbins</td>
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For more information on weekly Bible Studies and meetings, including BSF International, Moms in Prayer International and Youth and Young Adult events, please go to “What’s on at ACP” at www.acparis.org.
Join us on **10 June** when ACP artist Monica Bassett conducts a performance with audience participation, in the same manner as her “Dancing / Painting project”. The performance will include poetry readings and texts, with musical accompaniment.

From **11 June to 10 July**, the American Church in Paris presents the exhibition **Painting with the Spirit**, by Monica Bassett, created out of a humanitarian trip to India in February.

**A Prairie Home Companion radio show**

Friday 5 September at 20h and Saturday 6 September at 16h

Parlez-vous Garrison Keillor? Slow-talking, down-home Minnesota native Garrison Keillor will soon make his radio debut in Lake Wobegon, France.

*A Prairie Home Companion*, the radio show heard by over 4 million listeners weekly on hundreds of radio stations across the US, will be recorded live at 20h on Friday 5 September, and at 16h on Saturday 6 September, at the American Church in Paris. Ticket proceeds will be donated to the church, and are on sale now. It will be open seating, with doors open an hour before each show. See our website [http://acparis.org/phc](http://acparis.org/phc).

*Read Garrison Keillor’s selections of poetry and prose via the Writer’s Almanac at [http://writersalmanac.publicradio.org/](http://writersalmanac.publicradio.org/)*