The Spire
The Beacon on the Seine
May 2012

The American Church in Paris
www.acparis.org  65 quai d’Orsay, 75005 Paris, France
Dear Members and Friends,

I’m seeing red! Red is the color of roses. Red is the color of fire. Red is the color of a sports car. Red is the color of wine. Red is the color of blood. Red is the color of passion and love and life. Red is the color of change. Red is the color of Pentecost, because the celebration of Pentecost is about when the church was transformed and came to life early one morning in Jerusalem... Red is the color of Pentecost because the church can still manifest the power of the Holy Spirit in word and in deed and still be a part of God’s redemptive work in the world.

As I read again through the accounts in Acts 2 of the outpouring of the Spirit in Jerusalem upon each of the disciples, and later the work of the Spirit in Acts 15 when the church came into a unity around some difficult issues, and in Galatians, the magna carta of the Christian faith, about how in the Spirit of Christ “there is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female...” and in Romans 8 how the Spirit’s work is about the transformation and redemption of all creation, I am awed and amazed at the dimensions of the Gospel being worked out even in and through us!

We live in a time of incredible change, and I believe as Christians we are not supposed to be mere observers of change. We are called to be agents of change. I loved Apple’s 1997 “Think Different” commercial: “The people who are crazy enough to think they can change the world are the ones who do.” Doesn’t that sound like the early church, who were known for their radical love and compassion and who got the reputation for “turning the world upside down”?

Charles Taylor writes, “Many great conversions, or to put it differently, many of the great founding moves of a new spiritual direction in history, involve a transformation of the frame in which people thought, felt and lived before. They bring into view something beyond that frame, which at the same time changes the meaning of all the elements of the frame. Things make sense in a wholly new way...

As we learned in our Faith and Science lectures recently, some of the greatest minds in quantum physics, cosmology and microbiology insist there is no necessary barrier between the pursuit of revealed truth and the pursuit of scientific truth. In our increasingly multi-cultural and multi-faith urban context, it seems important that the church undergoes conversion back to the fundamentals of Jesus’ message: It’s all about love. Jesus’ unique but demanding ethic is summarized succinctly: Love God. Love your neighbor. Love your enemy. And he didn’t just talk about it. He lived, died and rose about it! We realize Jesus’ ethic as we undergo conversion from living according to “the law” to living according to “the Spirit” of God. We realize Jesus’ ethic every time we obey Jesus’ imperative to “Repent and believe in the good news!”

Pentecost is about opening ourselves up to the Spirit of God and the experience of God’s profound grace and love for us. Note the word “us.” We do this together. I love Enuma Okoro’s parenthetical comment on the creed when it comes to “I believe in the Holy Spirit.” She writes, “I believe that we are never left alone or expected to walk the path of faith without divine assistance and intervention...” Repentance is a gift of the Spirit. Believing the gospel is a gift of the Spirit. And as we believe and allow the Spirit of God to rule in more and more areas of our lives, we will be transformed. We will live differently. We will think and act differently, remembering that the metric for the Christian Spirit-filled life is above all else love.

We have all heard the adage by Descartes, cogito ergo sum, "I think, therefore I am." The Christian revision of this is more
like *credo ergo ago*, "I believe, therefore I do."
May we continue to be filled with the Spirit of Christ, and so believe and serve together to coordinate more with God’s transforming work in our church, this city and the world. Let’s all see red, OK?

In Christ,  **Scott**

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**PENTECOST...**

PENTECOST commemorates the arrival of the “promised power from on high” (Luke 24:49) of which Jesus spoke after his resurrection. Luke in his second book, Acts, in 2:1 and following, writes that “power” was the Holy Spirit which came upon the disciples as “blowing wind and tongues of fire.” *All of these were filled with the Holy Spirit and began speaking in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.* As you recall, **Pentecost** (means **fifty**) and was celebrated by the Jews (*Shavuot*) 50 days after Passover. Pilgrims came to Jerusalem from all parts of the Mediterranean celebrating the feast. The Apostle Peter addressed a crowd that gathered, drawn by the commotion of the disciples all speaking in different languages. Peter, a fisherman not trained speaker, spoke and 3,000 people *repented and were baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of their sins.* (Acts 2:38-41)

Thus, **Pentecost** marks the birth of the Christian Church, this year, 27 May. We will joyfully celebrate with wonderful music sung in many languages and a beautifully decorated sanctuary with red drapery and red plants, which will later be used to adorn the courtyard. If you would like to donate a plant in memory or honor of someone, there will be a form in one the upcoming bulletins. We are encouraging you to try something new. In honor of **Pentecost** we invite you wear as much red as you dare or least something red. Let us celebrate with joy the coming of the Holy Spirit.

**Pentecost Monday,** 28 May, and **the Day of Ascension,** 17 May, are national holidays in France. I wonder how many people know why they have the holidays let alone what the days mean. It is amazing to me that as secular as France is, the religious holidays are still honored. These holidays may be a good time to ask your friends why they have the day off and then give a short explanation of the Good News of Jesus’ death, burial and resurrection. After forty days of being with his disciples and giving them a cram course on everything he had tried teaching them before his death, Jesus was taken in to Heaven. That is what **Ascension of the Lord** holiday commemorates. The amazing part of that story is that Jesus entrusted his entire plan of telling about his life and death on a cross to “take away the sin of the world” to his disciples and us. He did tell his disciples to wait for the Power of “the gift my Father promised ... the Holy Spirit comes on you.” (Acts 1:4,8)

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"Thoughts from

**Rev. Dr. Glen Thorp**

**Interim Associate Pastor**

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continued ~
There are other national holidays in May. The 1st honours workers. The 8th is VE Day. The 28th, in United States of America, is when Memorial Day is celebrated, remembering and honoring not only those who fought and gave their lives so that this nation and others in Europe, the Philippines and other far Eastern Islands were liberated from tyrannical powers, but also those who fought in WWI, Korea, Vietnam, Iraq and Afghanistan wars so people would be free.

Mother’s Day, 13 May in the United States and 3 June in France, is an opportunity of recognizing and thanking those women who have been a loving presence in our lives. This is always a very special Sunday.

May the Holy Spirit “Fall Afresh on Us” on us not only on 27 May, but may God’s love radiate through us the entire month of May. *The Holy Spirit will lead into all truth.* (John 14:17).

In the Power Presence of the Holy Spirit,

Glen Thorp
Easter - the day of the resurrection of our Lord - is a very special time at the American Church in Paris. We wanted to add beauty and meaning on that important day in the Christian calendar. One of our members, Yoshiko Okubu, had a vision. In "Yoshiko-style" with her soft ways and beautiful voice she got many of us involved in a project that celebrated Easter in a unique way! Her vision incorporated making a thousand origami cranes to show love and support for a friend, Judith, who was going through difficult, life threatening illness. Yoshiko may be small of stature, but her ideas are BIG. She hoped and belived that interested persons could meet together and make the colorful cranes. She became our teacher.

Why we would use cranes in our sanctuary? The crane is important in Japanese lore, and folding a thousand paper cranes is a special practice there. In many western countries the custom has been extended. For example, a thousand cranes can be made for cancer patients. Cranes were popularized through the story of a young Japanese girl who at age eleven was exposed to radiation during the atomic bombing. Inspired by the legend she began to make cranes. The origami technique was first illustrated in a book dated 1797. To put that in perspective, remember that the American Revolution began with the Declaration of Independence in 1776, and the French Revolution began in 1789.

In Japanese lore, folding a thousand cranes is a labor of love, and it certainly became that for our "Crane Crew" - as we called ourselves. It is believed that the more people involved - the more good things will happen. And our "crew" attracted more persons as we worked. Eventually, thirty people were involved. The Martha Randy and Elizabeth Poux families added international help. When writing this article we came across a website for a business company using the slogan: BELIEVE, PLAN, FLY. Under the slogan were two interesting statements. One was "Success comes from helping others". A second one proclaimed, "Success comes from co-operative relationships." The beauty of the Japanese custom has caught the imagination of many Christians. Our own Dave Smidt noted that the American Church in Berlin featured cranes when he was attending the American and Foreign Christian Union meeting held there last March.

So, with Yoshiko’s leadership we began meeting - each time at a different place. We laughed, learned, made mistakes, helped each other, and had a good time. Pastors Scott and Glen joined us at different meetings supporting our efforts and the number of cranes began to grow - and grow - and grow. Although the original idea began with a show of support to Judith, Yoshiko wondered how the cranes could be used? There was a simple answer, "Much more can be said, but their beauty itself is enough to begin with."

Now enter our creative, artistic duo - Monica and Lionel Montoliu! During a meeting in Pastor Scott’s office, we developed a list of words that caught the meaning of the cranes for our congregation, including hope, love, fellowship beauty, care, peace, community, service, support, grace, encouragement, witness, healing. Continued ~
The words came quickly to those who were there. Lionel suggested building a cross - "free-style" using branches from a tree near his garden. He climbed, cut, transported, and then wove the branches together under the watchful eyes of part of the "Crane Crew". We called on Yoshiko and Monica, whose sense of style and artistic ability are well known. Even Nina, the Montoliu’s daughter, made cranes for us at home! There was only a single casualty. While weaving the branches together, Lionel cut his finger - adding a bright red spot of drama. On Easter, you saw the results! If somehow you have missed seeing them, there are pictures in the back of this newsletter!

As a final note let us add a personal word. We have loved being a part of "Project Crane". We both had difficulty learning how to fold the cranes, and some of our cranes were defective - like all of us! This was our second Easter at the American Church. Last year a beautiful cross created by the Montolius’ was an Easter focus. This year we have an international touch, led by a faithful and beautiful woman, Yoshiko Okubu. Thanks be to God, and to the "Crane Crew" that Yoshiko led in the spirit of lifting the spirits of a friend suffering with the effects of chemotherapy.

Praise God from whom all blessings flow,
Praise him ALL CREATURES here below.

With Joy,
Bedford and Carol Transou

Traditionally the Holy Spirit is portrayed as a dove. You have all made it possible to envision the work of the Spirit in an original way. In our Crane Story, Yoshiko, brought you all together to create a sign of love and hope, and you all went into action folding origami cranes. You even managed to make me a part of the action and the laughter, the breathing of life, without letting on to the deeper meaning and final surprise!

Because Jacques and I were not in Paris for Easter, at Yoshiko's suggestion, I went to see the sanctuary and the wonderful decorations with the Crane Cross. Then, it all came together, at our next rendez-vous, believe it or not, I was still expecting to do some serious folding. But no! Suddenly our home was filled with laughter, branches of pink flowered origami cranes and a small origami crane cross. There you all were with your friendship, your thoughts, your prayers, your hopes ...and more laughter. What a blessed day! Your love and concern will remain with me for as long as I am on this earth and the Easter Crane Cross will remind me of our active hope of new life in Christ. For the moment, Jacques and I are still gliding on the warm and soft wind of love that blew through our home.

May God Bless You All,
Judith
Thoughts from  
Rev. Dan Haugh

A Tale of Two Cities

I have come to believe that every city has a story, and personal stories often are interwoven within the fabric of a location. People are influenced by the cities they live in and visit, and cities are shaped by those who inhabit them or travel through.

One of the real joys in my life since moving to Paris has been the opportunity to explore some incredible cities. Over the past six weeks, I have been blessed to travel to a few remarkable and memorable places. The first experience was with nine members from our young adult leadership team. We journeyed to Rome for a long weekend for a team retreat seeking fellowship and vision for our ministry. It is hard to think of a more inspiring city than Rome! Our days were filled with exploring the unique history of this ancient city and marveling at the sites such as the Colosseum, Vatican City, the Roman Forum, and the Sistine Chapel. Of course our palates marveled savoring Italian cuisine, always followed by the famous and never duplicated gelato. Our meals, devotions, and team times were spent really getting to know each other on a much deeper level and prayerfully considering the vision that God has for our lives and ministry together. We discussed at length ideas such as purpose, vision, core values, and mission and also strategic ways to follow God’s lead in these areas.

What amazed me the most about Rome was the spiritual history discovered at every street corner. Thousands of Christian saints walked those narrow streets and left their indelible mark upon the faith we now confess. It was exciting to read Paul’s letters to the Romans with new eyes, after spending an afternoon seeing many of the sites he would have seen as well. Saint Peter’s Basilica commemorates the spot where the Apostle Peter was martyred.

More important than the monuments and plazas was to ponder the relationships Paul had made and that this city, like every city, was full of young Christians trying to discover what it meant to follow Christ. This city, which once persecuted and supposedly martyred Christians would eventually embrace that same faith, expand and spread it globally, and later become its center.

Rome helped me understand and contextualize the great cloud of witnesses that lived before us and inspire us by their testimony of faith, even in the face of death. The murals, monuments, and were living monuments to the early days of Christianity and a source of inspiration.

The following weekend, six youth members from our graduating Senior class at ACP headed to a different Mediterranean destination, one that the students had chosen for their Senior Trip. Barcelona would be home for three days and we enjoyed spending quality time with each other in celebration of a great final year as students here at ACP. The cuisine and culture were very different and we did enjoy bathing in the bright sun. Meals over Spanish tapas and paella were enjoyed, as conversations were intentionally focused towards each student’s thoughtful consideration and reflection of:

- What have you enjoyed most about living in Paris?
- What has been the best, as well as most challenging, aspect about your last year in high school?
- What are you looking forward to the most about university?
- What brings anxiety or stress when you think about it?

Continued ~
These questions led to wonderful discussions about our past, present, and future. While in Barcelona we had the very unique privilege to visit the Sagrada Familia. This is the last and only basilica being built in the world and its construction began back in 1882. This was a beautiful testimony to the continuation of faith and the pride a particular city has for it. Physically and structurally the cathedral has a mixture of both gothic and contemporary, thus showing the continuity of generations. The iconography was something to behold as well. Similar to the Sistine chapel, there was a sense of the beauty, majesty, and transcendence of God as we silently gazed all around the church.

Our group noticed there is something in the air in Barcelona that simply breathes joy. Perhaps it is the sun or the laid-back lifestyle but all nine of us truly felt refreshed and could feel the goodness of God. Life is meant to be enjoyed and delighted in celebration of God, the author of all good things. Sometimes, as our group discovered, a change of scenery and schedule is necessary in order to bring to light the stressors we let dictate our life and distract us from joy.

These two cities were extremely different, and different experiences were had and lessons learned. Each city left a mark upon our group for which we are grateful. We hope and pray we left an impression on the city and the people we encountered, and are thankful to live in such as city as Paris. May we experience all that God has for us wherever we find ourselves, and may we heed the words of the prophet Jeremiah to “seek the peace and prosperity of the city to which I have carried you into exile. Pray to the LORD for it, because if it prospers, you too will prosper.” - Jeremiah 29:7

-Dan Haugh
Members and Friends of ACP,

Grace and peace to you during this time of Easter or Eastertide. It is the time of new life, and indeed new life is blooming around us here in the city of lights. How blessed we are to welcome new arrivals to ACP during this season, one of the busiest and most exciting times of the year.

April’s Council meeting focused on our program committees - Christian Education, Community Life, Mission Outreach, and Worship & Music. Listening to the reports of each committee Chair left me feeling joyfully awestruck; it is simply amazing how much takes place in, around, or supported by ACP.

On 27 May we will have our next Congregational meeting, this time on Pentecost Sunday. The purpose will be to elect our Council leaders for next year. The Nominating Committee has been working very hard and now has a full slate of candidates to present to you. At the same time, the Associate Pastor Search Committee continues to work hard, our prayers of support go to them as they continue their discernment process.

I encourage you to take advantage of the season and to explore the many ways that you can contribute to the ministry activities within our community.

In Christ,
Mark Primmer
ACP Moderator
Community Life
Camilla Macfarlane and Nathaniel Akujuobi

Being in Service to Our Community
We are putting together a Rummage Sale and collecting items from people that are moving so we can give to the poor, sell to the needy, and donate proceeds to our charities. If you know someone leaving Paris that needs a place to donate stuff to, have them email us at communitylife@acparis.org. We are happy to get it to people who are in need!

New Members
Confirmations of seven new members will take place on 13 May!
Be sure to meet and welcome them!

Women’s Ministries
Is up and running now! See the Announcements page and the Upcoming Events page!

Christian Education
Lori Kolodziejczak

Upcoming Thurber Thursday Lectures
The Rev. Dr. Cynthia Bourgeault on 10 May
Modern day mystic, Episcopal priest, writer, and internationally known retreat leader, Cynthia Bourgeault divides her time between solitude at her seaside hermitage in Maine, and a demanding schedule traveling globally to teach and spread the recovery of the Christian contemplative and Wisdom path. She is the founding director of both The Contemplative Society and the Aspen Wisdom School.

Cynthia is the author of seven books: The Meaning of Mary Magdalene, The Wisdom Jesus, Centering Prayer and Inner Awakening, Mystical Hope, The Wisdom Way of Knowing, Chanting the Psalms, and Love is Stronger Than Death. She has also authored or contributed to numerous articles and courses on the Christian spiritual life. She is a past Fellow of the Institute for Ecumenical and Cultural research at St. John's Abbey in Collegeville, MN, and an oblate of New Camaldoli Monastery in Big Sur, California. Additionally, she will lead the weekend Adult Retreat on 1-3 June.

Enuma Okoro
We are pleased to host Enuma Okoro as a guest theologian from 16 May to 15 June. She will lead the remaining three Thurber Thursdays, speak with the Young Adults and the Women’s Retreat on 2 June. Additionally, she will be the guest preacher on 3 June. Please see the announcement regarding Women’s Ministries for her biography and book, which we will be using for study.
Children's Worship

ACP’s Summer Kid’s Bible Camp

Love to organize? ACP's Summer Kid’s Bible Camp needs you!

We are actively seeking a Coordinator for ACP’s annual vacation bible school program that will take place the week of 27 August. Leadership and good organizational skills are required for this role, which is a principally a volunteer coordinator position. Contact Lori Kolodziejczak at christianeducation@acparis.org for further details or to apply.

Library News!

We welcome Nathaniel Akujobi as our new head librarian, and give a heartfelt thank you, to Paula Taquet –Woolfolk, for her five years of service in this role. As a last act of service, she gives us this list of new acquisitions!

DVD’s

"Courageous" (Highly recommended for fathers!!)

"Grace Card" (Another of Glen's recommendations, regarding..... Grace!)

"Soul Surfer" the true story of 13-year-old girl whose arm was bitten off by a shark. Through faith and hard work she went on to become a professional surfer. The film includes footage of Bethany Hamilton surfing. Such courage and faith!

"Jesus: The Complete Story" focuses on the evidence of Jesus's life: the historical Jesus. Tom Wright is one of the people interviewed - nice mix of historical evidence and faith.

"The Power of Forgiveness" is a powerful film. The Holocaust, the Amish shootings, and September 11th are discussed, as are some murders on a smaller scale. A school program in Northern Ireland on forgiveness training is documented. Martin Doblmeier (http://www.journeyfilms.com/content.asp?parentid=753&contentid=757) directed it and is also the director of the Bonhoeffer film we have available in the library. Funding was partially provided by the John Templeton Foundation. There are interesting bonuses including one of Desmond Tutu speaking at the Washington National Cathedral. Highly recommended.

Fiction

We now have the complete set of Janette Oke's series

Love Comes Softly,

and the complete trilogy of Anne de Graaf's

The Hidden Harvest. a fun light metro read.

(Unfortunately, we have only that one book of the series.

Does anyone have the others? )

There are also new books available regarding child rearing and parenting!
Worship and Music
Anna Zweede

We are looking for people to usher! Have you ushered before? If you haven’t yet tried it, you really ought to consider it! It is really quite uplifting to welcome friends and guests to worship! It is such an important ministry to make a good impression on people, especially our guests!

Come pass out a bulletin and share a smile! What a wonderful way to start the day!

Christ has no body now, but yours.

No hands, no feet on earth, but yours.

Yours are the eyes through which Christ looks with compassion into the world.

Yours are the feet with which Christ walks to do good.

Yours are the hands with which Christ blesses the world.

Christ has no body now on earth but yours."

~ St. Theresa of Avila

Nominating Committee
Thelma Fuchs and Christopher Wobo

Congregational Meeting 27 May, 2012
We will be presenting to the congregation a slate of members to be confirmed as our next council.

Please be present for this important day to vote for your next representatives!

Associate Pastor Search
Skype interviews with the seven semi-finalists were completed. After a great deal of prayer and discussion, the committee decided on three finalists. These finalists will go through more extensive interviews with the committee and ACP staff.

The Search Committee hopes to come to a final decision by 15 May for the Council meeting.
Mission Outreach
Kristie Worrel and Anne Mildred

The MOC focus for 2012 is to remain committed to God’s work in mission – feeding the hungry, sheltering the homeless, aiding the poor, parenting the orphans, caring for the widows and elderly, providing restoration and reform for the prisoners, giving medicinal care for the sick, assisting the refugees, encouraging the downhearted, mentoring the young.....

Upcoming Mission Trips

July 8-22 Pastor Dan and the Youth Group (a team of ten, 15-18 yrs.) will be traveling to Gabon to do mission work there with the organization Envision.

July-August Habitat for Humanity will be leading a second team back to Cluj, Romania to continue work on the home being built there for a family in need.

Upcoming Events and Fundraising

Theater: An American Gospel Musical entitled “SOULZ” will be performed on 2 June (a change from its original April date) with a reception immediately following. The benefits of this event will go to support The Living Truth Foundation.

Concert: Saturday, 19 May Benefit Concert – the Lux Perpetua Choir will be performing Durufle’s Requiem at ACP with proceeds to go towards Beit El Safa and King’s Garden Children’s Home.

Fundraising and Event Successes

Africa Night – Held at the ACP on 31 March was an evening of musical and culinary diversity and delights. The event raised close to 3000 Euros for the Young Adult Mission trip to Gabon to take place in mid July.

H4H/Rotary Club Concert – Over 200 attendees enjoyed a wonderful concert on 12 April, with great financial success for the H4H team who are organizing two trips to Romania this year. Sincere thanks to the Rotary Club for all their generosity and matching funds.

Crisis Intervention

Refugee Ministry: Progress continues in our work to develop better venues to give assistance to the refugees and those in need within our own Paris community who come to the ACP seeking council and aid. We are growing our involvement and relationship with the Foyer de Grenelle in this regard. Its direct connection and network with organizations such as Cimade, Arc75, Secours Catholique, CAF, Femmes Egalité and Dom’Asile has already been a source of great help to several of our own ACP members in need.

King’s Garden Children’s Home – Lay leader Tess Roque, who is in the Philippines to be with her ailing father, will also make a trip to visit the KGCH. The MOC approved a special grant of 1000 Euros to purchase needed equipment for the girl’s dormitory facilities there. Tess is also bringing children’s clothing, toys and school supplies for the orphanage.
**“Feed My Sheep” by Kristie Worrell**

**Friday Mission Lunch to be hosted at the ACP beginning 18 May!**

For over 20 years the ACP has been an important partner in the Friday Mission Lunch Program, which was inspired, created and hosted by the American Cathedral -23 Avenue George V, our neighbor across the Seine. More than a soup kitchen, this program is a weekly reminder of God’s LOVE and ABUNDANT PROVISION. Many of you at the ACP have long been faithful volunteers and know firsthand the extraordinary nature of this mission – nourishing the body is paramount, but of equal importance are the portions of self respect and spiritual feeding that are offered each week to each and every individual who comes. Those that are truly homeless feel invisible and insignificant on the street. These are the people we often try not to make eye contact with in our daily routines. Others are elderly just trying to exist on very small pensions and who perhaps have no family present or who have family that for unexplainable reasons choose not to be present. Others are from the four corners of the world, their backgrounds diverse – all seeking a refuge from personal histories that implore human compassion and searching for a better quality of life for themselves and their families. These are our flock.

Currently the American Cathedral has undertaken a huge renovation project of its facilities, and as it happens, God is calling and entrusting the continuation of this ministry and the interim hosting of this program to the ACP. This is a huge honor and a calling to be God’s ambassadors of goodwill – but logistically it also is a huge calling to the members of the ACP to come forward and serve.

The Friday Mission Lunch is a hot, nutritious three course meal – prepared and offered every Friday of the year to those in need in our very own Paris community. The hosting of this ministry involves a team made up entirely of volunteers. We need individuals who can welcome, set-up, cook, prep, serve, and clean-up each Friday between 10h00 and 14h00.

If you have the heart and the time, please consider a commitment to blessing others and be prepared to be blessed tenfold in return.

For more detailed information about serving in this ministry please contact Kristie Worrel at: missionoutreach@acparis.org
Beeman in Bujumbura
with World Relief Burundi

In February, Michael Beeman moved to Bujumbura, Burundi as a volunteer with World Relief Burundi. During the previous two years, Michael was a member of Young Adults at ACP and an active participant in Thurber Thursdays when not at class. Michael is spending 6 months with World Relief, a Christian organization working with the local church to empower the most vulnerable. In Burundi, World Relief empowers church leaders, supports the health system, and rebuilds the lives of refugees. Michael shares here how the global church is transforming lives of the most vulnerable—not to mention how it is teaching him a thing or two.

The Long-Fingered Frog by Michael Beeman

Grace and peace from Bujumbura! Thank you for your prayers. The rains fall more frequently these days, the temperature is more comforting than boiling, and Easter was celebrated joyfully. And, most thankfully, the long-fingered frog has been found.

Okay, perhaps this has not warranted large headlines. However, I am one of the few who believe that it should. To my surprise, during the last month, Google news repeatedly alerted me to the species’ rediscovery after over 60 years. The Bururi Long-Fingered Frog was last seen in 1949, when, in fact, a Belgian biologist first discovered it. Recently, a team of American, Congolese, and Burundian scientists announced their lucky find during an expedition last December. The team trained their ears to listen for a similar mating call. When one heard it, the scientist brushed aside some vegetation, and, voilà, there sat the little, blue frog.

I took a recent day trip to the same forest where the long-fingered frog was found, in the Bururi Natural Reserve (about 2 hours southeast of Bujumbura). I did not find any frogs. Au contraire, I found a pile of driver ants which bit at my ankles for a good 30 minutes. Nonetheless, my eyes were opened to the depth of God’s creation. Burundi’s wildlife is quite unknown, yet certainly under His control. Indeed, the story unfolds here just as the Yellowstone NP in the US and its lakes recount millennia past.

This natural reserve also tells much of the country’s current challenges. Surrounding the indigenous forest grow acres and acres of pine trees—an attempt to “reforest” part of the country following independence in 1962. High rates of deforestation complicate matters in Burundi when land already suffers under the pressure of an increasing population. The country is one of the densest in Africa (about 300 persons per sq. km.).

Farmers are first to notice the consequences: little land, soil erosion, and low production. The costs are substantial. The government and many international actors acknowledge the challenges and are working towards improving the farms. At World Relief, returned refugees receive added training for farming in such conditions. With prayer and support, the farming business will continue to grow. (Personally, I am one for the local peanut butter and banana juice.)

Agricultural development is a complicated task with many facets (e.g. nutritional benefits). In Burundi, it takes active analysis of the current “value chains”, of community needs, and of agricultural policies. But when I stop to think about the depth of God’s creation—the collines, the Bururi Natural Reserve, and even that long-fingered frog—I understand that a greater story is being told by God. Please pray with me that God’s gifts to us and to Burundi are used to relieve millions of poverty and to glorify His name.
Being Finite  by Laura Kerber

We are often told that God is infinite. God has infinite mercy, infinite understanding, He is that which was, which is, and which will be, without limit. As someone who is immersed in math on a daily basis, I personally spend a significant amount of time trying to avoid infinity. I draw contours around infinity, I exclude regions where I think there might be infinities, I go through hundreds of lines of computer code trying to root out stray infinities and abolish them. Infinity is not only difficult to deal with; it is hard to even comprehend. Usually when I think of infinity I think of a sequence of white numbers superposed on a black background which come very close to the viewer and then, as we pull away, fade into the vast reaches of empty blackness. On paper I abbreviate this vision as an ellipsis [...], from the Greek for “falling short”. It is a feeble representation of the incomprehensible endlessness that follows.

There are different kinds of infinity. Imagine starting with 1 and counting to infinity: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9…. How many numbers are there? An infinite number, of course—it would take you an infinite number of lifetimes to finish counting. We call this kind of infinity a “countable” infinity. Despite the fact that it would take you an infinite number of lifetimes to count to this infinity, you could easily start counting without ever worrying that you were missing any numbers. On the other hand, consider trying to count the number of numbers between 0 and 1. We could start with 0.01, and then go up to 0.02. But if we did that, we’d be missing all the numbers like 0.001 or 0.0000001 or 0.0000023343434 that lie between 0.0 and 0.01 and 0.02. In fact, between any two numbers, there exists an infinite number of real numbers, because you could just extend those decimal places out as far as you like, in whatever combinations you can imagine, making however many numbers you want between 0 and 1. This, to be sure, is a new kind of infinity. This is an “uncountable” kind of infinity, and as you may have guessed, its magnitude is far greater than the normal kind of infinity that you just imagined when we were counting only the whole numbers starting with 1. Georg Cantor, a famous German mathematician, classified the many magnitudes of infinity. He used the Hebrew letter Aleph א with numerical subscripts to describe what size they are (well aware of the philosophical implications of his choice). Of what order is the infinity of God? One might say that the infinity of God is so great that it not only encompasses these infinities many times over, but encompasses all possible infinities.

Human beings are by definition finite beings. We are finite in space, we are tragically finite in time, and the way in which we are able to perceive the world around us iscrippingly finite. We experience the world around us like a satellite with only a limited number of instruments. It took most of human history to discover many things which we cannot perceive with our senses, like X-rays or radio waves. Imagine how many other things must exist that we cannot even imagine how to detect.

How vast, then, is the space between us and God? God knows everything at all times and in all places. God understands everything because He is everything. We are in one place at one time. We understand very little beyond what we can see with our own eyes. We know (imperfectly) what happens in our time and place, and when we perish most of our memories perish with us. Every way in which we think about God is merely a projection of a vast infinity into something we can
understand better. We imagine God as an old man with a flowing beard, as if such a form could contain Infinity. We each have a frame of reference, and we do our best to project God into it. As human beings we are flawed because as human beings we are finite.

When we talk about Jesus becoming incarnate, we talk about the Spirit becoming flesh. Another way to phrase it is that the Infinite became Finite. God, all-knowing, all-seeing, everywhere and everything, became a tiny, limited human being, interacting with other finite creatures, eating food, seeing out of only two eyes, walking from city to city in a linear fashion instead of simultaneously being all places at once. The magnitude of this transformation is astonishingly profound. It would be like giving up your humanity to become a bacterium without any eyes or ears or sense of taste, and trying to describe to the other bacteria what it is like to eat spaghetti. It is no wonder that Jesus told stories in terms of parables and analogies—he had to explain things which are far beyond our comprehension in a way we could understand. It speaks volumes about God’s love that he cares about us so much despite our limitations.

It is natural to try to draw contours around God. We restrict our everyday operations into areas where we do not have to deal with Infinity. In these domains, the world makes sense. We can spend our whole lives experiencing and exploring the world in these domains. But we cannot forget that because of our natural and self-imposed limitations, we are in a sense only guessing at the nature of the Universe by looking at its silhouette. It may not be so surprising that we fall short....

This essay was written with support from the ACP Writer’s Group,

**Pastor Scott’s Recommended Reading List!**

Are you looking for a good read this summer?

How about a few of these?

Donald Miller's *A Million Miles in a Thousand Years*

Scot McKnight's *The King Jesus Gospel*

Richard Stearns’s *The Hole in the Gospel*

Keith Ward's *More Than Matter? What Human Really Are*

Gary Haugen’s *Just Courage*

Roland Barthes’s *Mythologies*

Peter Rollins’s *Insurrection: To Believe is Human; To Doubt, Divine*

Scott McKnight's *The Blue Parakeet: Rethinking How You Read the Bible*

Editor’s Note: *A Hole in Our Gospel* changed my life. What a read it was!
I have become a Christian; evangelized by deeds more than words. The ACP showed me a powerful Christian message — that I am cared for. Showing love is always the best way to evangelize.

My Story: I am a Chinese nurse, arriving in France without papers in 2004. I escaped from China, where I felt my life was in danger because of my violent ex-husband. I was looking for a safe and stable life in another country. After being refused an immigration visa into England twice, and working and studying in Saudi Arabia and Malaysia, I obtained a travel visa to France where my sister lives. I arrived at sister’s home to take care of my two year old nephew, but very quickly realized that I had lost my freedom. One and a half years later, I paid her back in full and escaped her house. At that time, I had nothing except my freedom: no papers, no work, no money, and no home.

Luckily, soon after, I met Jean Taquet at one of his Refugee Ministry sessions at the American Church. I am so grateful. I believe that this was God’s will. With Jean’s help and other church members’ unconditional support, I have obtained my employee carte de séjour, my nurse assistant equivalent diploma, a full-time position in a nursing home, and my own rental apartment. And in March, I received permission for my son to immigrate to France. At the end of April, I will go back to China to bring him back to Paris. As a single Chinese woman, this is a miracle.

I feel I have achieved everything that is needed to have a normal life in France. It took me no more than six years to go from being a destitute single Chinese woman to this. I have been carried this entire time by my faith and my church.

The Refugee Ministry is about giving hope to people who have no reason to have any. So many times, I came to the church thinking that my situation was hopeless because the obstacles were too big. Then Jean showed me the realistic goals I needed to achieve, the journey I needed to take, and all the struggles I needed to face on the way. It was presented one step at a time, so I was not scared by the big picture. The ministry is also about giving Christian love indiscriminately. Jean passed onto me his confidence that the love that unites Christians creates the condition of success. He inspires people’s Christian fighting spirit when they are stuck in a no-hope situation. Finally, the ministry is about reflection, prayer, and time to analyze situations. Jean uses his experience and his ability to create sophisticated strategies that work.

My Baptism: I knew very little about Christianity when I was baptized in 2007. But I knew one thing for sure “God is in everybody, to love your neighbor is to love God.” Jean’s and many other church members’ love and care for me really touched my heart. The best way to thank people is to join with them. I have discovered that my church family is more supportive and intimate than my blood family. I am treated with genuine warmth and respect, because we all love God and God loves all of us. Also, I find Christian values more nurturing when we give to others. For me, because giving is a personal decision, it has more value, and I feel like a better person for it. It defines what I want to do. I am proud of being a Christian who can change peoples’ lives by spreading Christian love. I have changed from a traditional, subdued, and dependent Chinese woman to a confident, broad minded and independent Western woman. I have the strong feeling that I was able to grow as a new creation because I have been born again as a Christian. The more I trust God, the more support I receive from everybody. It is as if, the bigger the faith grows, the more I can trust Jean and other church members, and the more I can do the right things with the right spirit.

This is an abridged version of Jenny’s story. The full version is available at www.acparis.org/spire/jenny.
In the long history of the American Church in Paris, people have come and
gone; quite a bit, if you consider the temporal nature of most people’s time in Paris. Many are students or
businesspeople on fixed contracts; au pairs, artists finding their path, drifters, war widows. ACP has
welcomed them all. And one couple who has seen many of them, and much history at ACP, is Laurana
and Charles Mitchelmore.

Laurana and Charles’ history with ACP, lasting some 36 years to this point, is a story of family, church,
community, and commitment. They have not only been active as members, but have served multiple
terms on the church council and search committees for pastors. Laurana may have given more perfor-
mances in the Atelier concert series than any other artist, accompanying singers and instrumentalists
from flute to tuba, and has accompanied the adult choir continuously since 1980.

Though this is an ACP story, their story as a family begins in Vienna, where they met at the Vienna Com-
munity Church in 1969. The VCC is to this day a part of the American and Foreign Christian Union, the
governing body that administers ACP, the VCC, and the American Church in Berlin. Laurana and
Charles, both successful internationally with their careers (hers as a concert pianist, his as a journalist),
made the following path to Paris. Their son was born here, and all three of their children were bap-
tized and confirmed at ACP.

Though Charles comments that ACP has changed its mission in many ways over the years, the constant
was and is how welcoming and supportive the church is. Despite the challenges of geography, with ACP
being in the city center and so many of its congregants living in the suburbs or further away, so many of
the devoted come because of ACP’s openness and Christian fellowship.

Back when they first came, Laurana and Charles recall American girls, just here for a short time as au
pairs (live-in nannies), who would sit in the front pews and tearfully support each other and share their
homesickness; the dangerous days of the late 80s, with terrorism threats, purses being inspected before
French police armed with automatic weapons. The US ambassador at the time was an ardent supporter
of ACP and was instrumental (no pun intended) at seeing through the installation of the church’s beauti-
ful Beckerath organ … and yet, congregants would call the church to try to see if he was coming to church
to worship, for fear of a terrorist attack.

ACP persevered, and always reached out to the community. Laurana and Charles both describe things
from the bowling alleys (where G7 now is), to the 5 franc ($1.00) lunch offered after church, to the $5 per
night accommodations offered to US servicemen who needed a place to sleep for a night.

ACP’s magnificent music program was in transition, and coincidentally, the Mitchelmore’s first Sunday at
ACP was music director Fred Gramann’s first Sunday in his new position. The church’s adult choir,
which has of course grown larger and smaller over the decades with people passing through, has always
benefited from the steady presence of Fred and Laurana.

The Mitchelmores especially point out one of the key moments in their time at ACP is the founding and
growth of the Filipino and African Fellowships, whose contributions to daily life and worship at ACP have
been constant.

And what is the same between the ACP of 1976 and the ACP three and a half decades later? “It was, and
is, such a welcoming place,” they say. Laurana adds, “It would always find a way to make people feel bet-
ter.” “It is becoming more and more welcoming, really helps people in their transitions, and especially to
the down and out,” Charles says. “It has really been a waymarker in our lives.”
EVERYONE IS INVITED BY THE AFRICAN FELLOWSHIP of the American Church in Paris
Unity, Fellowship and Love ~ Fundraising Luncheon
6 May at 13h00
(In the Thurber Room)

10€ suggested donation at the door
We do however encourage you to give more, as the Lord enables you.

At this fundraising luncheon we will be entertained with traditional dance, songs and a brief history of the African countries represented at ACP.

The funds raised from this event will be used for various activities that the African Fellowship is part of, in Africa and at ACP. We count on you to make this a success and look forward to sharing our food and culture, along with fellowship with our brothers and sisters in Christ.

Women’s Ministries
Women’s Sunday Gathering
27 May at 10h00 - 10h50
Library on 2nd floor of Church House

This will be a time of fellowship, and to meet other women of ACP.

We will be discussing Enuma Okoro's first book, the spiritual memoir, Reluctant Pilgrim: A Moody Somewhat Self-Indulgent Introvert's Search for Spiritual Community (Fresh Air Books, 2010).

You may order your copy on-line or purchase it along with a guide book to complement your reading at the ACP Book Table during coffee fellowship.

This book was a winning finalist in the 2010 USA Best Books Award and received the 2011 National Indie Excellent Book Awards, winning finalist in “Spirituality and African-American Non-Fiction.”
# Youth and Young Adult Activities

by Lisa Prevett

## Young Adult Events for April (18-30yrs)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday 1</td>
<td>18h00-21h00</td>
<td>Bible Study in <em>Parc des Invalides</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunday 6</td>
<td>TBA</td>
<td>Social gathering following the 13h30 service</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday 8</td>
<td>18h00-21h00</td>
<td>Pizza in the Park!</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday 15</td>
<td>19h30-21h00</td>
<td>Bible Study in the <em>Catacombs</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday 21</td>
<td>19h00-21h00</td>
<td>Pub Theology in <em>O’Brien’s pub</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday 22</td>
<td>18h00/19h00</td>
<td>Pizza night with Enuma Okoro (<em>Thurber Room</em>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday 28</td>
<td>TBA</td>
<td>French Protestant Celebration event</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday 29</td>
<td>19h30-21h00</td>
<td>Bible Study with Enuma Okoro (<em>Catacombs</em>)</td>
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Come and join us every Tuesday for either Bible Study, or Pizza Night, as we share fellowship and conversation. For Pizza Night come at 18h00 to help cook and from 19h00 for dinner and fellowship.

## Youth Events (13-18yrs)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sunday 6</td>
<td>15h00-17h30</td>
<td>Youth Group in the <em>Catacombs</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>17h30</td>
<td></td>
<td>Africa Mission Team meeting (<em>Catacombs</em>)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sunday 13</td>
<td>15h00-17h30</td>
<td>Youth Group (<em>Catacombs</em>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday 19</td>
<td>19h00-22h00</td>
<td>Youth Talent Show and Dinner (<em>Thurber Room</em>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunday 20</td>
<td>15h00-17h30</td>
<td>Youth Group (<em>Catacombs</em>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday 25-Saturday 26</td>
<td>20h00-08h00</td>
<td>Lock In!!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Youth Group** meets on Sundays from 15h00-17h30 for fun, fellowship and bible study in the *Catacombs*. Please feel free to bring friends along – they are always welcome at ACP events!

## Youth Worship (11-13yrs)

We meet each Sunday this month during the 11h00 worship service in the *Youth Catacombs*. Follow the cross during the service to gather in the theater.

Contact Rev. Dan Haugh (youthpastor@acparis.org) for more information about Youth and Young Adult events. You can also follow us on Twitter (www.twitter.com/danhaugh) or connect on Facebook (www.facebook.com/haugh.dan)
ACP Bible Studies and Other Discussion Groups

ACP SUNDAY SERMON BIBLE STUDY: Sunday morning after the 9h00 service in G2. Contact Kristie Worrel for further information at missionoutreach@acparis.org

ACP TUESDAY MORNING WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY meets from 10h30 to 12h30 in the catacombs. We are currently studying Thessalonians I and II: Be Ready - Living in Light of God's Return. If you have small children, the church nursery is available for a nominal fee. Please let us know if you'd be interested so we can ensure that we have the proper number of childcare givers. We will break from 1 May through 8 May. Questions or more information, contact our coordinators: Jennifer Jourlait or Diedre Grizzle.

ACP BIBLE STUDY: Simply Christian: Why Christianity Makes Sense by N. T. Wright. Connecting to God through worship, prayer, scripture and the church, leads to life that is full and abundant. Contact MaryClaire King for further information on these studies.

ACP MEN’S GROUP: Come for coffee, conversation, prayer and fellowship. Any men interested in further information, address and door codes, or in being added to our e-mail list, should contact Ed Hyslip.

Independent Christian Prayer Groups and Bible Study Activities

MOMS IN TOUCH PRAYER GROUP: 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 scripture together. Moms in Touch groups are in 120 countries and now English language groups are forming in Paris.

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.

LEADERS, LIFE, AND PURPOSE: Our next rendez-vous is on 25 May for “Heaven in a Parisian Nightclub.” Dr. William Edgar, professor of theology and professional jazz pianist, will lead us through a concert and conference on the Biblical heritage of jazz. A delicious dinner and vibrant discussion follow. Please contact Denise Dampierre.

If you are interested in starting a group, please see the Associate Pastor to get it started! There are always opportunities to get people together to live, laugh and share our Christian values, and at ACP, we would like to help that happen!
ACP Groups and Additional Fun Activities

ACP WRITERS GROUP meets the second Saturday of the month from 14h00 – 17h00 in room G2. Contact Rosalyn McKeown.

ACP MULTICULTURAL COUPLES POTLUCK EVENING: You are warmly invited to join us. This evening is guaranteed to be filled with fun and laughter. Bring a dish to share on 11 May at 20h00 in the Thurber Room.

ACP RUNNING TEAM: If you are interested in being part of the ACP running team? We will be running La Parisienne in September. Those interested in running this race should register at the LaParisienne website. For those who don’t have the ACP running shirt, more will be available before the race! Please contact Kim at woac_president@yahoo.com.

THE KNITTING GROUP welcomes newcomers and experts, and others in between. Some of us are knitting for Mission Outreach, and some for ourselves and our families. This month, some of us will be making an afghan together – anyone can join in! We can guide you to Paris knit shops, patterns, online resources, local knitting events and more. Drop in and bring a friend! Monday at 17h00.

MOVIE DISCUSSION GROUP: See any or all listed movies in the cinema at your convenience, then join the group for discussion on Thursday, 24 May at 19h30 in room G2 of the American Church basement. The movie group’s choices for May are:

Radiostars by Romain Levy
I Wish: nos voeux secrets by Kore-Eda Hirokazu
Barbara by Christian Petzold
The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel (French title: Indian Palace)

Volunteering and Outreach

CHILDREN’S WORSHIP: Highly sought after leadership positions available for both 11h00 and 13h30 services. Join one of the most expanding, dynamic groups of ACP. There are many opportunities to serve according to your comfort level and talent. Just send me a line to get more details: Jeanette Laugier at childrensworship@acp.org.

GREETING AND USHERING: We are seeking new members for the Contemporary Service. Can you contribute, once a month for example? If you are interested in knowing more, please contact Anna Zweede at musicandworship@acparis.org.

FRIDAY MISSION LUNCH: The Mission Lunch Program provides a hot, nutritious and free lunch, every Friday to those in need. ACP will be the host church starting 18 May! Volunteers are needed every week for cooking, serving and cleaning-up. Contact Kristie at missionoutreach@paris.org.

FOYER DE GRENELLE has an urgent need for babysitters Mondays and Thursdays, 1400h—16h00. Please Contact Anne Mildred at missionoutreach@acparis.org.

HOSPITALITY TEAM needs help for Thurber Thursdays and Mother’s Day Brunch. Please contact Camilla Macfarlane if you can help! Special blessings for clean up people!
The Atelier Concert Series Presents

Sunday, 6 May at 17h00
The Mirror Visions Ensemble celebrates its 20th Anniversary
Vira Stywotzky, soprano
Scott Murphree, tenor
Jesse Blumberg, baritone
Gary Chapman, piano
Tobé Malawista, Artistic Director
Music by Meyerbeer, Grieg, Debussy, Cipullo, Thomas....

Sunday, 13 May at 17h00
Ateneo Glee Club from the Philippines

Sunday, 20 May at 17h00
The 2012 Fulbright Musicians studying in France

Sunday, 27 May at 17h00
"Nocturnes"
Amy Blake, soprano
Debra Takakjian, piano
Vocal and solo piano works by Faure, Debussy, Rachmaninoff, R. Strauss, Barber and Bernstein.

Free entrance and free-will offering for all Atelier Series Concerts

The ACP Youth Music Program Presents
Spring Concert
12 May 2012 at 20h00
joining the Youth Choir is: Voices Choeur International
Rendez-Vous Student Vocal Ensemble
Les Griottes Women’s Ensemble

Spirituals, sacred songs, art songs, jazz...
Handbells and Handchimes too!

Entre Libre with a free will offering. Donations encouraged and appreciated!
The Choir from the University of Colorado at Pueblo will provide special music for the 11h00 worship service on Sunday, 13 May.

The English Choir, Lux Perpetua, is performing at ACP with a donation of proceeds going to two of our ACP Charities: Beit El Safa and the, King’s Garden Children’s Home.

Beit El Safa’s Lay Leader, Bettina Chehab, has put Pastor Glen in touch with the director of this facility, which is a safe house for girls who are victims of domestic violence.

Kings Garden Children’s Home is an orphanage. Tess Roque, who is in the Philippines now, is bringing them children’s clothing and school supplies. We support them by helping with dormitory supplies.

Additionally, a piece this choir is performing is composed by our own Fred Gramann.

Please come out and support our friends and these important outreach missions!
Are you an American?
Make your voice heard in 2012!
20 May 2012, 12h15
in the Theater at Coffee Hour

A voting assistance team will be at the welcome desk after the 11h00 service to
assist people in registering to vote in their home state and obtaining
an absentee ballot for this year's elections.
Recent changes in the law make it necessary for Americans living abroad to
request an absentee ballot each election year,
even if you have received them from your state automatically in the past.
Take the time to do this before the deadline, which varies by state.
Pass the word on to your friends and family.
This team will be holding future voting assistance sessions as well,
and announcements will be made in advance.

“ACP Today, the American Church in Paris”

Have you tuned into ACP Today, the American Church in Paris’ radio show yet? The shows are broadcast the first and third Mondays of each month 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 let friends know who may be housebound, or who would simply like more devotional time on a Monday evening, for ACP Today, Faith Talk from Paris! Past shows are available on the ACP website, too!

If you have any questions or comments, be sure to contact us at acptoday@acparis.org.
Celebrate Mother’s Day at ACP!
Everyone Welcome!

Mother’s Day
Pancake Breakfast!
Sunday, 13 May
9h30—11h00

Celebrate Mother’s Day at ACP!
Everyone Welcome!

Men’s Ministries will be cooking and serving!
Contributions kindly accepted!

Men’s Ministries will be cooking and serving!
Contributions kindly accepted!

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 Kerry Lieury at 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.
April in Review

Christ is Risen! Christ is risen, Indeed!
ACP’s Habitat for Humanity Team traveled to Cluj, Romania to work on a home building project.

We worked hard, and had a really good time, reported Lisa Laney, member of this ACP Habitat Team. We set out with good intentions and were blessed not only accomplishing our goals but learning things along the way!

There was a lot of love for one another as a team, and also for the family they were building for. It was nice such a connection was made and they plan on keeping in touch.

As we can see, it was truly a bonding experience, not just for the team, but for the family for which they were building. And despite the need for translation, there was so much support and encouragement. Lisa added that they really enjoyed the team’s enthusiasm and collective spirit.

Knowing the people on this team, we aren’t the least surprised!

(The mother and father of the family are center in the picture on the right).

ACP Runners conquer the Paris Marathon!

Here they are, proudly wearing their “Finisher” shirts and medals!

A big Congratulations
UPCOMING ACP EVENTS

JUNE RETREATS

Note that there are two retreats the first weekend of June. There is a one day Saturday retreat sponsored by Women’s Ministries on 2 June, and ACP’s Annual Spring Retreat for Adults on 1-3 June. Because these two events will offer very different experiences and neither could be moved to a different date, it was agreed to celebrate the abundance of opportunities with which we are blessed and to hold both concurrently.

ACP’s Annual Spring Retreat for Adults
Exploring Centering Prayer

This weekend retreat will take place 1-3 June 2012. We will be returning to the Abbaye-Fleury, an historic Benedictine monastery on the banks of the Loire. Our theme will be “Exploring Centering Prayer”. The retreat will extend our introduction to this practice which will be presented by Rev. Dr. Cynthia Bourgeault at the 10 May Thurber Thursday.

Rev. Bourgeault is a contemplative herself, an Episcopalian priest, a former student and colleague of Father Thomas Keating, and an internationally known author and retreat leader. As preparation, it is recommended to read Centering Prayer and Inner Awakening by Rev. Bourgeault, is available at the Sunday book table and also online in the kindle edition. Additionally, we are fortunate and grateful to have as our pastoral leader the Rev. Bedford Transou who was introduced to the contemplative life by Thomas Merton and other monks at Our Lady of Gethsemani, the Trappist monastery in Bardstown, KY.

Our program will begin with supper Friday evening, and end after lunch on Sunday. It will include discussion, meditation and prayer time, a question period with a monk, as well as some free time. A very special opportunity is the option for each of us to attend any or all of the six daily offices with the monks. This is an environment conducive to a silent retreat for any who wish.

As we are limited to a maximum of 24 persons, please contact Sue Orsoni as soon as possible at. Formal registration will be coming soon and notices will be in the bulletin and on the ACP website. The cost will be 85 euros per person (exclusive of transportation) with some funds available for assistance. For any questions, please contact Sue, or Elizabeth Rand.
Annual Women’s Retreat

Saturday, 2 June at 9h30 - 15h00
(In the Thurber Room)

Our guest speaker will be Enuma Okoro, award-winning author and widely sought-after speaker. A Nigerian-American living in the African diaspora, Okoro was born on 6 February, 1973 in New York City to Imo parents, Vincent and Enuma Okoro. Though her family is from Imo State in Southern Nigeria, Okoro identifies as a global citizen who was raised in the USA, England, Nigeria and Côte d’Ivoire.

Her writing, speaking and teaching interests intersect spirituality, cultural anthropology, women's studies, race relations, and the visual and literary arts. Okoro receives invitations to speak and teach at colleges, universities, religious institutions, and conferences across the United States, Europe and Australia.

SOULZ
The Gospel Musical

Dawn Houghton is creating a fabulous show, along with her manager Destiny Ryales!

Don’t forget to mark this on your calendar for a night to remember!

Proceeds go towards ACP's Living Truth Foundation in Ghana.
Clergy and Staff of the American Church in Paris

Senior Pastor: Scott Herr, seniorpastor@acparis.org
Interim Associate Pastor: Glen Thorp, associatepastor@acparis.org
Visiting Pastor: Bedford Transou, pastoralassistant@acparis.org
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Music Director: Fred Gramann, music@acparis.org
Contemporary Music Director: Natalie Raynal, cmusic@acparis.org
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Evening Receptionist: Kithiri Fernando, reception@acparis.org
Saturday Receptionist: Martha Gachoka, reception@acparis.org
Sunday Receptionist: Boryana Dimitrova, reception@acparis.org
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