Dear Members and Friends of the ACP,

I recently enjoyed listening to Frank Sinatra’s version of “I love Paris in the springtime.” I also love Paris in May (whether it feels like springtime or not), not only because the Horse Chestnuts are in full bloom and the lush foliage shimmers with a warmer breeze, but because of all of the holidays! May is a feast of mini-holidays. There is Labor Day, V-E Day, Ascension Day and then Whit Monday! Three weeks of “bridge” days to take long weekends! I call it Swiss-cheese month: Lots of air.

I hope that you will take the opportunity of so many “off” days to take time for physical rest and relaxation, and for some spiritual reflection and reorientation. Consider Labor Day as a day to give thanks for all of those little chores that fill up so much of life: washing laundry and dishes, cleaning and shopping and paying the bills. How often do we think of the privilege that such work really is for us? It means we have clothes to wear, food to eat and a place to live that has water, light and warmth. Not all of us are employed, but each of us has some form of work to do each day. It’s been said that “pressure is a privilege.” Perhaps Labor Day is a time to give thanks to God not only for gainful employment, but also the ability to do all kinds of labor that is a part of a healthy and blessed life. It’s also a great time to appreciate those people that work in ways that benefit the larger society, or work for you directly.

Or consider V-E Day. V-Day can mean a number of different things, I’ve learned, including the global movement to end violence against women and girls. Here in France, 8 May is a holiday because we celebrate V-E Day, the end of World War II in May 1945 when the Allies accepted the unconditional surrender of the armed forces of Nazi Germany. The peace agreement was signed in Reims on 7 May and in Berlin on May, 1945. This is a day to take time to remember the great sacrifice of so many millions who died in that terrible war. It’s a time to remember the Holocaust. And it’s a time to pray for those who yet suffer the devastating violence of war and oppression.

The other days off are religious holidays, Ascension Day and Whit Monday. Ascension Day, celebrated this year on 9 May, is that day when we remember the ascension of Christ to his rightful heavenly throne. Luke records this event in his gospel narrative and in Acts: Luke 24:50-53 records how Jesus led his disciples out to Bethany, and after blessing them, “he withdrew from them and was lifted up to heaven...” In Acts 1:6-11, we read how Jesus told his disciples to wait for the Holy Spirit, and how the Spirit will give them power to be his witnesses “to the ends of the earth” before he ascended into heaven. We confess in the Apostles’ Creed that “he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father...” Ascension Day is a good time to remember and reflect more deeply on the sovereignty of Christ, that he is Lord of Lords and King of Kings. Very simply, that means that in the end, as T.S. Eliot put it, “All will be well and all manner of things shall be well.”

Finally, we will be celebrating Whit Monday, or Pentecost Monday on 20 May. The Jewish community remembers on Pentecost the giving of the Law to Moses and celebrates by reading the Torah all night long. In the Christian community, we celebrate the coming of the Holy Spirit upon all the believers and the miraculous speaking and hearing of the gospel in such a way that the first disciples understood and believed the good news in their own language (Acts 2)! We enjoy a little bit of Pentecost every Sunday at the ACP, with so many nationalities, ethnic and racial groups represented in our fellowship. This is a good holiday to remember and celebrate the gift of the Holy Spirit at work in our midst, and to remember that the Spirit was given to all the disciples. On Pentecost Sunday we’ll confirm the faith of some of our students, and be amazed at how God calls so many people from different ethnic and language groups to be a part of the household of faith! Pentecost is also a good time to consider the spiritual gifts the Spirit has given you to bless the larger community? How are you sharing your gifts?

I think you’ll agree that May is a luxurious feast of holidays. I pray that you will take time to savor and learn more about each of these holidays... and be inspired again to love this city!

In Christ,
Dear Friends,

As I write this letter, I can hear the spring showers outside my office window. I hope that all these April showers will bring beautiful May flowers — soon! Before moving to Paris, I would spend a significant amount of my Sabbath time in my garden at this time of year — cleaning, preparing and planting. Occasionally, I would find myself remarking, “It’s not safe to plant that yet!” and I would be tasked with “holding back” my two overzealous garden helpers from planting things too delicate to withstand the drastic temperature/condition changes of spring in Pittsburgh (and similarly, Paris!).

It seems so counterintuitive to the spring season to “hold back” planting. With signs of new life all around – budding trees, bulbs appearing from the ground and busy birds – I dislike being unable to help spring along by planting my summer flowers or vegetables. The life of faith can follow similar “spring planting” patterns. Sometimes we might be excited to be in prayer, to be engaged in the community of faith or to enjoy a new aspect of the community of faith. Other times we might “hold back” and only reluctantly engage in faith or the community of faith. I tend to believe that these are perfectly natural cycles of faith, which can bring us challenge and help us to grow even stronger in our love for God and one another.

It also brings me great comfort to know that in the times when I “hold back,” God never does. In fact, God held back nothing from us — giving even his own Son that we might have new life. It’s a blessing to see signs of spring begin to flourish and to be reminded that we live in a world that has been (and continues to be) refreshed by a Creator who holds absolutely nothing back from us. I pray that we might be able to joyfully partake of this season (and every season!) with that reminder in our hearts.

Bénédictions,

Michelle

For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth takes its name. I pray that, according to the riches of his glory, he may grant that you may be strengthened in your inner being with power through his Spirit, and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, as you are being rooted and grounded in love. I pray that you may have the power to comprehend, with all the saints, what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. (Ephesians 3:14-19)
A Call to Prayer

From 15 to 22 April I visited Turkey for the annual Pastors’ Conference, sponsored by the Association of International Churches of Europe and the Middle East. The week was refreshing and stimulating as our days were full of seminars and excursions to archeological Biblical sites. Walking literally in the footsteps of Paul and Barnabas helped provide more in-depth insights into the narratives of Acts as well as Paul’s letter written to the churches in that geographic area of Galatia.

What impressed me most was the experience of being in a Muslim country for the first time. In truth, all of my other travel experiences have been to “Christian” nations. While Turkey certainly has a vast Christian history and claims more Biblical sites than any nation except for Israel, Christianity is visibly a minority religion. Unlike some Muslim countries, the Turkish government does provide religious freedom and is more secularized than most.

However, regardless of where you venture there are continual reminders of faith imbedded in the fabric of society and noticeably in its architecture. Whereas in France cathedrals adorn the skyline, in Turkey mosques are prolific. The tall minarets rise towards the heavens and are the tallest structures in almost every village, town, and city. This may go unnoticed but what cannot be ignored is the very audible call to prayer offered five times a day. Within a 4-5 block radius in every neighborhood is a mosque and at certain times each day you will hear throughout the country the Imam’s call to prayer. Devout believers will cease all activities and proceed to their local mosque to join the community in prayer. Others will take a moment wherever they are and unravel a mat to offer their prayers. Even at the airport, located next to the restrooms, there are separate prayer chapels for men and women. Throughout Turkey there exists visible and audible reminders of faith and faithfulness in prayer.

Whilst I do not hold the same beliefs as Islam, I appreciate and highly respect the commitment of Muslim believers. Their faith is experienced in community and expressly impacts their daily lives, including schedules.

In my experience, many Christians view spiritual disciples as an unnecessary “add-on” of sorts. Grace triumphs all and so our actual daily routines can be of little significance.

I reflected on these questions:

- How often do days and weeks go by without a conscious reminder about God?
- How often am I challenged and inspired to pause from the frenzied pace of my daily routines to ponder and pray?

Though I have a desire to do so, I can easily get caught in a whirlwind of activity for God without taking time to be with God. Perhaps you have developed structures within daily life to help focus on God. I realize my need for that and am thankful for the example and reminder from our Muslim friends that we are never too busy to take time for prayer.

In Christ,

Dan Haugh
Follow up to a question raised at the 17 March 2013 Congregational Meeting

**Question:** Why is WOAC presented as a line item in the 2013 budget when it was previously agreed that WOAC no longer exists as a committee of the ACP?

**Response:** The labelling of WOAC in the presentation is made in error. The amount represented in that line item is for the activities of the **BLOOM** program. We apologize for the misunderstanding and will update any and all future reports accordingly.

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**Bloom Where You’re Planted**

Would you like to be part of the **Planning Team** for the **2013 Bloom Where You're Planted** orientation program being held on Saturday, 5 October? We have a number of committees such as Speakers, Organizations, Registration, Food, Publicity, Children’s Program, Decorating, etc. where we could use your skills and talents. It is a great way to offer hospitality and a warm welcome to those who are just arriving in Paris. If you have any questions, contact Kim at bloom@acparis.org.

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**Women's Ministry Monthly Gathering**

Please join us from 12h30 to 13h30 in the 2nd Floor Library

**19 May** Dr. Elizabeth Milovidov, Esq. will join us again to talk further about children’s rights. In particular, she will speak about child safety in our school environment in France. She will address issues of bullying, school violence and games such as the choking game or ‘jeu du foulard’ – which has led to the ban of scarves at certain schools.

**16 June** Monica Bassett will be speaking to us about her faith journey and how the Spirit is reflected in her painting. Come learn a bit about the painting classes she has offered at ACP called Painting in the Spirit. Maybe there is a budding artist waiting to be discovered even in you.

Contact Kim Herr at women@acparis.org for more information.
What gift do you most crave on Mother’s Day? For years, I did not know how to answer that question.

Twelve years ago we began attending the ACP when our fourth son was a nursing baby. On our third Sunday attending church, as I was dropping off the brood for their worship classes, I was targeted as prime Sunday School volunteer material and invited to join the team. M.O.M. seemed to be written all over me. And yet, I did not always relish in being a mother. Many days felt like mere survival. “Get down from that fence!” “Talk to your brother nicely. He’s made in God’s image too.” “It doesn’t matter who played with the Lego first; there’s plenty for all to enjoy.” “We hear you. You don’t need to scream. Everyone, let's take turns speaking, please.” “B.E.D.T.I.M.E, darlings.” And this was repeated the following day, and the next one too...

When God wants me to hear something, He often communicates the same message in multiple ways. I began reading biographies (one page at a time before conking out at night) and realized that these leaders must have been a challenge to their mothers. I also pondered about our God whose thoughts are so much higher than mine. What appeared to be a total failure—Jesus’ death on the cross—proved to be of infinite success. And my produce salesman at the marché regularly remarked how privileged I was to need to buy tons of food for five men; he and his wife could not have children.

“O.K. Lord. I’ll stop giving lip service to my sons being gifts from you. Help me believe it and act on it.” And the Lord answered my prayer.

Our eldest child, as probably most do, introduced us to the need to discipline. And yet, he is also the one who brought us the first joys in parenting: from that initial eye contact to hearing him recite poems and admiring him in school plays, to proudly watching him receive his high school diploma. One child tests limits, again and again, but he teaches me creativity in parenting. It’s boring to hear (and say) the same reprimand again and again. Thanks to him, I constantly seek ways to give him a vision of himself as a grown man positively contributing to society. Another son has a sensitive spirit which made him an easy target for bullying. As a recovering victim he too can resort to meanness and tantalizing others. For him, love is spelled T.I.M.E. He teaches me to slow down. It’s impossible to connect with people when we’re all running around. Yet another child teaches me patience...just when I’m about to lose my cool! This fun-loving child points me to God’s faithfulness and sense of humor. I can imagine Abba Father whispering, “Denise, I’m answering your prayer for patience, the real stuff, not the virtual version.”

The best Mother’s Days are when I thank our children for how they change me. “As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another.” (Proverbs 27:17)
In April, ACP welcomed the members and directors of the American and Foreign Christian Union (AFCU) to Paris for their annual meeting. The AFCU is our parent organization in the US that provides amazing financial and spiritual support as well as business guidance to ACP and to the American Church in Berlin and the Vienna Community Church. We started with a welcome cocktail on the Thursday evening before the official meetings opened on Friday. Most of the AFCU folks also joined us for the Habitat for Humanity concert on Friday evening.

The AFCU visit to Paris coincided with the successful completion of ACP’s Faith into Action capital campaign. We celebrated with a gala dinner to acknowledge and say a big “Thank You” to the AFCU members and to many of our church members who gave so generously to the campaign. We also want to thank the amazing team of volunteers led by Marie Grout that made the week of meetings and special events such a great success.

Moving forward, we are now preparing for the Congregational Meeting which will be held on 26 May between the 11h00 and 13h30 services. The primary purpose of this meeting will be to elect next year’s council. Thanks to lots of work by the Nominating Committee, headed by Ursula Perrier and Jonathan Wheeler, the slate of proposed individuals to replace outgoing council members has been selected and will be voted on by the congregation. Please mark your calendars now and plan to attend.

We are also thankful for those who have recently attended the new member orientation meeting. Interestingly, many of these people have been attending ACP for quite some time and some have been involved in church activities long before exploring membership. It is wonderful to see our congregation growing and it’s truly an inspiration that so many people are willing to contribute their time and talents to our very active church.

Thank you,
Radford Laney and Pam Bohl
Children’s Worship

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

SAVE THE DATE:  End of Year Family Party for Children’s Worship, 9 June from 12h00 to 13h30.

Please find below, the May calendar stories and scripture readings for family review:

3-10 year olds

5 - 19 May, Spring break (No Children’s Worship)
26 May, Pentecost Story (Acts 2:1-11)

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

Vacation Bible School

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

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

The Weekly Atelier Concert Series

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

5 May
Piano Recital—4 hands
Nathalia Romanenko and Olga Aoust (pianos)

12 May
Clarinet Recital
Carol Mundinger (clarinet) and Laurana Mitchelmore (piano)

27 May
Voice Recital
Caroline Drury (soprano) and Vladimir Maric (tenor)
with Laurana Mitchelmore (piano)

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

Special Concerts in May

11 May
Sacred Concert by Ricky Ford and Ze Big Band (20h00)
Special concert celebrating the launch of their latest album
To sample the band and their work, you can find audio and visual clips at www.acparis.org/community-activities/special-events.

Reservations: zebigband@hotmail.fr or 06 83 47 24 64.

31 May
Sinfonietta Chamber Orchestra (20h00)
Join Sinfonietta Paris for this season-ending gala concert and cocktail! Conductor Michael Boone and the performing artists of SPCO will deliver a program of CPE Bach, Telemann, Strauss and Schoenberg. Emilie Rault will be featured as narrator in Telemann's story of Don Quixote.
Christian Education

Anne Speicher and Lori Kolodziejczak

A Call to Live—Small Group Studies

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

**Wednesday Evening Supper Club**, led by Camilla Furman, meets at an Indian vegetarian Restaurant near UNESCO with discussion about Mark Labberton’s book *The Dangerous Act of Worship* over dinner. [communitylife@acparis.org](mailto:communitylife@acparis.org)

**Couples Study**, meets twice a month in Versailles with Angela and Dominique Grelet.

**Saturday Morning Brunch Circle** led by Felicia Henderson.

**Community Bible Study International** will be studying an in-depth study entitled *God’s Amazing Book*, led by Ariel Brown, meets on Sundays until 25 May at 15h30 in the Library, 2nd Floor.

**Would you consider being a Group Leader?**

If you would like to be a group leader, please contact Anne at [christianeducation@acparis.org](mailto:christianeducation@acparis.org) or Pastor Wahila at [associatepastor@acparis.org](mailto:associatepastor@acparis.org)

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

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

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

**ACP Tuesday Morning Women’s Bible Study** will be continuing our study of Hebrews. The study runs from 10h30 to 12h30 every Tuesday morning, except on 7 May due to school holidays, in the catacombs of the church building. Childcare is available for a minimal fee. For more information please contact Jennifer Jourlait.

**Volunteers needed!**

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

For further information, please contact Lori or Anne at [christianeducation@acparis.org](mailto:christianeducation@acparis.org)
May Thurber Thursday Lectures

Thurber Thursdays is an adult community gathering and growth time that is open to all. We share a meal at 18h30 and the evening program begins at 19h30.

On 16 May Rabbi Tom Cohen, of Kehilat Geshe, will speak on A Jewish perspective of human rights. On 23 May we welcome Una Kelly, and Aurélie Radisson, who will speak on The right to asylum, the situation of asylum seekers in France and the concrete actions of Secours Catholique so that their dignity and their rights are respected and on 30 May Dr. Diane Collard will be speaking on the topic entitled I choose to forgive: an intimate journey with God.

*Please note, due to Public Holidays, there are no Thurber Thursdays on 2 and 9 May.

ACP Men’s Group

Come for coffee, conversation, prayer, and fellowship. Any men interested in further information should contact Ed Hyslip.

Annual Spring Retreat For Adults: 7-9 June

ACP’s annual Spring Retreat for adults will take place the weekend of 7-9 June 2013. We will be returning to the Abbaye-Fleury, an historic Benedictine monastery on the banks of the Loire about two hours from Paris. The theme of the meeting will be “Centering Prayer at the Wellspring” to be led by Rev. Dr. Cynthia Bourgeault. 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 further preparation it is recommended to read Centering Prayer and Inner Awakening by Rev. Bourgeault.

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 period with a monk, and some free time to relax. A very special opportunity we have 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. The cost will be 100€ per person (exclusive of transportation), with an early registration fee of 85€ if payment is received prior to 15 April.

Please contact Sue Orsoni for more information.

Young Professionals

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

Our topics for May include stress at work, money and giving and the power of forgiveness.

*Due to the Public Holiday on 8 May, our meeting will take place somewhere outside of ACP. Please contact Elodie for more details.

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

If you have any questions, feel free to contact Elodie.
Keeping up with Patti!
At Rafiki Village in Uganda

In September 2011, Patti Lafage flew to Uganda to join the Rafiki Village. Rafiki, built in 2003, is home and school to orphans and local children. On these pages, Patti shares stories of “how God has been working to help (her) contribute to His transforming love in Africa.”

Rescuing Little Ones, One by One

The estimated four million orphans in Uganda notwithstanding, our Village was not able or authorized to take in new children last year. A number of factors were involved: Rafiki Uganda with 103 children was one of the largest of the ten African Villages, so the newer, smaller Villages like Rwanda and Ethiopia needed to grow fast to reach optimum size. The Home Office decides where the limited resources necessary for a new child will be used. Also, the application procedures are long and slow, as I have mentioned before. Social workers’ case loads are heavy. Strict vigilance ensures that prospective adoptive parents or organizations have the best interests of each child at heart as well as the capability to offer good care.

So you can imagine what a joy it has been to welcome three new children since January, with several more potentials in process.

Meet “New” Jeremiah Wambete, officially three years old, who came to us just over a month ago. Jeremiah joined his new brothers in Cottage 9 under the care of Rafiki Mother Florence. Her boys are between five and eight years old, so New Jeremiah arrives as the “baby brother”, transforming little Emmanuel, five, into a big brother overnight. Like many of our children, Jeremiah had been left with an aged relative after the death of his biological parents. He received little more than the most basic care. Upon arrival he spoke only a few words of the local language and had to be coaxed to walk, holding tightly to any offered hand. His shyness disappeared at the table, however. He ate enthusiastically and now even uses his fork – most of the time.

After two weeks at home with his new Rafiki mother, which included health checks and immunizations, Jeremiah donned a tiny blue and white Rafiki school uniform and joined the “Threes” class. He immediately fitted in - singing, clapping and taking part in all the nursery school activities. His teacher has seen it happen many times: the younger children adapt well and learn English with their classmates very quickly.

It is a great blessing to see how Jeremiah’s “Big Brothers” dote on him, play with him, take turns holding his hand when he accepts – which is less often now that he can walk firmly by himself and he prefers that! “We teach him everything!” says his oldest brother, also named Jeremiah.

Another little one is due to arrive very soon. This will be the biological son or daughter of our Residence Hall parents. He or she will join Raymond, two, next month, and 17 Rafiki Brothers aged from 13 to 15. What a family!
It’s official!! The Excellence Computer Technology Center, in Afrangua, Ghana, had its Grand Opening on 31 March, by the Chiefs and Elders of the town, during our Easter Festival. It’s was a beautiful day in the Lord and I thank God for it.

The Easter Festival in Ghana lasted for 5 days, starting on the Thursday and ending on the Monday. Our little village welcomed 200 or so individuals who relocated after primary school. It was fun to meet everyone and welcome them into our IT center.

On Friday, we started to receive arrivals from all around Ghana. It was a blessing to meet them and to explain the what, when, where, why and how of ECTC. The center was open all day Friday for everyone to enter for time on the computers. However on Saturday, that all changed...

The village was decorated with pretty red and white curtains and balloons and they also decorated the ECTC classroom entrance. Around 13h00, the fun started with the Chiefs and Elders in their traditional dress. Pastor Francis from The Living Truth Foundation was the Chairman and I was the “Honored Guest”.

We enjoyed the wonderful blessing of the new Youth Chief, numerous speeches (including one from ME!) and beautiful traditional music and dancing. Towards the end of the day, everyone came to the ECTC at the community center to cut the ribbon!! We pre-organized 18 students to be in the classroom before our arrival to show their wonderful typing skills for the guests after the Grand Opening. Everyone was amazed at the facilities, the number of computers and the work of the students.

The festival finished with a community church service on Sunday by our own missionary Pastor Francis and a game of football by the youth. There was a Miss Afrangua Beauty Contest scheduled but we lost electricity that evening so it was not possible to host it!

I have now experienced and participated in my first Ghanaian Easter Festival and I am already looking forward to the next one!
Habitat For Humanity

Meet the team!

From 4 to 12 May, a team of 13 Young Adults will be in Portugal, where they will be helping to build a new home for a family in need. Before they left, some of the team caught up with the Spire to tell us a bit more about themselves and why they feel called to serve with Habitat.

Name: **Eunice Ahn**
From: USA

Favourite Bible verse: *Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord of your God will be with you wherever you go.* (Joshua 1:9)

I value serving in the communities I live in. I’ve been in Paris for over 7 months and, as a student studying abroad, I wanted to make sure I continued to stay involved. Habitat for Humanity will provide me the opportunity to travel and serve.

Name: **Anne Waldrop**
From: USA

Bible character you most relate to: David

People energize me. I love communicating, helping, and learning from people of all cultures and perspectives. Some of my most profound experiences have been on mission and work trips, in the United States and beyond. I am full of energy and enjoy working with others. I am eager to give back, and grateful for every opportunity to do so.

Name: **George Risse**
From: France

Favourite Bible verse: *so in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets* (Matthew 7:12)

I would love to be a part of habitat trip because I believe it is important to help people who are less fortunate than us.
Name: **Elizabeth Jung**  
From: South Korea  
Languages: English, Korean and French  
I'm sincerely excited to be a part of this year's Habitat for Humanity (H4H) project in Braga, Portugal. This will be the second time I've participated after my trip to Cluj, Romania with a group from ACP in 2012. It is hard to express in words all the joyful feelings that I felt while constructing a home for the family. It was a very special blessing that I could witness a house being built to provide a warm shelter for them and that I was able to work alongside the family. We built not only the house but also our friendship and the bridge between different cultures. I hope I can continue participating in Habitat for Humanity projects every year and this second trip to Braga is very meaningful to me. I can't wait to meet the family and to humbly serve them with the love of Jesus Christ. I am grateful for the opportunity and the mission that the H4H organization provides and believes in. I pray that our effort would make a difference for the lives of the families that we reach out to. It's going to be another unforgettable experience!

Name: **Deborah First-Quao**  
From: Ghana  
Languages spoken: English and French  
I went to Portugal before with Habitat for Humanity and loved it! I admire and believe in what Habitat does.

Name: **Maria Christina Achomuma**  
From: Cameroon  
Languages spoken: French and English  
I want to take this Habitat trip so that I can serve with love and grow in trusting God.
The H4H team are so grateful for all the support that you have given them so far...but don’t stop now!! Please continue to support them whilst they are away by praying for the team’s safety and the success of the trip as they step out in faith to serve a family in need.

If you are inspired to get involved, another team from ACP will be going on a second H4H trip in August. Find out more at the meeting on 26 May at 12h30 in G7.

Name: Daniela Makembe
From: Cameroon (Douala)
Habitat for Humanity has the reputation of being an organization that thrives to promote healthy living standards around the world. As a global health professional, I have chosen to participate in this Habitat for Humanity mission for that very reason. Improving the living conditions of the vulnerable population is a passion of mine. I look forward to committing my time to such a wonderful cause.

Name: Andry Rakotoarimanana
From: France
Languages spoken: French, English, German
This trip is a wonderful opportunity to put into practice the “love of God for all people”. We have received so much and this a way for us to be a blessing to others.
Africa Night—Dive into Diversity
Friday 24 May, 20h00-22h00 in the ACP Theatre

Join us for a fundraiser with a three-course dinner, live bands, African dancers, singers, a fashion show and a Raffle draw.
To reserve your ticket, please contact Debra First-Quao.

From our Prayer Chain Team

Do you have a prayer request for our Prayer Team?
If so, please forward your prayer by e-mail to prayerrequests@acparis.org.

Your prayer request will remain strictly private and confidential.
Prayer is powerful. We are here for you.

James 5:13-16 (NIV)
“13 Is anyone among you in trouble? Let them pray. Is anyone happy? Let them sing songs of praise. 14 Is anyone among you sick? Let them call the elders of the church to pray over them and anoint them with oil in the name of the Lord. 15 And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise them up. If they have sinned, they will be forgiven. 16 Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.”

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

From the Lay Caregiver Ministry Team...

LCG’ers are dedicated to demonstrating the love of Christ to the ACP community by making hospital visits, rejoicing with those who are celebrating, and calling or visiting those who are going through a loss or transition or in need of a listening ear or a prayerful presence.

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

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

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

Following the ACP Today Radio Show which focused on prayer, the second of our 3-part series features another personal story from one of our members.

If we have faith, God always hears and answers our prayers. He doesn’t always give us exactly what we want but He always gives us what we need. Even if we don’t always see it right away, in the end, what He gives us is so much better than what we asked for in the first place. This is an account from part of my adult life, and how, I believe, God’s plan for me (and my wife) has always been clear ever since we started fully trusting Him and depending on Him to take care of us and use us for His glory.

A little over 10 years ago, I was at a crossroads in my life. I needed to change careers. I wanted to go back to school and get a Master's but I couldn't get the financial aid I needed and didn't want to get into debt, so I just prayed to the Lord for guidance to know what I was supposed to do next, where I was supposed to go next. After my prayer, I had peace, knowing He would take care of me. A few months later, something someone said led me to consider teaching English in Asia, and with his advice, I soon had some offers to teach English in China. It all came down to two phone interviews. The day before the calls, I started to have second thoughts and canceled the interviews but one of the interviewers didn’t read my e-mail and called me anyway! During the call, it felt right and I took the job. I went to China and lived there for the next 4 years. During that time, besides having a wonderful experience, something even better happened. One of my prayers of many years was finally answered. I never thought I'd fall in love with a Chinese woman, but I did. I found the love of my life on the other side of the planet!

Now, after we started dating, I prayed to God to know for sure if she was the one or if it would just end in another disappointment. I asked for a sign. Well, that evening after our date, we were waiting for a taxi to take her back home on a pitch-dark, freezing night, and we looked up at the sky and saw the most beautiful moon with the widest halo we’d ever seen! I’d never seen anything like it before and I've never seen anything like it since. And that amazing sight was there just for the two of us! (The best part of this is that a beautiful moon is considered the most romantic sign for a couple in Chinese culture, so she was probably even more stunned by it than I was!). Over 10 years later, we're now here, happily married with a wonderful little boy! And to connect this with one more sign (and one more answered prayer) I should mention that when we were thinking about having a kid, my wife had a miscarriage with what seemed at the time like pretty bad timing, as we were away traveling. Fortunately, she didn't have any medical complications but there was some emotional pain and lots of worrying (mostly on my part) after that. The following Sunday, we went to an international church over there and the Pastor gave a sermon on Luke 12:22-31 ("Don't worry"), just what I needed to hear. From then on, we not only felt that we would have a healthy child, but I would often go back to that passage of Scripture when I needed to be reminded of Jesus' "Don't worry" sermon. My wife and I finally fully accepted that passage and stopped worrying. We decided to depend entirely on God to take care of us, seeking His kingdom first and trusting that He will provide for our needs. After living somewhere else for some time, we realized that our prayers had been answered but one thing was missing. We hadn't found the right church for us. We then felt the Lord wanted us here in Paris and He guided us through the job and apartment search process.
But before we were settled, we once again had a sign. The first time we came to ACP, I talked to the visiting Pastor at the time and I soon realized that he was the very same Pastor we had heard give sermon on Luke 12, in a totally different part of the world, 6 years previously! Right there and then we knew that we had found our home church, that we were supposed to stay here and become active members of ACP...and here we are!

Some prayers are answered overnight, others take days, weeks, months, even years. We need to learn to be patient. Our human timing is not always the same as His Divine timing.

Submitted by an Anonymous ACP member


ACP Today: Faith Talk From Paris

Have you tuned in to ACP Today, the American Church in Paris’ radio show yet? Join us on Monday 6 and 20 May at 20h45. The 45-minute program is an exciting and inspiring mix of music, interviews, sermon highlights, and discussion on hot topics.

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

If you have any questions or comments, be sure to contact us at acptoday@acparis.org.
Young Adult Activities in May

**Young Adult Events (18-30yrs)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday 7</td>
<td>19h30-21h00</td>
<td>Bible Study</td>
<td>Catacombs</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Prayer Room open from 18h30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday 14</td>
<td>18h00-21h00</td>
<td>Pizza Night*</td>
<td>Thurber Room</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday 22</td>
<td>19h30-21h00</td>
<td>Bible Study</td>
<td>Catacombs</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Prayer Room open from 18h30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Friday 24</td>
<td>20h00</td>
<td>Faith in Film</td>
<td>Catacombs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday 28</td>
<td>18h00-21h00</td>
<td>Pizza Night*</td>
<td>Thurber Room</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

21-23 June at Château de Villebon

*For Pizza Night come at 18h00 to help cook and from 19h30 for dinner and fellowship

You can also join us on Thursdays for Thurber Thursday with a meal (suggested donation 5€) at 18h30 and a presentation from 19h30 in the Thurber Room. Check Christian Education for speaker list and come early to help cook or set up!

Volunteers are greatly appreciated!

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

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

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

[http://www.facebook.com/groups/ACPyoungadults/](http://www.facebook.com/groups/ACPyoungadults/)

You can also follow us on Twitter ([www.twitter.com/danhaugh](http://www.twitter.com/danhaugh))
# Youth Activities
## in May

**Youth Events (13-18yrs)**

Please feel free to bring friends along – they are always welcome at ACP events!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Location</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sunday 5</td>
<td>15h00-17h00</td>
<td>Youth Group “Lycée” &amp; Collège</td>
<td>Gym</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sunday 12</td>
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<td>Youth Sunday</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Parent Meet and Greet after the 11h00 &amp; 13h30 services</td>
<td>ACP Courtyard</td>
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<td></td>
<td>15h00-17h30</td>
<td>Youth Group “Lycée”</td>
<td>Catacombs</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>15h00-17h30</td>
<td>Youth Group “Collège”</td>
<td>Gym &amp; G2</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Holiday Activities!</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Friday 17</td>
<td>20h00</td>
<td>Youth Lock-In!!</td>
<td>Catacombs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunday 19</td>
<td>12h15-13h30</td>
<td>Confirmation Class</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>15h00-17h30</td>
<td>Youth Group “Lycée”</td>
<td>Catacombs</td>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
<td><em>The Art of Mercy – Session 5</em></td>
<td>Gym &amp; G2</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>15h00-17h30</td>
<td>Youth Group “Collège”</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Introduction to ‘Inter-religious dialogue’</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Friday 24</td>
<td>20h00</td>
<td>Africa Night</td>
<td>Theatre</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sunday 26</td>
<td>15h00-17h30</td>
<td>Youth Group “Lycée”</td>
<td>Catacombs</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>The Art of Mercy – Session 6</em></td>
<td>Gym &amp; G2</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>15h00-17h30</td>
<td>Youth Group “Collège”</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Inter-religious dialogue: Abrahamic religions</td>
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For more information about who we are and what we do at **ACP Youth**, please visit our group page on the church website: [http://www.acparis.org/acp-groups/youth-ministry](http://www.acparis.org/acp-groups/youth-ministry), or contact Rev. Dan Haugh at **youthpastor@acparis.org**.

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

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

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

THUBER THURSDAY: Like to cook? Bake? We need people for making cakes/cookies
and delicious desserts in advance of our dinners on Thursday evenings, as well as helping with
dinner preparations on Thursdays. Our cooking crew starts at 16h00 and set-up crew sets the
tables starting at 17h30. Please contact Camilla Macfarlane at communitylife@acparis.org if you
would like to become part of this fun team! Clean up crew eats for free and earns special
blessings!

FRIDAY MISSION LUNCH at the American Church in Paris. Each
Friday from 10h00 to 14h00, a hot, nutritious meal is prepared for the
homeless and needy. The American Church is responsible for
providing the meal on 10 May but we are grateful for volunteers and
helping hands every Friday. If you are interested and available, please
contact Kristie Worrel.

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

SANDWICH MINISTRY will take place on 18 May at 13h30, when we distribute sandwiches
to hand out to the hungry and homeless. You can also come and help make the sandwiches on 17
May at 19h30. Contact Jurie Ane or Dan Haugh at youthpastor@acparis.org if you would like to
get involved.

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

ACP WRITER’S GROUP meets on the second Saturday of the month at 14h00 – 17h00 in room G2. Contact Laura Kerber for more information.

MULTICULTURAL COUPLES GROUP meets in the Thurber Room on Friday 31 May at 20h00. You are warmly invited to bring a dish to share and join the fun. There is always great fellowship and fascinating cross-cultural discussion. For more information contact Monica Bassett or Anja Wyss.

KNITTING GROUP meets on Monday at 16h00 in room G2 adjacent to Pastor Dan’s office. Whilst we are primarily a knitting group, we have several new members who crochet, cross stitch and embroider. We knit for ourselves and/or church missions. We welcome all to our fun and diverse group. Please contact Nancy Verwest for more information.

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

MOVIE DISCUSSION GROUP: The movie group's choices for May are: The Grandmaster by Wong Kar-wai, Hanna Arendt by Margarethe Von Trotta, Mud by Jeff Nichols and Stoker by Park Chan-wook. See any or all at your convenience, then join the group for discussion on Thursday, 16 May at 19h30 in basement room G2.

Independent Christian Prayer Groups and Bible Study Activities

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

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

MINDFUL MEDITATION: This group, being offered on Saturdays from 12h00 to 13h15 in G2, is for those who already have a meditation practice, as well as for those who are interested in beginning a practice. Mindfulness meditation is a way of learning to pay attention to our life as it unfolds moment by moment. It is open to church members as well as to the larger community. Norma Jean Deak, a clinical social worker, has taught Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction for 14 years. Contact Norma Jean with any questions.
Clergy and Staff of the American Church in Paris

Ministers
Senior Pastor Scott Herr
Associate Pastor Michelle Wahila
Visiting Pastor Bruce Morgan
Dir. Youth and Young Adults Dan Haugh
Youth Intern Hanna Woodhead
Music Director Fred Gramann
Contemporary Music Director Natalie Raynal
Youth Music Director Bonnie Woolley
Business Manager Chira Rosen
Accountant Jean-Michel Bollecker
Administrative Assistant Ilinca Mreana
Daytime Receptionist Emily Claudio
Evening Receptionist Kithsiri Fernando
Saturday Receptionist Martha Gachoka
Sunday Receptionist Boryana Dimitrova
Building Maintenance Tom Padden

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Moderator Radford Laney
Vice-Moderator Pam Bohl
Secretary Bettina Chehab
Assistant Secretary Paul Grayson
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Stewardship & Finance Vice-Chair Megan Staley
Human Resources Chair Pierre Lisbonis
Human Resources Vice-Chair Pascal Berger
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Communications Co-Chair John Newman
Community Life Chair Camilla Furman
Community Life Co-Chair Nathaniel Akujuobi
Development & Property Chair William Johnston
Development & Property Vice-Chair Eric Sadoux
Mission Outreach Chair Carolyn Bouazouni
Mission Outreach Vice-Chair Ann Mildred Gontard
Worship & Music Chair Anna Zweede
Worship & Music Vice-Chair Chad DuBose

The American Church in Paris is a member congregation of the Association of International Churches in Europe and the Middle East. If you are traveling and looking for a place to worship, please consult the AICEME website for our sister congregations: http://aiceme.net/.