9/11
10 years later

Becoming a Blessing

Sunday/Dimanche 11 September/Septembre 2011

16h30 – 17h00
Commemorative Service/Service Commémoratif
A service remembering those who died in New York, Washington, DC and Pennsylvania,
in the presence of the United States Ambassador to France
Where: Statue of Liberty, Île aux Cygnes, Pont de Grenelle
Metro: Javel-André Citroën

18h00 – 19h30
Colloquium Discussion/Débat et Discussion
Moderated discussion featuring Jewish, Christian and Muslim leaders of Paris:
"How are we, the descendants of Abraham, living into the promise
that 'in you all of the families of the earth shall be blessed'?
Where: American Church in Paris

A panel of American University in Paris students will lead a question-and-answer session
With refreshments and inter-faith music

www.acparis.org/9-11-remembrance
Events are free and held in English with material also available in French.
Dear Members and Friends of the ACP,

The rentrée signals the “re-entry” of hundreds of thousands of people back to Paris after summer vacations. For some of us, coming into Paris is a routine, a kind of home-coming ritual. For others who are new, coming into Paris is fraught with apprehension and trepidation. For students, it’s the anxiety of who will be my new teacher(s)? Will I make friends? Young singles wonder if they will find a way in a city that has much to offer, but is hard if you don’t have connections. For families, it’s about managing new systems of education, shopping, healthcare and community. For all newcomers, there is the challenge of navigating the wonderful yet often mystifying idiosyncrasies of French language, culture and government bureaucracy! For those who have survived initially, we point to the Paris coat of arms of a ship sailing in stormy seas with the motto: “Fluctuat nec mergatur,” which means “tossed but not sunk.”

David McCullough’s book The Greater Journey: Americans in Paris chronicles a number of famous Americans who made the voyage across the Atlantic during the period of 1830-1900. Some of those people, for example, Samuel Morse, became quite famous. Interestingly, Morse was a member of the American Church in Paris and his daughter Mrs. Leila Morse Rummel was one of our Sunday School superintendents.1 To hear McCullough tell it, we’re all (other nationalities included, I presume) destined for exceptional adventures and global impact because we’ve made the “greater journey” to Paris. Obviously, they didn’t have the rentrée then …

I started reading another book that perhaps gives a more accurate voice to some of our experience as we move back into the city, written by Enuma Okoro: Reluctant Pilgrim: A Moody, Somewhat Self-Indulgent Introvert’s Search for Spiritual Community. I love her emergent style; honest, edgy, and she loves Paris. And she makes me wonder how do we build together more authentic “spiritual community”? I smiled when she confessed if she were sitting next to Jesus in worship on Sunday she would lean over and whisper, “Okay, maybe the idea of church isn’t sooo bad, but what’s really supposed to be going on here?”2 Indeed.

It’s a question on which we would do well to reflect more deeply ourselves, especially as we are “re-entering” a church community that has changed. Some of our dear friends and pastors are gone. New people are now here … We welcome the Rev. Dan and Lauretta Haugh, freshly landed from the suburbs of New York City, and of course a variety of new families and students “checking us out.” I pray that part of “what’s really supposed to be going on here” is a warm welcome and making space around the table for these new friends, colleagues, brothers and sisters in Christ. I pray that we will remember the adage promoted by Richard Baxter, 17th century English author and Puritan preacher: “In necessary things, unity; in doubtful things, liberty; in all

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1 Rev. Dr. Clayton Williams, Centennial Program of the American Church in Paris, 1857-1957, page 7.
things, charity.” St. Paul encourages us to pursue “a more excellent way.” And so we welcome those who are new to our community, and reach out to those who are on the fringes “in search for Spiritual Community” with as much love as we can muster.

After we unpack our luggage and try and get through the laundry before school starts, we should also mark the calendar for the beginning of Children’s Worship on Sunday morning, September 11th. As that is the 10th anniversary of 9-11, we will be having a brief afternoon ecumenical memorial service at the Statue of Liberty at 16:30 and then a colloquium here at the ACP with Jewish, Christian and Muslim leaders responding to the question: “How are we, the descendants of Abraham, living into the promise that ‘in you all of the families of the earth shall be blessed’ (Genesis 12:3)?” A panel of students from the American University of Paris will then lead a half-hour of questions and answers. Thurber Thursdays, the ACP mid-week fellowship and learning time, will begin on September 15th. Then on Sunday, September 18th we will have a Ministry Fair that invites members and friends to consider different opportunities to share and serve. And don’t forget to sign up for the All Church Family Retreat October 7-9 with Rev. Don Postema, "Sabbath: Cultivating a God-Conscious Life." Enjoy more details of these opportunities and more in the following pages…

As we enter into a new season of life together, reluctant pilgrims that we may be, I would remind you that we are on a much greater journey together, and I look forward to pursuing spiritual community with each of you,

In Christ,
Scott

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| **September 11:** |
| First Lesson - Matthew 5:43-48 |
| Second Lesson - Philippians 1:3-18 |
| Sermon: “What has happened...” – Rev. Scott Herr |

| **September 18:** |
| First Lesson - Matthew 20:1-16 |
| Second Lesson - Philippians 1:21-30 |

| **September 25:** |
| First Lesson - Ezekiel 18:1-4, 25-32 |
| Second Lesson - Philippians 2:1-13 |
| Sermon: “The Song of Christ” - Rev. Ken Stenman |

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With Thanksgiving to God for John Stott …
by Pastor Scott Herr

It was in 1992 when Kim and I first met John Stott. Doug and Marilyn Stewart, missionaries in Latin America with IFES, were good friends of Rev. Stott and had invited him to come visit them in Mexico City where we were living. As they were members of our worshipping community, the Union Evangelical Church of Mexico City, we asked if he wouldn’t mind giving an evening lecture on a topic of his choice. He gave a talk on the “Supremacy of Christ.” It was a brilliant talk and I’ll never forget introducing him to the packed congregation and then sitting down just behind him. He stood up in the pulpit and kept us spell-bound for a solid hour without using one note. And most impressive to me was after the lecture was over we had a hymn and John discreetly got down on his knees (behind the pulpit so no one else could see him – he was extremely discreet!) and prayed quietly until just before the hymn ended. I’ll never forget the image of that great statesman of the Anglican evangelical movement, humbly down on his knees.

Two close friends and leaders in the church at the time, Bob and Anne Genock, hosted Rev. Stott at their home and invited me to have breakfast with him. I remember arguing with him about an interpretation of a text in Matthew 18 on forgiveness. He insisted that “There is no forgiveness without repentance.” He had a twinkle in his eye as he sparred with me and challenged me to think more deeply about what authentic forgiveness really involves … I’m still wrestling with his teaching on that subject.

After we moved to Switzerland where I served as the pastor of the International Protestant Church of Zurich, we heard that Rev. Stott was to be the speaker at a family camp. We signed up and drove over to enjoy a week in Surrey, England, where Rev. Stott expounded on the epistles of John. It was an outstanding week of spiritual refreshment and fellowship. (Incidentally, I was also surprised on that visit to see an old Princeton roommate, Simon Steer, who had recently become Principal of Redcliffe College in Gloucester, England, who introduced me at that camp to the poetry of Gerard Manley Hopkins).

After hearing John connect the gospel with social justice, it seemed right to invite him to come and speak in Zurich. I wasn’t sure he would remember me with all of his many contacts, but I gathered up the courage to call him and when I finally got through to him, he said, “Scott, how so very good to hear from you. How is Kim? And how are your children?” I was impressed with his amazing memory. He agreed to come and speak on “Faith in the Workplace.” Actually, I lured him to Zurich with the promise that one of our congregation’s ornithologists would take him out to see an alpine warbler. “Uncle John,” as we came to know him, was an avid bird watcher and it was the one luxury he allowed himself.

The series of talks he gave were a tremendous success, touching on the social, political and ethical challenges of how Christian faith is lived out (or not!) in the world of business. I wanted to take him out with the leadership team to a nice Swiss restaurant before he returned to England, but his assistant said he would prefer not to go out. I insisted that we at least take him out for a dinner to say thanks (he would not accept an honorarium, but had us direct a donation to his foundation which provided libraries for developing world pastors). He had to eat either way! He relented and agreed to go out to dinner so as not to appear rude, but he
ordered the least expensive thing on the menu. I found it strange, but John said it was a lovely dinner! His assistant took me aside later and explained that John practiced what he preached. He lived a very simple life intentionally, as he wanted to express in very practical ways solidarity with the poor and the marginalized. I continue to be humbled by his example.

Over the years I have admired the faithful witness of this dear brother in Christ, and invite you to explore more about his life on line … In reflecting on Revelation 3:20 ("Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me"), John wrote these words:

"Here, then, is the crucial question which we have been leading up to. Have we ever opened our door to Christ? Have we ever invited him in? This was exactly the question which I needed to have put to me. For, intellectually speaking, I had believed in Jesus all my life, on the other side of the door. I had regularly struggled to say my prayers through the key-hole. I had even pushed pennies under the door in a vain attempt to pacify him. I had been baptized, yes and confirmed as well. I went to church, read my Bible, had high ideals, and tried to be good and do good. But all the time, often without realizing it, I was holding Christ at arm's length, and keeping him outside. I knew that to open the door might have momentous consequences. I am profoundly grateful to him for enabling me to open the door. Looking back now over more than fifty years, I realize that that simple step has changed the entire direction, course and quality of my life."

I may not agree with everything that “Uncle John” preached or taught, but I do know that he will always be a giant for me in that great cloud of witnesses who surround us as we seek to live out the gospel in this time and place. Whenever I preach or teach, he will be one of my “balcony people” who I will look to and ask, “Is this faithful to the text and the gospel of Jesus Christ?” A humble man of the highest integrity and sweetest spirit, I thank God for him and count it a rare privilege to have known him in even a small way.

John Robert Walmsley Stott died on Wednesday, July 27, 2011, at age 90, but his personal, pastoral and scholarly example over the decades has impacted millions of lives around the world. May his faithful proclamation in word and deed continue to challenge and inspire us all. Soli Deo Gloria!

September 11, 2011 is the tenth anniversary of that infamous day when terrorists took the lives of 2,996 people from 26 countries around the world and of different faiths at the World Trade Towers, the Pentagon, and a field in Pennsylvania. Leaders from Jewish, Christian and Muslim communities are organizing opportunities for all English-speaking peoples of Paris to remember and look forward: Becoming a Blessing: How Jews, Christians, and Muslims can work together towards harmony in a world that appears divided along religious lines. (Please see front page for details of the program, or visit the ACP website.)

Throughout Scripture we read about people being called by God: called to a task, a position, a vocation, a life-style. The most basic is Called To Be Christian. That call is a reflection of Jesus’ call to the disciples to follow him. (Luke 5:1-30)

Called to follow Jesus has taken on many different forms throughout the centuries. These calls do not always fall into what we might think to be logical, understandable or even reasonable. To follow can be giving up something, sacrificing something in order to answer the call. Who God calls doesn’t always seem to be the ones we would call. People were puzzled when Jesus called Matthew, a tax collector; my guess is there were probably those who wondered about calling fishermen to be followers. As we know from Scripture, there were those Jesus called who were doubters and even betrayers.

In the Old Testament, God called Moses to lead the Israelites from slavery. Moses had an excuse not to accept the call. (Exodus 4:10ff) Tradition would be that the eldest, the strongest in stature would be the one to be called to take an honored and responsible role; God inspired Samuel to break tradition and to call David to be king. (I Samuel 16:6-13)

I believe that God still calls people to tasks, roles, responsibilities. As with David, God often uses people to extend a call. Cil and I both felt called. The call, really two calls, didn’t make sense at first and even now is a bit puzzling. We have eight grandchildren; the oldest 22 and the youngest just one year old in April. We have cared for the one year old and her sister who is five years old for a year. Our son and his wife took us to dinner and asked if we would continue to care for them, two days a week, taking the five year old to and from school as it is her first school year. We were happy to answer that call. Not a week passed when Pastor Scott e-mailed me to Skype with him; he asked if I would be interested in being the Interim Associate Pastor. I felt called; both Cil and I felt called. Accepting would mean we would be living an ocean apart. God’s call doesn’t always fit our ideal pattern. Both Priscilla and I found we saw reasons to support one another’s calls. So here I am. Cil was here with me until August 18th. I’m in training to care for myself, being alone.

Pastor Scott agreed that I could take a “family fix” in October for two weeks. Then I will return to Paris and ACP. How long I stay will depend upon the search process for an Associate Pastor. Francois Pierre, chair of the search committee, said it best. “I hope for a fast and successful search, not that we don’t want you here; but I know you want to be with your family.”

During two years, I find that the technology has advanced beyond my ability; so I am in training in this as well. I want to respond to your needs, questions or whatever. The best way to contact me at this time is through my e-mails: associatepastor@acparis.org or KCSten@msn.com or phone the reception or the Associate Pastor’s apartment. I will be studying and working a great deal in the apartment office, and meeting people in the Associate Pastor’s Office.

It’s good to be here. I recognize so many faces; names escape me. So telling me your name over and over will be appreciated by me. Pray that God will bless our ministry together and guide the Search Process in its looking to be God’s instrument in calling an Associate Pastor.
Alba and I are delighted to be back at the American Church in Paris while I serve as the pastoral assistant in charge of wedding and vow renewal services. We last served in this capacity in 2002 while I was on sabbatical. We enjoyed working with the pastoral team of Larry Kalajainen, Tina Blair and Sarah and Stephen Sours. Now, I am “officially” retired as a Presbyterian minister. It’s great to be of service during this time of transition and work with the pastoral team of Scott, Ken and Dan.

I feel blessed to have served a variety of congregations in the USA and overseas. I was ordained in 1976 and served as pastor in four Presbyterian congregations in southern California. In 1992 Alba and I began our ministry to international, English-language congregations where I served as pastor/head of staff at the Tokyo Union Church (1992-1997), the American Church in London (1997-2001) and then the United community Church of Buenos Aires (2003-2006). During my ministry I specialized in the areas of evangelism and congregational renewal.

In a way, I feel like I have come full circle since I began my international ministry in Japan. As you may know, many Japanese couples come to ACP for bi-lingual, Christian wedding blessings. Only about 1% of Japanese are Christian. This offers ACP the opportunity to share the love of Christ through pastoral contact, a Christo-centric weddings service and the presentation to the couple of a Japanese-language Bible. It is a joy for me to sow the “gospel seed” in couples during such a significant moment in their lives. During the wedding blessing I even wear the beautiful white stole that Alba made for me from a traditional Japanese kimono obi.

Alba has always enjoyed being a partner in ministry and she is looking forward to participating in the Christian Education ministry of ACP and the fellowship groups of the congregation. Alba is trained as a primary school teacher and holds a master’s degree in social work. She is a licensed clinical social worker in the US and has worked for California Children’s Services.

We have three grown children living in California and New York. Our three grandchildren are aged nine, five and two years.
Welcome, Rev. Dan and Lauretta (and Brady)!

The long wait is over! Rev. Dan and Lauretta Haugh arrived in Paris on Saturday, 27 August. They brought with them their pet Brady, a beautiful and friendly black Labrador. Rev. Dan will serve as the new Director of Youth and Young Adult ministries. Lauretta has her Masters in Special Education. They both look forward to serving with us in an “ecumenical, missional and visionary church community”. Please take a moment to welcome them.

On July 22, a bomb exploded outside government offices in central Oslo, capital of Norway. At least seven people were killed. According to reports, the suspect in the bombing then proceeded to Utoya island, shooting at the teens and young adults who were attending a summer camp there. Some 80 people died. Following is a letter from Pastor Timothy Stewart of the American Lutheran Congregation of Oslo, and his wife Mary Ann, written soon after the killings. Let us continue to keep this congregation and the people of Norway in our prayers.

Dear Scott,

Thank you for your gracious email. The support we have felt from many places around the globe this past week have been a profound experience of the goodness of people and the human community, despite what we might sometimes think when reading the news. Thank you especially for the prayers for Norway and her people.

Although we heard and felt the explosion in our flat and at the church on Friday the 22nd, it was a while before we understood what was happening. I don't think it was until early Saturday morning that the true scope of this tragedy really hit us. We are grateful that no one in the congregation was in the blast area downtown or on Utøya, however with such a small, tight knit country it feels some days as if every family knows someone who was. The headlines I saw in the beginning of last week of "A Country Grieving" seem true to me.

Still, even though I know it should be too early to speak of healing, I have no other word for what I see in Oslo today. I have been struck with how my Norwegian neighbors and colleagues have faced this crisis head on and with typical Norwegian honesty and restraint. I suppose it is a truism that after such a horrific event things must change. What that change will be remains to be seen, and I for one have great confidence in the resilience and character of my Norwegian neighbors and colleagues.

Scott, thank you again for your email and the care and concern that undergirds it. If you have an opportunity, please extend my thanks to the people of the American Church in Paris for their kind thoughts and prayers.

Pax,

Tim
ASSOCIATE PASTOR SEARCH COMMITTEE 2011-2012

August is a quiet month in France, so the Search Committee has not met. The first meeting is set for September 3. Francois Pierre, Committee Chair, and Ken Stenman, Interim Associate Pastor and pastoral consultant to the committee, decided that August would be a good time to get a notice out announcing the open position. This was sent to the places used by the previous search committee, giving an e-mail to indicate interest. In less than three weeks, there were 85 indications of interest. Obviously, the American Church in Paris is a sought-after place to minister.

Those who indicated interest were sent a personal e-mail with a form letter attached stating that applications would be available in September after the search committee has met and approved the application and job description.

The names of the members of the Associate Pastor Committee:
Francois Pierre, Chair
Margaret Munjeri, Vice Chair
Kerry Lieury, member
Rosalyn McKeown, member
Joan Minor, member
Paul Myers, member
Emiliano Ricafort, member
Kenneth Stenman, pastoral advisor

Join us on September 18 for ACP’s Ministry Fair!

Are you looking to get involved in a new ministry or activity at the ACP this year? The good news is that the ACP needs you! Please join us during the coffee hour after the 11 o’clock service on September 18th to find out more about ACP’s Ministry Teams. Council leaders and committee members will be available to talk to you about their ministries and ways you can use your "time and talent" for God’s work at the ACP. Tables will be set up in the theatre and courtyard area (if it's sunny). Snacks and refreshments will be provided. Ministries may include the following: Christian Education, Youth and Young Adults, Habitat for Humanity, Mission Outreach, Worship & Music, Communications, Community Life, Development & Property, Finance & Stewardship, and many more.

Did you know that Stewardship is a lifestyle?

Maybe you think that Stewardship is only about pledging money to your church, but Stewardship is so much more than that!! Stewardship is the responsibility of protecting and sustaining all that God has given us – the environment, health, property, information, and yes, our finances.

That may seem like too great a responsibility for one person but God has blessed each of us with different talents and gifts. As a faith community we are each Christ’s stewards and by working together we can protect and sustain what has been given to us by God through God’s grace and blessings.

How has the grace of God blessed you? Are you using the blessings God has given you to support the ministry and stewardship of the American Church in Paris? Won’t you join us in rejoicing all the blessings God has given the ACP!
Thurber Thursdays begin again in September and you are invited! Thurber Thursdays is the ACP’s midweek gathering, celebrating and learning time for young and older adults. We will begin meeting on September 15 at 18h30 for a home-cooked meal together and brief worship, and then from 19h30 until 21h00 we will learn together. We are offering two courses this Fall: Gospel Christianity and The Gospel in Life- Grace Changes Everything. Both are theological and practical, but GC explores in depth what is the heart of the Christian proclamation and GIL explores in depth how to live out the proclamation.

Gospel Christianity “Gospel Christianity” is a course offered to help you rekindle the fire of your faith. This course is both explorers who have been in the church for decades or just set foot in the door. This course focuses on the following questions: What is the Gospel? Who is God? What is wrong with us? Who is Jesus? Why did Jesus die? Who do we change? What is Jesus’ mission? What can’t I do this alone? How do we know about Jesus? Where do we live out the Gospel? These are important questions that we will explore together. GC will be taught primarily by the Rev. Dr. Scott Herr.

The Gospel in Life – Grace Changes Everything! “The Gospel in Life” is an eight-session course on the gospel and how it is lived out in all of life – first in your heart, then in your community, and then out into the world. In each session, Timothy Keller presents a ten-minute teaching segment on the gospel. Session 1 opens the course with the theme of the city: your home now, the world that is. Session 8 picks up the theme of the eternal city: your heavenly home, the world that is to come. This year we will extend the course by a couple of weeks to reflect more deeply on how the ACP is experiencing in and mediating God’s grace for the great city of Paris! GIL will be taught by the Rev. Dr. Jeff Powell.

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All Church Retreat: October 7-9, 2011/ Theme: “Sabbath: Cultivating a God-Conscious Life”

“Come off by yourselves – let’s take a break and get a little rest” (Mark 6:31) is Jesus’ Sabbath invitation to his friends – to you. In Jesus’ words we can hear an echo of the fourth commandment: “Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.” This retreat gives you an opportunity to respond to the divine invitation to Sabbath rest. It is time to catch your breath and be refreshed in the middle of a busy and occupied life.

“Sabbath is a sanctuary in time; and opportunity to mend our tattered lives; to collect rather than to dissipate time.” (Abraham Joshua Heschel)

During our time together we will enter that sanctuary through presentations, meditation, personal Sabbath time, music, talking together, worship and Holy Communion. We are taking time for refreshment and refocusing, time for relaxation in the Presence of God.

Our speaker is Rev. Don Postema, author of Space for God: Study and Practice of Spirituality and Prayer and Catch Your Breath: God’s Invitation to Sabbath Rest, and former ACP Pastoral Assistant [2005].
THE ACP MUSIC MINISTRY

Through our musical offerings the choirs and handbell choirs of the American Church in Paris strive to witness to the love of God as revealed in Jesus Christ. All groups rehearse weekly and participate in the 11:00 worship service on Sunday morning (some weekly, others once a month). They also present several concerts during the year, including the annual Candlelight Christmas Concerts. If you would like more information about how your own musical gifts might be of service in this church, you are encouraged to speak with Fred Gramann or Bonnie Woolley.

FRED GRAMANN
DIRECTOR OF MUSIC
Director of the Adult Vocal and Handbell Choirs
music@acparis.org

BONNIE WOOLLEY
Director of the Children’s, Youth and Young Adult Vocal and Handbell Choirs
youthmusic@acparis.org
GUEST CHOIR FROM TEXAS

On September 18th the Choir of the First United Methodist Church of Kerrville, Texas, will provide music for the 11:00 worship service. They are directed by Rev. Don McAvoy, Jr. who graduated from Southwestern University in Georgetown, TX with a B.A. in Music (Voice/Church Music). From 1990-1993 he attended Southern Methodist University's Perkins School of Theology where he became certified by the United Methodist Church in Church Music and subsequently completed the coursework for Diaconal Ministry. He was consecrated in the North Texas Conference in 1994 and was ordained by the Southwest Texas Conference as a Deacon in Full Connection in 1997. In 2006, he graduated from Luther Seminary in St. Paul, MN with a Masters of Sacred Music degree with an emphasis in Choral Conducting. They are accompanied by Dr. Sabrina Adrian who has been organist at Kerrville First United Methodist Church since 2002. She holds degrees that include Bachelor of Music, piano performance from Southwestern University; Master of Music, organ performance, University of Texas at San Antonio; Master of Music, piano performance, University of Texas at San Antonio; and Doctorate in Musical Arts, Organ Performance from the University of Texas in Austin.
Like the youth and the young adults who had wanted to go to Burkina Faso but went to Cameroon instead, the Habitat for Humanity team also had to find another destination for their mission. Instead of Romania, they went to Hungary. God clearly had other ideas.

Despite the change in plans, the mission trip to Hungary (July 28-August 6) was a great experience for the team and wonderfully blessed with new friendships. The Habitat group 2011 was led by Natasha Turner, from California, who joined the ACP group from the American Church in London (ACL) and Destiny Ryales from Illinois. The other members were Catriona Melrose (UK), Kendal Brenneman (USA), Lillian Nganga (Kenya), Solomon Enobakhare (Nigeria), Tete Atiko (Togo), Radford Lanley, Wesley Lanley, and Emaline Lanley (all from Philadelphia, USA). As in previous years, the Habitat team received strong support from the Rotary Club.

There are three types of work sites that Habitat for Humanity volunteers could be sent to: a new build (new construction), reconstruction or renovation. This year, the Habitat team was tasked with a renovation project this summer. The house to be renovated was located in Berekfurdo, a very small and intimate town of 1,000 residents. It was a 3-hour ride by van from the capital, Budapest.

On the site, the team members installed foam insulation and mesh sheets, and then plastered the entire two-level house with cement. Some would sand the surface as even as possible between each coat of plaster. They only had to lay on three layers, but some were particularly energetic -- there might have been five layers applied on to some areas! Everyone not afraid of heights was on scaffolds and landings, applying plaster and sanding.
The mother of the beneficiary family would prepare snacks for midday breaks, and drinks were always available. She would also cut up watermelons for everyone to enjoy under the plum trees across the road. One day she baked some biscuits filled with tiny dried tomatoes that melted in the mouth! Yummy!!

Destiny Ryales, who has gone on a Habitat mission twice now, said: “I enjoy these mission trips enormously and I can explain why. In this world, there are countless people who suffer from famine, drought, and lack of employment. Growing up with everything readily available in the U.S., I have realized how blessed I have been. Now, as an adult, my prayer is to pay it forward. With so many individuals in need, I cannot just sit back and be still. I want to help. If that should consist of traveling to Ghana to deliver food, Bibles or books to prisoners, or teaching kids in a little village how read or count, or helping build a house for families who cannot afford to do it on their own, then I will be the first one to volunteer.”

Happily, there will be another Habitat for Humanity build in the next year. The team has not selected a country yet, but they expect it to be in East Europe or Africa. Wherever they might have to go, the Habitat volunteers are always ready to go!

Photos by Destiny Ryales
Every mission trip is full of surprises. No matter how much planning goes into organizing a trip, there are always surprises. This mission trip was no exception.

Three months ago, no one could have imagined we would be heading to Cameroon. The Cameroon Mission Trip was a big surprise. Our eyes and hearts were set on Burkina Faso. After our mission trip to Burkina Faso last year, there was no doubt that we would be going again in 2011. We had started a mutually beneficial relationship. When we were not teaching English in Ouagadougou, we spent our time with the children in an outlying village at the Shalom School. We played with these kids, we built bricks for a new classroom, and we wanted to go back and help them build more classrooms and help with whatever activities we could provide. We were invited by Pastor Zongo to prepare a Vacation Bible School program, and help with the building of their school in the summer.

After a full year of fund raising and planning our curriculum, we were faced with the unhappy reality that travel to Burkina Faso just wasn’t safe this year. The entire Youth Team was devastated with disappointment when we had to cancel the trip just a few short weeks before our scheduled departure. Even though we could not make the trip this year, we did not forget our friends in Burkina Faso, and continued to give support from a distance until we can visit again.
Surprise! Change of Plans

But, as we all know, as one door closes, another opens. When Marie-Antoinette Ebene Ebene heard of our plight, she generously offered to open her home in Djoum, Cameroon and paved the way for us to facilitate the two-week Vacation Bible School for the village kids, as well as have a chance to participate in community service projects.

Our trip in Cameroon was intended to animate the Vacation Bible School for the village kids, aged 6 - 12, in the mornings. The Young Adult group was to teach English to the older kids. Then, in the afternoons we would do community work: clean the village streets, help build the first public latrine, visit the medical clinics, make a prison visit, and attend the local football matches and church services. We did it all, and more! We all agree that we were happy, on many levels, to have had the opportunity to serve in Cameroon.

A Typical Morning

Every morning, the children would come and wait with eager anticipation for the classes to begin. Although we only intended to have children between the ages of 6 to 12, we welcomed children as young as 2 who were in the daily care of their older brothers and sisters.

A normal day started in the school's courtyard with games. Each day the number of children increased.
Reflections –

Before we left for Cameroon, I had no idea of what it would be like, and I knew very little about the country. Going to Burkina Faso last year was the only firsthand experience that I had of Africa and I thought that the Cameroon trip might be somewhat similar. It wasn’t. While we were treated like royalty by the people, it was still tough in many ways for everyone. Our “normal” day consisted of bathing in the river each morning, before breakfast then heading to the school to teach English for the kids over 12, or to give different workshops in the areas of music, games, theatre, and art. Many of these kids were not well. On a few occasions children had to go home, or they simply stayed at school despite being sick and often throwing up. One of the most memorable experiences of this trip was the church service. Church was around 3 hours long, and included singing, dancing, a great sermon, and then more singing and dancing. Overall this trip taught and re-taught me many things. I had forgotten a number of things from last year’s trip. For example going to this wonderful country and seeing people who quite literally have nothing. But they are so cheerful, no matter the situation. Even though we went to teach, we learnt much more than we taught. It was an amazing experience.

Christian de Looper

![Typical classrooms with the kids waiting to see what we had planned for them each day: arts & crafts, music, games and learning a new Bible story and acting it out.](image)
After the morning classes, each child received a freshly made beignet and cool water from a safe well. For many, this was their morning and noon meal.

**Time to Refresh**

After a hard day’s work, there was a cooling dip to wash in the river.

Meals were a big family affair. On Bastille Day, we were treated with soft drinks at lunch!
Reflections –
I really felt blessed being a youth leader on this trip. I was a little apprehensive when I agreed to take this trip because it was my first mission trip in Africa. As the weeks went along, I learned what wonderful youth they were. They genuinely care for the people they helped. They did all that they were asked to do without complaining. It was a challenging trip: We were out of our comfort zone, most youth got sick at least one day, African time requires patience, there was no running water (bathing and laundry was done in the river!), etc. However they showed compassion and concern to everyone they encountered. They treated each other with respect and got along with each other. This mission trip to Cameroon has been an opportunity to learn about the struggles of a people so deprived yet so happy and free. I came back filled with hope and inspiration to make a difference in the world around us.

Alix Le Masne de Chermont

Evenings were a time to sing and play with the local youth.

On the Sunday, Pastor Ginger was invited to give the sermon [in French!]. Seen here are Marie-Antoinette Ebene, an elder of the Church, Pastor Ginger, and Pastor Bengono Emmanuel Maxime of the Eglise Presbyteryenne Camerounaise, Paroisse Endengue.
The Closing Ceremony

Over 125 children came to perform songs at the closing ceremony. The older group enacted the story of Zachery to the delight of their parents and the dignitaries of the village.
Each child received a certificate of attendance at the Vacation Bible School and English classes. The younger children all received one of the Bible storybooks used during our time together.

Reflections –
On a personal note, I have learned that I really enjoy teaching English [ESL] to the older kids. I may teach English, but the students teach me about their country and their lives. This personal exchange and building of relationships is key for me. I have also grown to thoroughly enjoy working with our Youth Team as we work together planning our trips, and then as they participate in their first mission trips. It is a joy to experience their enthusiasm, be part of their youthful energy to play and work with the local children, and then watch our youth mature as their eyes and hearts are opened to other, more difficult, realities of life. We will never take our comforts in life for granted after such an experience, yet the trip was well worth the physical difficulties and primitive living conditions.

Marie Grout
On the way to mission site

1st stone layout ceremony for the first public latrines in Djoum

Classroom window

Bus ride

Time for devotion

Children learn songs

Trying out some instruments

Sunlight peeking through clouds
Photos by Daniel Grout and Alix Le Masne de Chermont
On her way ...

Please rejoice with Patti Lafage! She has received the news she has been waiting to hear: she will be leaving for the Rafiki Village in Uganda, near Kampala, on September 27. Rafiki Uganda was built in 2003 and is now home to 102 resident orphans plus 72 local children who attend the preprimary, primary, junior and senior secondary schools. Patti says: “I am grateful and overjoyed, and thank each one of you who has contributed with prayers, funds or both.”

Is she prepared?

“As much as one can be!”, she says. From June 19 to July 1, Patti attended the Survival Training then Enrichment at the Rafiki Home Office in Eustis, Florida. “Survival” involved daily devotions and Bible studies with the staff followed by classes with each one of the directors: Education & Childcare, Curriculum, Finance, Operations, Communications, as well as daily sessions with Rosemary Jenkins, Rafiki Founder. Ms. Jenkins explained the foundations of Rafiki policies, beliefs, and best practices. Her wisdom and experience were a great help to the new volunteers. In the afternoons, the team of four new Rafiki Overseas Staff (ROS) worked together on food preparation, warehouse organization, and sorting and boxing hundreds of new children's clothing articles which had been donated. “It was hard, requiring organization and team work – a good preview of what's in store as we join our various teams out in the field. We survived!” Patti says.

Enrichment Week followed, bringing about half of the current ROS staff to the home office as well as a large number of Rafiki friends, supporters, curriculum writers, and former missionaries. The trainees were treated to inspiring, thought-provoking and informative lectures on a variety of topics ranging from African history and culture, Rafiki history and plans for the future, to studies of the books of Revelation and Psalms, by noted experts and theologians.

What’s next? “Much to do!” Patti says that there is a pile of manuals and books to read and study, as well as research on Uganda’s history, culture, way of life, and current situation. “Study to prepare for my job: teaching language arts in English, helping with the Widows’ Program”, she explains.

“Thank you for your continuing interest in the work God is doing through Rafiki and His plans for me,” says Patti.
OPPORTUNITIES FOR ADULT EDUCATION, FELLOWSHIP AND MINISTRY

We are looking for outgoing and friendly people to welcome and greet visitors on Sundays after each service!

This is a truly important ministry and a wonderful way to show a Christian spirit by warmly welcoming those who will, no doubt, appreciate being greeted and welcomed to our church home!

If you could volunteer your time to be a Greeter, or to sit at the Welcome Table, please look for the sign-up sheet at the Welcome Table so you can choose dates and a Sunday service to participate! You can also contact Camilla Macfarlane for further information. Let her know if one Sunday a month (or more!) for 15 or 20 minutes would work in your schedule! Unfortunately, there have been too many stories of people coming to coffee hour and having no interaction with a single soul, and leaving feeling deflated (no matter HOW good the sermon was!) It is so heartwarming to make someone feel good, and this is an easy and informal way to put your “new personality” of Christian faith to work! Anybody and EVERYBODY can do this! Taking a share in this ministry will be a huge blessing to our visitors AND to all who participate.

The Youth Group meets on Sundays from 15h00-17h00 for fun, fellowship, and Bible Study. Please wear/bring comfortable clothes and shoes. Friends are always welcome at ACP youth events! Questions? Please contact Alix at alicemc@hotmail.fr

Ladies' Bible Study, 10h30-12h30. Everyone is welcome! We are currently going through the 5th book in the Pursuing Spiritual Transformation series: Gifts - The Joy of Serving God. For more info, please contact Shelley Fischer at shelleyfischer@gmail.com or Diedre Grizzle at sanc2fied@yahoo.com.

ACP Men – come for coffee, conversation, prayer and fellowship. Any men interested in further information or in being added to our e-mail list should contact Ed Hyslip (gtmmsinc@gmail.com) for information about address and door codes.

Youth and Family picnic. Sunday, September 18, 15h00 at the Invalides. For youth and families! Come to meet friends, get to know our new youth pastor, and hear about our youth program for this Fall. Meet us in front of ACP at 15h00 or look for the yellow blanket on the grass in front of Les Invalides. Please bring some food to share. We’ll provide the games, beverages, plates, and napkins.

Calling all multicultural couples. Welcome back! It's time to get together again. Our next gathering will be on September 16, Friday. Bring a dish to share and join the fun. For more info, contact Monica Basset or Susanna Anglada at monica.basset@free.fr or susanna_anglada@yahoo.com. 
The Knitting Group will resume on the first Monday of September. We look forward to welcoming newcomers and seeing each other again! Complete beginners join experts and others in between – all are welcome. Bring your own project, join us in a group project, knit for the church or just sit with us for some laughs and finding new friends. For more info, contact Antoinette Wolfe: alawolfe@gmail.com or Elizabeth Rand: ehrand@gmail.com.

Movie Discussion Group: The movie group’s choices for September are La Piel que Habito by Pedro Almodóvar, Win Win (Les Winners) by Thomas McCarthy, Blackthorn by Mateo Gil and Habemus Papam by Nanni Moretti. See any or all in the cinema at your convenience, then join the group for discussion on September 22 at 19h30 in the church basement.

Women’s Running Team. The results of the first running of the La Parisienne by the ACP Running Team. Approximately 15 faithful women from ACP will be running on September 11 in La Parisienne. They have spent the past few months in training and look forward to running the race with PERSEVERENCE. Please keep them in your prayers! You can come encourage them along the race route and if you are going to the contemporary service, you can still make the 13h30 service. Also, if you are interested in being part of the ACP running team (men and women are welcome) please contact Kim at woac_president@yahoo.com. We will be looking for other races to run in the fall. Several have already signed up for the Paris/Versailles Race on September 25!

Sunday Sermon Bible Study meets in the Library between the 9h00 and 11h00 services, 15 minutes after the end of the worship. Please contact Kristie Worrel for more information at kristieworrel@hotmail.com.

Children’s Worship. ACP hasboldly committed to an ambitious, meaningful and powerful worship for children. Members of the ACP have also boldly committed to enriching the children’s lives and helping them grow in spirit, share in fellowship and learn the love of God through Bible lessons and worship. Are you gifted as a “greeter”? Perfect. Can you recap glue sticks (or something totally basic)? Awesome! Inhibited by children’s worship songs? No problem. Are you between the ages of 13 and 99? Never “heard a call” to participate with the children’s program? Today just might be the day for you! Contact Jeanette Laugier at 06 78 40 42 43 (sms or voicemail) or netteinparis@yahoo.com.

Parenting from the Heart, September 24, Saturday. Please plan to attend this special event organized by Multi-cultural couples group and OPEN to ALL couples. Most parents come to the job without much training, but with a lot of cultural baggage! And when partners come from different cultures, what is a child to do? There are thousands of parenting books, how to choose? What approach really works, whether your child is a baby or an adolescent? We’ll show you a DVD explaining Dr. John Gottmann’s approach. Bring a dish, an appetite, and your baggage if you must! Introduction and facilitation by Cindy Davis, a Paris-based psychotherapist. RSVP: monica.bassett@free.fr
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<td>7: Men's Morning Coffee, 7h30*</td>
<td>8: Friday Mission Lunch, 10h30, American Cathedral</td>
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<td>12: Ladies' Bible Study, 10h30*</td>
<td>13: Youth and children’s choir rehearsals, 14h-18h30</td>
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<td>19: Ladies’ Bible Study, 10h30 am*</td>
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<td>21: Men's Morning Coffee, 7h30*</td>
<td>22: Parenting from the Heart, sponsored by the Multicultural Couples Group, 19h30</td>
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*Activity not held at ACP. Check with organizers for details.*

*Please check the ACP website for a more complete and detailed schedule.*