



Afcu

*American
& Foreign*

Christian Union

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

This year the AFCU held its annual Development meeting in Dallas, Texas on October 17th. As with past Development meetings the focus was on ways in which we can continue and improve on the financial conditions of the AFCU and its partner churches. While the results of our mid-year solicitation are incomplete, the progress is encouraging. The response from you (friends and alumni) is having an immediate impact on our ability to support the current and ongoing missions and outreach of all three churches. Additionally, the Board continues its focus in the areas of foundation grants and our own Heritage Society. Also, I would be remiss if I failed to mention the faithful stewardship of Board members; not only in their giving to the churches, but also their personal contributions to cover AFCU expenses.

One of the major topics of discussion in this year's meeting was the Faith Into Action campaign currently underway by the American Church in Paris. Mark Primmer gave us a positive and encouraging report about its progress and its projects (both completed and those in-progress). Listening to Mark reminded me of the emphasis of "Faith In Action" as expressed in the Gospel of James. The Message (by Eugene Peterson) contains the following:

I can already hear one of you agreeing by saying, "Sounds good. You take care of the faith department, I'll handle the works department." Not so fast. You can no more show me your works apart from your faith than I can show you my faith apart from my works.

"Show" is likely the operative word here. Faith is not something that we humans can see. Works is something that we can see, but usually in a specific context. So how do we show our faith through works? What is James suggesting we do? I believe it is to exhibit works combined with faith in(to) action. That is, perform our work in a manner that reveals our faith. It is easy to write a check or pound a nail. Our challenge is consistency and continuity. To this end I want to encourage you in this effort by reminding you of Paul's encouragement to the Philippians:

So let's keep focused on that goal, those of us who want everything God has for us. If any of you have something else in mind, something less than total commitment, God will clear your blurred vision – you'll see it yet! Now that we are on the right track, let's stay on it.

*In Christ,
Gregg Foster - AFCU President*

AFCU DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING DALLAS, TEXAS – OCTOBER 17, 2009

It was a beautiful day in Dallas, Texas on October 17, 2009 when we held the fall meeting of the AFCU Development Committee. All members of the AFCU are members of that committee and participate in the functions of that group. We are grateful to David Moore who planned the meeting and provided the facilities.

Twenty-one members plus two guests out of the thirty-two AFCU Board Members were in attendance at the meeting. We welcomed new Board Member, Marcia Coats, and a representative from the American Church in Paris Development Committee, Mark Primmer.

Normal business included a review of finances by the treasurer which shows improvement over what was reported at our April meeting. Asset appreciation has grown from earlier reported numbers and expenses are on forecast.

Individual church reports from ACB, ACP, and VCC representatives and discussions indicated that the ministries are strong and attendance is growing. A detailed review of the results of the Faith into Action capital campaign of ACP showed how some of the funds have already been put to valuable use. The Berlin Church has postponed a large development campaign project until more planning can be accomplished. The Vienna Church continues to seek expanded facilities to meet their growing Christian ministry for youth and adults. It is important to note that our member churches, in addition to their own local ministries, share their skills and possessions with mission activity in other countries of Eastern Europe and Africa.

A mid-year solicitation was held with very good results. We are grateful to the many individuals and family units that participated and wish to voice a grateful, "Thank You" for their help. A fall Thank-A-Thon calling program will be carried out by 19 committee members in an attempt to personally contact by telephone and thank all of our late year 2008 and year-to-date 2009 donors.

Thank you for your prayers and your generous support.

The next meeting of the Development Committee will be held in conjunction with our annual AFCU Board Meeting on Saturday, April 17, 2009 in Tucson, Arizona.

*Russell McNaughton, David Moore
Chairpersons, Development Committee*

HERITAGE SOCIETY

The three churches of the American and Foreign Christian Union rely on gifts from alumni and friends. They play a vital role in the ministry of those churches, their mission and their future. If you have recently made a gift, your generosity is greatly appreciated.

One additional and very important opportunity for gifting is in the form of future gifts that fall under planned giving and are an integral part of estate plans of donors. We believe that planned giving, which is sometimes referred to as deferred giving, is one of the most useful tools to ensure continued long term ministries of the church. This is the case particularly when the contributions are used for strengthening the endowment funds of the churches.

The future gifts to the AFCU for the benefit of our churches are recognized through membership in the Heritage Society. Many of you may be members. We currently have 51 confirmed members that have notified us of their intentions to include

the AFCU in their estate plans. We keep reminding people that it may be time to update their plans because of the recent changes in your economic situation and changes in tax laws. For those of you that have included the churches in your plans and have not notified us, we encourage you to do so.

Many opportunities for future gifts exist: Bequests, Life Insurance, Charitable Remainder Trusts, Charitable Gift Annuities, and others that can be referenced by going to our AFCU home page at www.afcubridge.org . Then click on Support. We would like to welcome you to our roles as a new member.

Thank you for all you do for these organizations. For questions and assistance, please contact us at afcuheritage@afcubridge.org

*Russell McNaughton,
Heritage Society*

GIFTS OF STOCK

We are often asked how to gift shares of stock. Here is the process:

Step 1: INITIATE TRANSFER

The two common methods of gifting securities to the American and Foreign Christian Union are Electronic transfer through which your broker can transfer shares using the AFCU DTC (Depository Trust Company) number. The other is physically mailing the paper certificates to US TRUST Company of New York , our agent. Either method is acceptable, although the electronic transfer is faster and preferred.

A. SECURITIES DELIVERED ELECTRONICALLY

Donate your stock to the AFCU Cross through U S Trust of New York. The AFCU Treasurer should get an acknowledgement of the deposit from US Trust at the end of the receiving month and sent you a receipt acknowledgement by the middle of the following month. It is important, however, to notify us by email as defined below.

U S Trust Company of New York
DTC Number: 0955
DTC AGENT: 20955
DTC Institutional: #20955 (to be used if Bank of America is affirming party)
ACCT Name: AFCU-General (Tax ID# 13-5637046)
ACCT Number: 41-01-100-5831329

B. SECURITIES DELIVERED BY MAIL

Mail your UNENDORSED certificates by registered mail, to:

Bank of America Merrill Lynch
Bank of America, N.A.
111 Westminster Street
Providence, RI 02903

Reference: AFCU-General Account # 41-01-100-5831329
Bank of America Merrill Lynch
Bank of America, N.A.
111 Westminster Street
Providence, RI 02903

In either case, our account manager at US Trust is Jerry Stonehouse – 401-278-6043

Step 2: NOTIFY THE AFCU TREASURER

Regardless of the method chosen to deliver a gift of stock; the donor needs to provide us some information about the gift

for audit and acknowledgment purposes. Please send an e-mail to at the time of transfer to: dickbright@prodigy.net and include:

- Donor's full name and complete address
- Name and number of securities transferred
- Date of the transfer
- Specific AFCU program(s) to which the gift should be directed, AFCU , ACP, ACB, VCC or ACP Faith Into Action

*Richard E. Bright
Treasurer American & Foreign Christian Union*

GIFTS FROM INTERNATIONAL CONGREGATIONS

When Kathie invited me to write an article for the Bridge, I thought back to all the gifts I have seen international congregations give to global Christianity. The list is impressive.

The most obvious gift international congregations make is their **ministry to English speaking expatriates**. Traditionally the expatriates were mainly business, military or government agency personnel whose first language was English. Increasingly, however, expatriates from around the world whose second or third language is English also find a church home in international congregations.

Perhaps the most prominent gift international congregations have to offer is that of **hospitality to strangers**. International congregations are islands of security offering community for English-speakers from an increasingly diverse number of nations. Hospitality plays a greater role than in most national congregations. The very nature of the congregation as international enables it to reach across denominational, national and ethnic lines to welcome the stranger.

International congregations often make a **contribution to the national churches** in the countries in which they are located. In one Scandinavian country, the pastor of the international congregation is used by the national church in its refugee program. This is a two-way street, of course, since the international congregations are guests of the national churches.

A similar gift associated with international congregations is that of **companions in mission** with the national churches. Previously Churches in Europe and the USA were seen as “giver/sender” churches to Christians in the southern hemisphere. That situation is changing as churches formerly seen as objects of mission have grown into equal partners in the Christian mission. The way mission is done is being discussed in the European churches. Along with United States churches, European churches are experiencing changing financial and political environments. They are asking questions not formerly heard about the way other national churches do evangelism and stewardship. International congregations can serve as meeting places in which the dialogue on mission takes place.

The greatest shift I observed in working with international congregations was their **openness to refugees**. Occasionally a national church sees the international congregation as having a role in ministry to immigrants and refugees. In at least two international congregations, part of the congregation’s ministry is to visit incarcerated English speakers.

International congregations offer seminaries in their home countries sites for **the training of interns**. At gatherings of international congregations, such as the Association of International Congregations in Europe and the Middle East (AICEME), interns are exposed to a variety of ministries in international settings. The interns, in turn, bring their international experiences to bear on the congregations they then serve in their home countries.

Probably the most overlooked of the gifts that international congregations bring to the Christian church is that of **the ministry of their members to their home churches**. Expatriates in international congregations become skilled in practicing worship and community building in multi-denominational, multi-ethnic settings. They learn to recognize impediments to ministry that exist in more homogenous communities. When alumni of international congregations return to their home countries, they resource the congregations they join with their expertise learned in diverse denominational and ethnic communities.

Those of us involved in the lives of international congregations have unique opportunities available to us. Our involvement gives us entrée to congregations with a tradition of offering bountiful gifts to the global Christian scene.

*Karl Reko
Director, Network for International Churches*

WHAT'S YOUR STORY?

If you are receiving news from the AFCU, it is because you have a tie to one of our member churches in Berlin, Paris or Vienna. What was it that drew you to one of these faith communities? What did you find there that made you become a part of the family? In what ways did you see God's grace at work in and through the church? How was your life personally touched? In what ways did you see others transformed?

YOUR STORIES matter and we would love to hear them. As your AFCU board begins to approach foundations for grant funding in support of our family of churches, we would like to compile your stories about why these faith communities are worthy of external financial support. As most grant makers will tell you, the application itself is important but your testimonials make the difference. Stories of lives transformed, hope restored, and renewal made possible are what distinguish one funding request from the others.

In these challenging economic times, we are all doing our best to support the causes we care about most deeply. One non-financial way to significantly show your support would be to simply write a paragraph or two about your best memories in the Berlin, Paris, and Vienna churches. Then, simply **send it to karenhalac@aya.yale.edu** specifying whether or not we may include your name in future grant applications. What could be simpler?!

TO HELP YOU GET STARTED, PLEASE INCLUDE:

- Your Name
- You have permission to use my story (below) in a grant proposal (indicate yes or no)
- You have permission to use my name in a grant proposal (indicate yes or no)
- Your Church affiliation: - Berlin - Paris - Vienna
- Your Contact information: (address, phone, email)

PLEASE RESPOND TO ONE OR MORE OF THE FOLLOWING:

- My best memory
- How my time in this church has changed/affected me
- Where/how I experienced God in this place
- How my faith was stretched/challenged/matured there
- Why I believe that supporting this church is so important
- What this community of faith offers the world that is unique.

At a time when it may be a challenge to write the kind of check that we want to, we can ALWAYS take thirty minutes to write our reminiscences in the hope that our shared stories of faith would touch those institutions that provide grant funding for urban ministry, spreading the gospel, Christian education, and international missions.

Thank you! Karen Halac

Berlin Connection

DOIN' BUSINESS WITH GOD



This past weekend the American Church in Berlin hosted the AICEME Youth Conference in Berlin. Over 120 participants came from congregations in Europe: Madrid, Oslo, Paris, Stockholm, Bratislava, Vienna, Frankfurt, Berlin, Zurich, Bonn, and The Hague. I asked one of the young people how it was going and the reply was, "I'm doin' business with God!" In further conversation it was a gift to hear this young person talk of the struggles as well as the insights that were forthcoming from the challenging and life giving worship, talks and conversations that were happening. The old walls of a Gothic style church of ACB rocked with lively music, joyful noise, challenging messages and intense small group conversations. One night it was well past midnight before the lights were turned off and the doors locked! And they were back by 9 a.m. the next morning – full of energy, excitement, honesty and hope!

The theme of the weekend was “Many Cultures – One Faith”. A high point for me was Saturday night following a challenging message talking about issues close to the heart and life of youth. There was opportunity for writing a confession on a card and nailing it to the cross; an opportunity to write a letter to God; an opportunity to sit quietly in prayer and meditation; an opportunity to celebrate the joy of the Lord’s Table/Eucharist. I will



never forget looking into the eyes of these young people and sharing with them the Good News – “the body of Christ broken for you – the blood of Christ shed for you for the forgiveness of your sin”. To see their smiles and experience their trust in the grace of the presence of Jesus will forever be carried in my heart and mind! As I sang songs that night tears streamed down my face – this was a “God Moment” – a time of “doin’ business with God” – experiencing his forgiveness, grace, joy and love! Wow – it doesn’t get better than this folks!



Our Lord Jesus with his Disciples, Johannes, John, and Matthias. The hands of these statues have fallen though age, aggravation, or war damage.

Pastor Ben noted:

“We are those hands, we are the servants.

Photo copyright exclusive – David Look.

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International ministry is a powerful, unique and life giving opportunity to share the Good News of a loving, forgiving, empowering God in Jesus Christ in the midst of lonely, painful and confused life! To have the opportunity for young people to come together in a unique Christ-like community of sharing, caring and growing in the context of honesty, integrity and confession is worth every ounce of energy, planning, and euros expended!

Sunday morning the huge cross-covered with cards of confession nailed on it along with a basket full of letters to God was front and center in the worship space. After the act of confession and absolution the cards of confession were torn from the cross and destroyed. The basket of letters was offered up to God as gift. Again, as I returned to my pew as we sang powerful songs, tears streamed down my face! Folks, it doesn’t get better than this for this old preacher!!!

“I’m doin’ business with God” – wow! – what a response from a young heart open to the Spirit’s leading, guiding, forgiving and empowering! May I challenge you today to say with this young person, “I’m doin’ business with God” and then be open to the Spirit’s leading, guiding, forgiving and empowering?

*Blessings in Joy
Pastor Ben*

FROM THE ACB INTERN, KATE PROCTOR

I mentioned to Pastor Ben and his wife, Margit, this week that I envision the previous interns of the American Church in Berlin like that great cloud of witnesses. Once a week or so I hear something about one of the ten previous vicars. Maybe it's how Intern Sarah started the ACB Street Fair that happens every year now. Or maybe it's a Bible study that worked really well when Intern Beth was here. Or the Learning Cafe with homework help every week. Or the gifts of hospitality Intern Dan and his wife Anna displayed for the Young Adult group. Every time I learn something new and amazing about ministry in this place!

Throughout the years, ACB has fostered gifts like these in so many leaders. Having interns is a great asset to a congregation, but it also takes a lot of dedication. It takes commitment and patience from the pastor and the internship committee, and a congregation with gifts for nurturing leaders. This congregation certainly has those gifts! And the end result is astounding: ACB has been a vital part of forming 10 (and maybe more!) pastoral leaders for ministry for the church, whose ripples go out and touch thousands of people around the globe. By nurturing these leaders, ACB has truly been a gift to the world.

I am so pleased to be able call myself one of that great "cloud of ACB intern witnesses" and to receive the gift of doing ministry in this place. I am originally from Abingdon, Virginia, a little town in the southwest corner of the state where I grew up with my two brothers and two sisters. I went to William and Mary in Williamsburg, VA, for my undergraduate studies. Before coming to Berlin, I completed two years of my M.Div. degree at the Lutheran Theological Seminary in Philadelphia, and I will go back next fall to finish my degree and look towards the first call process to become a pastor in the ELCA. And now, I am thrilled to call Berlin my home for this year.

Thanks be to God for your part in the great "cloud of AFCU witnesses". Thank you for supporting churches like ACB and making fantastic internship sites like this one possible!

*Kate Proctor, Intern Pastor
American Church in Berlin*

AICEMEA YOUTH CONFERENCE 2009 IN BERLIN – OCT. 22 TO OCT. 25, 2009

Thank God, we made it, we worked it through as one body – ACBers we can be so proud of ourselves. It was a wonderful team work!!

After throwing hundreds of hundreds of hours to plan this wonderful event, we are so thankful that everything worked out so well, that everyone enjoyed it and everyone is looking forward to the next AICEME (The Association of International Churches of Europe and the Middle East) Youth Conference. The joyful noises made by the wonderful 120 youth and youth leaders in our historical church are still in my ears and the bonding continued by seeing the photos and exchanging words on the facebook, created by one of the talented girls from The Hague.



It was a lot of work to pull everything together for the youth conference, but the appreciation from the participants and even the one who helped is so graceful and beautiful. One kid held my hand with his two hands, looked into my eyes and told me it was so wonderful to be here and thank you for organizing it. One kid wrote me on facebook: thanks a lot for the GREAT conference. It was really amazing. Everyone enjoyed it so much. All of you really did a great job. Thanks again and see you next year!! God bless. Not to mention the many nice words from the youth leaders.

Everyone who was involved with the youth conference thanked me for giving them the chance to serve in this super fun event, they loved these fine young people and one said “they behaved so well, even the toilets stayed clean” – we served a bunch of nice young people and they’re called God’s children. Those God’s children were served by the humble servants of God at ACB.

The excitement will soon be over, the joyful noises in my ears will soon be fading away, but God’s Grace will stay. Thank YOU for giving us the chance to serve YOU by hosting the AICEMEA Youth Conference 2009 in Berlin. It was a wonderful experience for me and I believe everyone who helped planning, praying, talking, rocking, decorating, cooking, baking, washing, acting, cleaning and to help making the joyful noises at ACB experienced the same.

*Your humble servant, Daphne Jiang Ratke
the American Church in Berlin*

LAIB UND SEELE DONATION

On September 26, a delegation of Laib und Seele and the American Church in Berlin received a donation of over 150 cans of food from the 8th Company of the German Honor Guard. It was a joyful occasion for the volunteers of L&S and the donors to get to know one another and to find ways to work together for a better world. Laib und Seele receives donations of produce from grocery stores each week. This donation of cans will provide more shelf-stable food to families during the holidays and other times when needs are the greatest. These cans are a symbol of an ongoing commitment of the Company, which plans to make many more regular donations to the Laib und Seele program in the future. A special thanks to Helmut Popko, who coordinates Laib und Seele at ACB and to Chief Master Bernd Brix, a member of the company that facilitated this donation. Thanks be to God for this commitment to feeding the poor and supporting a life-giving program for our neighborhood!

Paris Connection

DEAR AFCU MEMBERS AND FRIENDS,



It is coming up on our second Thanksgiving here in Paris, and I want you to know how thankful I am to God for the partnership we share in the ministry and mission of the American Church in Paris!

We’ve discovered that Darwin doesn’t have the corner on evolution. If you haven’t been back to the “City of Light” recently, there are a number of excellent reasons to come and see how God is helping us to evolve as a community of faith and action:

- The ACP is thriving with three worship services, two of which are growing in attendance and the steady early morning service (not a high growth potential here in Paris, but) very meaningful with weekly communion. Fred Gramann continues to compose and coordinate the most amazing music programs, and our new Associate Pastor, the Rev. Laurie Wheeler, has led the way in crafting a wonderful new children’s worship for the wee ones.
- A healthy staff and Council leadership team which is blessed with the creative genius of a visiting artist, Peter Chalmers, from Scotland who helped put together an emerging artists’ summer program for the last week of August, and who continues to add an artistic touch to various ministries of the church.
- A new mid-week Adult Education program called Thurber Thursdays which have been drawing anywhere from 60-80

people for dinner, lecture and discussion. We've had guests ranging from an astronaut and neurobiologist, to an Old Testament scholar and Oxford philosopher come and share their ideas on creation, and are looking forward the end of this year to upcoming topics ranging from faith issues in the workplace to a multi-media dramatic faith presentation.



- The largest ever registration for an “All in the Family” church retreat at the coast in Normandy.
- One of the best Youth and Young Adult ministries in Paris, with Ginger having around 80 young adults recently attending a panel discussion on relationships and Christian faith.
- A successful Leaders’ Life and Purpose event which attracted over 80 participants, about 30% who do not attend a church.
- About 50% completion of the Faith Into Action fund-raising, which continues to support the ongoing renovation and improvements of our physical plant, the most visible recent project completed being the new wood floors in the chapel, theater, reception area and first and second floor landings.
- A healthy stewardship campaign which helps us all to focus on the “grace of giving” and how we all are blessed to give of the many resources God has given into our care, even in challenging financial times like we’re currently facing, to share God’s love with the world...

The Psalmist writes, “O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; for his steadfast love endures forever” (Psalm 107.1). We are experiencing God’s goodness and steadfast love, and so even in challenging times, we humbly give thanks to God. Do come and visit us and, in the meantime, know that your ongoing prayer and support makes a difference as we continue to grow into the church God has created and called us to be. As you prepare to celebrate Thanksgiving back home, we pray that you also will experience the blessing of God’s enduring goodness and love,

*As we remain thankfully your partners in Christ,
Scott and the ACP Congregation*

FAITH INTO ACTION - NEWSLETTER NO. 3

Greetings to our faithful donors whose generosity has made possible some of the greatest material challenges which we have had to face. I’m pleased to report to you that through Faith into Action, God is at work!

Initiated as a campaign to strengthen the American Church in Paris for the future, FIA continues to have significant impact on the ministry and mission of this dynamic congregation.

With thanks to the AFCU, the success of the FIA campaign has already allowed the following initiatives to be financed:

1. Restoration of the Sanctuary, including cleaning of stained glass windows;
2. Renovation and cleaning of the Becherath Organ;
3. Refurbishing of the Associate Pastor’s apartment;
4. Conversion of 4th floor storage room into a 1-bedroom apartment, available for “Theologian in Residence”;
5. Gymnasium Renovation and relocation of Youth & Young Adult Pastor’s office;
6. Renovation of main Jean Nicot staircase & 4th floor hallway;
7. Repainting main reception, staff offices, all of the garden level meeting rooms and the bedrooms of the Senior Pastor’s apartment;
8. New modern signage boards have been installed.



While the sanctuary renovations continue to be enjoyed by all who worship here, Bill Johnston and Daniel Grout have continued to work diligently to oversee and coordinate other important structural repairs and renovations using monies from Faith Into Action including:

1. Completion of the sound-proofing and ventilation of the Gymnasium (paid for in 2008);
2. Sound-proofing the ceiling of the Thurber room and painting of the ceiling;
3. Replacing the floors in the chapel, theater, reception entrance, and landings with new stained oak parquet;
4. FIA donor board and furniture renovation in Narthex;
5. Repainting and rewiring of the Theater and payment of the architect's fees.

Looking ahead, additional projects to be undertaken when the funds are available include:

1. Redesign & renovation of the stage area of the Theater in order to allow congenial activities as listed above;
2. Restoration of the Steinway grand piano and the Pleyel grand piano;
3. Exterior cleaning of the Church spire and sanctuary (legal obligation);
4. Renovation of the attic area in order to create appropriate archive & storage space;
5. Redesign & waterproofing of the garden area.

The visible improvement of physical environment of ACP has had tremendous impact on the congregation and visitors alike – indicating that ACP is in good health and full of vitality. This provides the setting for the human side of development, namely the seed planting for long-term relationships with ACP.

Thanks to FIA investment, ACP is attracting greater number of participants for Worship and other programs:

- Have added a 1:30pm service with 150 people regularly attending
- “Thurber Thursdays” program draws 60-80 people
- Youth events have shown increased numbers, and also have provided support for some adult events

In addition, we have all seen the surprising success of having the 4th floor 1-bedroom apartment to host guests in support of our ministry (Visiting Artist, Visiting Musician, Theologian in Residence). This relatively small (and less visible) project will have long-term benefit for all.

On behalf of ACP, I would like to thank AFCU for helping to contribute to the ministry and mission of the congregation. Faith into Action has had a tremendously positive impact on ACP and I look forward to working closely with all of you as we continue to realize the full extent of the campaign.

“For my house shall be a house of prayer for all peoples” (Isaiah 56.7)

*Respectfully submitted,
Mark Primmer - Property & Development Vice Chair*

JESSE JACKSON: TROUBLEMAKER FOR PEACE

True peace is not merely the absence of tension; it is the presence of justice.

August is usually such a peaceful time in Paris. Most of the Parisians are gone, traffic is down, daily pressure is light, and at the ACP on Sundays there are often more visitors than members. It was a perfect setting for activist Reverend Jesse Jackson to blow into the sanctuary and stir us up with his powerful sermon for world peace.

His visit dropped out of the blue. Rainbow Coalition/PUSH rang up on Monday afternoon 3rd August, just after Pastor Scott and team had put the finishing touches to next Sunday's service. Reverend Jackson was heading to the Côte d'Ivoire for a political congress* via Paris, and offered to preach at the American Church. After a bit of reflection and with the blessing of Council, Scott took a deep breath, pushed the GO button, and those who were not on vacation jumped into red-carpet mode.

What an honor! Civil rights leader and activist, preacher and politician, Jackson had preached here 10 years ago, following in the footsteps of his mentor Martin Luther King, who spoke from our pulpit in 1963.

So the service was rapidly revamped. Marie sent out a jubilant announcement by email; Fred called soloist Kimberly Hawkins; Ginger tapped the youth group, since youth fellowship is one of Jackson's focal missions; Kristi Worrel organized a breakfast reception; ushers were gathered; and the work to replace the floor in the Theater was accelerated. We even had media, with France 24 TV scheduled to interview the Reverend after church.

Everyone showed up early this lovely sunny morning, with the front pews filled by 10:45. Oddly enough, Peter Bannister just happened to be sitting in for Fred at the organ this Sunday, exactly as he did for Jackson's last visit. Scott introduced the Reverend during the community announcements and we all quickly realized that applause would be the order of the day, as the congregation stood and welcomed Jesse Jackson with a standing ovation.

He did not disappoint. Scott said the Reverend was clearly pleased and impressed, as the youth fellowship named the different countries they were from. He stood patiently while the mike was painstakingly clipped inside his robe, and graciously thanked Scott for his welcome and asked the congregation to show our appreciation for him. "Show your love", he urged. We did with more thunderous applause.

His sermon, "A Mind for Peace", was a perfect complement to Scott's equally powerful discourse at 9 and 1:30 on Peacekeepers vs. Peacemakers. "We dream of peace", Jackson said. Citing Jesus, Martin Luther King, Mandela, he asked, "But why do dreamers face rejection? Why are they killed so often? Peacemaking is risky work." Later, he stated, "Me, I'm not a peacemaker. I'm a troublemaker for peace!"



He continued, "America had a dream moment when Barack Obama was elected president. On that night America matured enough. The world rejoiced...we wept tears of joy...Many of the opposition are now calling him un-American. Racist. Why are dreamers so viciously attacked?"

Pastor Scott liked his citation from Martin Luther King: "Vanity asks the question, Is it popular? Politics asks, Will it win? But conscience asks the question, Is it right?" Reverend Jackson described how someone in the airport had asked him whether he actually preached anymore, along with the politics. The Reverend answered, "I preach the Gospel every day – and I use words if I have to!"

His rhetoric was spellbinding: "The Berlin Wall couldn't come down. But it did. Lincoln couldn't win the Civil War. But he did. Dr. King couldn't bust apartheid in America. But he did. Obama couldn't win the White House. But he did. If we believe, we can win! Faith rejects doubt, fear, the status quo." He urged, "We can feed the world. We can have drinkable water. We can provide healthcare for everyone. Peace is possible."

At the end of the service, he greeted the congregation as we left the church, shaking hands while cameras snapped and people crowed up. The Reverend and his wife then invited Scott and Kim out for a spontaneous lunch, a boat ride and dinner at a friend of his wife's, a nice bit of tourism before the Jackson entourage left for Abidjan.

Pastor Scott said, "For me it was a convicting Sunday. This is a man that first got beat up for his beliefs, has been pursuing his call diligently for 47 years of his life, and kept the faith all those years." Jesse Jackson is truly a living legend, and we were privileged to host him.

* On Monday 10th August Jackson was symbolically crowned Prince Nana Aka Essoin in a ceremony in the village of Krindjabo.

*By Alison Benney
from the Spire, August 2009*

FROM JAM JARS TO CHURCH WINDOWS

While you may have never experienced breakfast at Tiffany's, chances are you're familiar with that illustrious name in the realm of American fine arts. Decorative genius Louis Comfort Tiffany (1848-1933) first developed artistically as a painter, but at age 27 his focus took a startling new direction: glassmaking. Quickly assimilating the craft in noted Brooklyn glasshouses, he was most fascinated with glass that had noticeable impurities, causing interesting textures and designs. Glass being produced in his time being fairly pure and, in his opinion bland, he resorted to experimenting with ordinary jam jars and bottles. He established his own glass making firm in 1885 and soon gained worldwide recognition for his brilliantly colored glass lamps, stained glass windows for residences and churches and other decorative creations. At the Paris Universal Exposition of 1900 his stained glass garnered him a coveted gold medal.

The following year Tiffany was commissioned to create two special windows for the American Church in Paris, situated at that time on the rue de Berri just off the Champs-Élysées. Donated by Rodman Wanamaker in memory of his wife, the windows were placed in the chancel, high above the altar. Entitled "The Word" and "Contemplation", they were dedicated on Easter Sunday, April 7, 1901. When our current facility was constructed on the quai d'Orsay, the Tiffany windows found a new home along the right-hand aisle of the sanctuary, placing them at eye level where the detailed craftsmanship could be observed and appreciated. However, due to the limited height of that space, the dedicatory panel at the bottom of each window was removed.



Tiffany's genius was to create a picture in stained glass by using a type of glass he developed and termed favrile, coming from the word "febrile" or "handcrafted" in old English. This glass was unique with its visible mix of colors, blown in a variety of thicknesses, the surfaces sometimes etched with contrasting textures. As far as possible the entire picture was created by the colors and textures in the glass itself, often resulting in several layers of glass being superimposed. If you look closely at our two Tiffany angels you will observe that only the face, hands and feet are painted onto the glass. Every other detail is achieved with the glass itself: the clouds in the sky, the folds of the robe, the texture of the wings and the pages in the Bible. Observing the windows from the exterior walkway off the Theater, you can see the flat foundational layer of glass upon which the rest is layered. Because of their location they are best viewed in the afternoon when the sun has moved to the west side of the building.

On September 15 ACP hosted a visit from two of the leading world experts on Tiffany glass, in town because of their involvement with the Tiffany Exhibit opening the following day at the Musée du Luxembourg. They were Dr. Martin Eidleberg, art professor and historian, and Alice Cooney Frelinghuysin, curator of the Department of American Arts at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. Earlier in the day they were asked during an interview what they thought of the Tiffany windows at the American Church and, having never heard of them, they came immediately over to inspect them. They commented on the sheer beauty of the glass as the years just after 1900 were the best period for Tiffany's church windows. In later years the company resorted to glass of lesser quality for church windows which were located high above the viewer. They noted that the restoration some years ago of the right-hand window had resulted in flattening the lead strips which made them thicker and unfortunately more noticeable. It's easy to see this detail when compared with the untouched leading in the left-hand window. They warned that this detail, if and when the other window is restored, should be considered. They recounted how a small team of craftspeople would spend weeks looking through sheet after sheet of glass to find the right match of texture and color to create a garment, the sky or other object desired by Tiffany. They warned us that the new exhibit in Paris (Louis Comfort Tiffany: Couleurs et Lumière) was likely to increase the number of admirers wishing to experience our Tiffany windows. After all, they are the only permanent examples in France, classified as historic monuments by the French Government.

So from now on, as you finish your Tiffany-esque breakfast feast and rinse out those empty jam jars and orange juice bottles for recycling, remember that these simple containers once inspired the greatest American decorative artist of all time, and that two of his unique creations have accompanied worship at the American Church in Paris for the past 108 years, and will continue to do so for decades to come.

by Fred Gramann

HOMEGOINGS

Joseph Wilson Cochran III, son of former ACP pastor Dr. Joseph Cochran, Jr., died peacefully October 18th, of pneumonia and complications from Alzheimers. Joe was born March 7, 1919 in Englewood, New Jersey to Dr. Joseph Wilson Cochran, Jr. and Dorothea Edwards Lewis Cochran. Shortly thereafter, he moved with his family to Paris, France, and spent his early years in school there. His father, a noted Presbyterian minister, served as pastor of the American Church in Paris from 1923 to 1933. During this time Dr. Cochran oversaw the purchase of the Quai D'Orsay site and the construction of the church buildings. Dr. Cochran received the Knight's Cross of the Order of Palmes Académique from the French government for his work.

He is survived by two daughters, Bambi (Mrs. Robert) Griffin and Wendy (Mrs. Arnold) Jones, and their families. He also leaves several nieces and nephews. He was predeceased by his wife, Joan Ralston Cochran in 2008 and his sister, Louise Cochran Wareham, of Nantucket in 2005.

Joe embraced life and was a mentor to many. He enjoyed biking through Europe as a teenager, racing his '52 Cad-Allard, and flying airplanes. Above all, he adored his wife and family and treasured his friends. His gentle spirit will be dearly missed.

(from the 2009 SF Chronicle)

The **Rev. Dr. Edwin Tuller**, who presided over American Baptist Churches during the turbulent sixties and was a unyielding advocate for human rights and peace, died on August 26 in Pittsburgh.

"Ed Tuller was one of a vanguard of church leaders who made it clear that support for the Civil Rights Movement was a Christian duty," said the Rev. Michael Kinnamon, General Secretary of the National Council of Churches. "He openly supported his fellow Baptist, the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and he was prominently visible at the 'I Have a Dream' march on Washington in 1963 and other Civil Rights demonstrations. His strong Christian faith gave him unquestioned moral credentials to stand for freedom, justice and equality and he set an example for the generation of church leaders that followed him."

"Dr. Ed Tuller was that rare mixture of both the prophetic and pastoral leader," said the Rev. Dr. A Roy Medley, the ABC's current General Secretary. "He became general secretary during the racially charged civil rights struggle. Through his prophetic leadership, American Baptists threw their support behind Dr. King and his fledgling movement. Yet, Dr Tuller was pastoral in his approach to those American Baptists who questioned such an active stance in "politics," patiently answering their concerns and helping them embrace the struggle for equality as a biblical response to injustice. Dr. Tuller will long be remembered for his leadership that paved the way for American Baptists to be the most racially diverse denomination today."

Tuller was born in Hartford, Conn., in 1913, the second son of an active Baptist family. He graduated from Colgate Rochester Divinity School in Rochester, NY, in 1938, and did graduate work at La Faculte Libre de Theologie Protestante in Paris, France, in 1938 and 1939.

During much of his time of service to the denomination, Tuller made his home on a farm in Flemington, NJ, with his wife, Rose Catherine, and their four children; Edwin H., Jr., Joan Elizabeth (Jensen), James Gordon, and Katherine ("Kitty") Crawford (Abbott).

After leaving the position of General Secretary of the American Baptist Convention, Tuller and Rose were appointed as Special Service Workers of the Board of International Ministries, with Ed serving as Pastor of the American Church in Paris, France—the oldest non-governmental American institution established on foreign soil—from 1971 until his retirement from active ministry in 1978.

For the past several years, Tuller has lived in the Pittsburgh area, where he has continued to be an active American Baptist as a member of the First Baptist Church of Pittsburgh.

from the National Council of Churches news

NCC News contact: Philip E. Jenks, 212-870-2228 (office), 646-853-4212 (cell) , pjenks@nccusa.org

Vienna Connection

AUTUMN GREETINGS FROM VIENNA COMMUNITY CHURCH!



What beautiful autumn weather we have had here in Vienna! Coming into the second week in October, and the weather was still in the 70's. Then we had guests from one of our previous congregations in the US visit us - and it has rained/snowed ever since! Talk about a dramatic change in our weather . . .

Some fairly dramatic changes are also occurring in regards to the Mundts and VCC.

- a. For the Mundts, it means teaching religion a couple of days a week in Bratislava, Slovakia. Because of a combination of personal problems and cut backs in ministry dollars, there was a desperate need for religion teachers at the Lyceum Lutheran High School. We stepped in and have tremendously enjoyed getting to know these young people. Think about it – these parents grew up under communism, but their children are the first generation with no firsthand experience with it. Talk about a generational gap! We travel by train on Tuesdays and Thursdays, and continually love and are stimulated by our teaching responsibilities.
- b. As for Vienna Community Church, we have had five baptisms in the past month. In addition, worship continues to grow to such a point that we need to buy (yet again) more hymnals and begin to seat people in the balcony. Every Sunday is an amazing experience of multi-culture ministry!
- c. The Church Board has unanimously voted that we actively look for additional space for full time ministry. As most of you may know, we only rent the Reformed church for three hours on Sundays. This means we are in desperate need of additional space to expand our growing ministry. We therefore are actively looking for either a new and larger manse, or other additional space for expanding our week day ministry. This will provide and insure a strong foundation for ministry for the years to come.



Our autumn stewardship campaign is called “Forward in Faith”. We are looking forward to address the challenges and opportunities that are currently before us, and seek to build a solid base for VCC’s ministry for many years to come.

Again, we want to thank all of you who have held us in your prayers and may have contributed to the ministry of the VCC! Without your support, we would not be able to fulfill our congregation’s motto: “Many Cultures – One Faith”.

Pastor Randy, Gail and Katrina

MOVING FORWARD!

VCC is looking for a new meeting space and manse to enhance our current and future ministry. The current manse has been rented by VCC for 18 years and has been home to the VCC pastors (and families), as well as the site for counseling sessions, board meetings, choir practices, young adult dinners, Lenten soup suppers & discussions, Bible studies, special meals, etc. It also houses the church office.

We have maxed out the manse! Due to the growth in attendance and in ministries, the manse has reached its’ maximum

occupation. With adult gatherings, we can comfortably fit 15 into the living room. Having a limit of only 15 is a definite detraction to group ministry and we have lost attendees when there was not enough room. Since we don't have a church building, we do need to make available space for "other than worship" activities. The consistency of meeting at the manse is a plus, we just need more room.

What we are seeking:

- A large area for a meeting room (app. 40-50 sq. meters)
- A kitchen large enough to support fellowship & meals
- 2-3 bedrooms, (2 bedrooms & space for an office)
- A balcony/patio/rooftop where pastor and family can have a little outdoor space
- A second bathroom/toilet
- Centrally located and close to public transportation (U-bahn)

Your prayers & ideas are appreciated.

*From the VCC Voice
October 21,2009*



HOW YOU CAN CONTRIBUTE

The American and Foreign Christian union (AFCU) supports the American Church in Paris (ACP), the American Church in Berlin (ACB), and the Vienna Community Church (VCC) through grants to help their programs. Gifts to the AFCU help to increase our support of these churches. Contributions may be sent to the American and Foreign Christian Union at AFCU, PO Box 1254, Summerfield, FL 34492.

You may also make gifts to the individual churches. If you wish your gift to be tax deductible in the United States, you must make your dollar check payable to the AFCU at the above address. Put the words "for ACB or ACP or VCC" on the memo line of your check. Your continued support is greatly appreciated.

NEW POSTAL ADDRESS FOR AFCU DONATIONS

We have elected to implement a new post office box for donations, replacing the prior service at the Riverside Drive location in New York City. We had a few unfortunate instances of lost mail last year and determined to have total control within the AFCU Board of mailings to the Treasurer.

The new address is:

American & Foreign Christian Union
PO Box 1254
Summerfield, FL 34492

If you have any questions, write to that address or email me:
Richard E. Bright - Treasurer AFCU
dickbright@prodigy.net

A "Greener" Bridge

Due to increasing mailing and printing costs, and to be more environmentally friendly, the AFCU is making greater use of e-mail. If you wish to receive the Bridge electronically please respond to us at AFCUEmail@afcubridge.org. If not, you will continue to receive the Bridge by regular mail. The newsletter is also available on our web site, www.afcubridge.org.

Thank you, Kathie Eppert, Editor *the Bridge*



Editor

Katherine Eppert
AFCUEditor@afcubridge.org

American & Foreign Christian Union
PO Box 1254
Summerfield, FL 34492
www.afcubridge.org

AFCU President

Gregg Foster
AFCUPresident@afcubridge.org

American Church in Berlin

Leberstrasse 7
10829 Berlin-Schöneberg, Germany
american.church@berlin.de
www.americanchurchberlin.de

American Church in Paris

65, quai d'Orsay
75007, Paris, France
secretary@acparis.org
www.acparis.org

Vienna Community Church

Dorotheergasse 16
A-1010, Vienna, Austria
vccoffice@chello.at
www.viennacommunitychurch.com

What have you done for Karen lately? See her article pg 5

The Bridge Deadlines

March 1, July 1, November 1

DONATION INFORMATION

I PREFER THAT MY DONATION BENEFIT:

AFCU General Fund ___% American Church of Berlin ___% American Church in Paris ___% Vienna Community Church ___%

Unless otherwise designated, your contributions will go to the General Fund from which annual distributions support all of the churches.

AMOUNT \$ _____ Check enclosed: (preferred)

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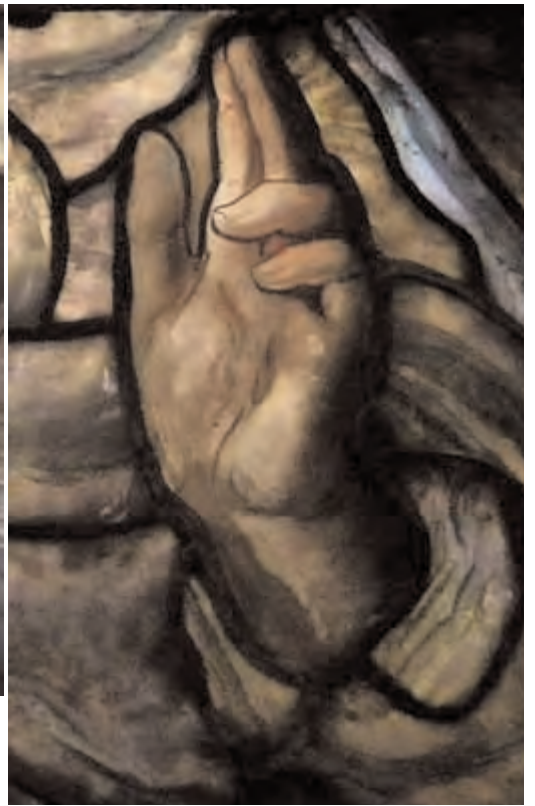
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AFCU Treasurer
PO Box 1254
Summerfield, FL 34492-1254

Your gift is greatly appreciated. Thank You!

11-09

Layout - J Gail Designs







Snack Ladies Gerda, Heike, and Juastine



