



Daveys in France

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God, who has called you into fellowship with his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, is faithful. 1Co 1:9
Dear friends and supporters,

This prayer letter is about a month late but when you read it you'll see why we waited. There's a lot to report ! We'll try to be methodical.

Bordeaux is a beautiful city, especially in summer and especially when it is not raining. But the most beautiful thing about the city is the grace of God at work in all sorts of people.

In the student work just after Easter we had a very good visit from the team from Mission Vacances, with an exhibition on the life and work of Calvin and talks, films and evenings on various themes. Alan especially remembers one man who was adamant that he did not want to come and see any exhibition, that belief in God was a force for evil and it held no interest for him. After a bit of discussion he said goodbye and thought that was the end of that, but ten minutes later he came along to the student centre and had a good conversation with a team member, then with Alan. No doesn't always mean no, does it. The team visit was a great encouragement to us as we share the gospel in the centre of Bordeaux and on campus, and we look forward to further teams, perhaps at a different time of year, more suited to the student academic year.

The international congregation has known a time of great encouragement, too, with our first baptism - that of our Chinese friend A. Everything went very well, there were lots of people at the Château including a good number of Chinese, and very good weather to warm the water in the swimming pool where the baptism was held. A's daughter translated for his testimony. It fell to Alan to conduct the baptism, ably assisted by Ben Griffin. During July and August we have decided to meet every Sunday evening so that our folk can benefit from the fellowship and so that holiday makers can find us and worship with us during the summer weeks.

Three people from the French church were also baptised that day. Two of the people are very involved in the student work, too. D is part of almost everything; student bible studies, English classes, international church and french congregation. She's grown tremendously since arriving in Bordeaux. Another, M, is a chap who came leafleting in the Christmas market and said "just 18 months ago I could never have imagined doing this". Thank God for evidence of his grace at work.



The week following the baptisms was another eventful Sunday, the farewell service for Samy Foucachon who has been pastor here since 2000. Again a packed church with tables in the street for refreshments because the building is too small to contain everyone. The service was also the

occasion to officially welcome Dik Briennen as the new pastor. Please pray for Samy, Carol, Rachelle, Joseph and Christina as they move to the USA for a year of deputation and study. Also pray for Dik and Hetty as they move to Bordeaux. Dik will begin his ministry in August, and they have found a house to rent within 200 yards of the church. Meanwhile in July and the first half of August Alan will be preaching in French in the mornings and in English in the evenings.

We are also encouraged at our friend M, who has just completed a year working with a Friends International team in Cambridge and will spend the next two years working with St Helens, Bishopsgate and on the Cornhill Training Course. He says that France is more and more on his heart. Please pray that his time in Britain will be blessed.

Another area of concern has been how to help the Chinese group in Bordeaux. None of us speak Mandarin ! However there are now three Chinese guys who are all linked in with the international congregation, with varying proficiency in English. One is quite a young Christian and was converted here but is growing fast. Another is the senior figure in the Chinese group and is gifted in hospitality and pastoral care. The third has a good Christian background but only recently arrived in Bordeaux. While Alan was in Britain we prayed that he'd be able to work with the group via these guys and on his return one of them asked Alan to help in preparing a series of studies on John's gospel, so we are going to meet up regularly and work on the studies which will then be conducted with the Chinese group.

Despite a slightly-stronger pound and some very generous gifts our support situation remains fragile, so Alan made one brief visit to Britain in May and will make another in September. May saw just over 1000 miles travelled safely, mostly in Wales this time but with a brief visit to the UFM Ireland conference. At present there are still some mid-week evenings and one weekend free in September. If you think your church may benefit from a visit from Alan please speak to your church leaders and then get in touch. Please pray that God will soon put the financial base for our work back in place.

Pat, Gwilym and Catrin are still in good health. Gwilym struggles with his written French and this impacts on his other subjects, too. We have a young teacher coming to the house to tutor Gwilym but we are also wondering if a change of school would help him. We've submitted his dossier to another school and we're waiting to here from them. Meanwhile his guitar is progressing well, as is Catrin's flute. And they're both going on camp to Tywyn in July, a real answer to prayer.

May God bless you during these summer months.

Thank you for your faithful prayers.

Every blessing,

Alan, Pat, Gwilym & Catrin

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Mr. Phil Harman, 14 Eaton Avenue, Connah's Quay, Flintshire. CH5 4HR

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