



We've never been in this café but we like the look of it !

Daveys in France

Issue 15, May 2008

Alan & Pat Davey
14b Rue Pérès
33600 Pessac
France

alandavey@gmail.com
www.daveys2france.blogspot.com

God ... is rich in mercy - Ephesians 2:4

Dear friends and supporters,

Greetings from a warm and soggy Bordeaux. When it rains it really rains, and when the sun shines it gets quite hot !

Alan's time in Britain was good. He travelled 4000 kilometres (2500 miles ?) in three weeks in his hired Vauxhall Corsa through rain, sunshine and snow, from Inverness to Bath and from Swansea to Whitby. It was a great joy to meet friends old and new, and the only regret was that it was not possible to visit more churches during the available time. Meanwhile, back at the ranch, everything went well. Pat and the children had a good three weeks and if it was good to be in Britain it was even better to come home.

As this was our first "two-yearly church visits" trip, it seems a good time to consider the past two years and the time ahead, so Pat and Alan will set aside some time to talk, think and pray over our time in France so far and think about where we're heading for the next two years or so. We'll then talk it all over with the other UFM folks here in Bordeaux (Fiona Steward, mainly) and also with the church.

However the adjustments have already begun. When Alan got back he found people very motivated to begin ministry in English. This has always been a need and a part of the vision of the church but the usual hindrances exist - mainly the lack of a suitable venue in central Bordeaux. Also we have been conscious of the need for our French to be as fully functional as possible before taking on anything like that. However we have a number of contacts now who really cannot follow a church service in French. Some are going to learn French. Others are not. So after thought, prayer and discussion - last Sunday we held the first service of the English ministry of the church ... in our home. Eight people were present. It coincided with a Sunday School outing so that reduced our numbers by roughly half and took all the children away so we will almost certainly know a dramatic increase in size in just one week ! Preaching in English on Ephesians 1 in the morning and in French on Ephesians 2 in the afternoon had a certain logic, I suppose.

We are hoping to hold an International Carol Service (in English) this year in central Bordeaux. This depends on having a suitable venue. It's not easy. I've been to see someone about a place - the secretary was very positive but I won't get an answer for a week or so.

In the student work exam-time and better weather (!) mean that numbers are reduced for the English Class, but the Thursday Bible Studies remain encouraging and outreach continues by means of the surveys and questionnaires.

In the church things have been encouraging. One feature of the church now is that we have a good proportion of students and people in their twenties and thirties. It's a real sign of hope for the future, though increasingly we have to adapt to being one of the "older couples". Hmm. Another area that has developed is the Chinese work. A group of churches from Paris has been sending workers down to Bordeaux and on the weekend of the 1st June some 15 people are expected from Paris to meet up with the Bordeaux Chinese. That Sunday will also see our friend Sen baptised at the Château in Blaye.

The hunt for a settled meeting place continues as the date for our final Sunday at the Centre Albert Peyriguère draws ever nearer. The need is quite specific - a place suitable or adaptable for public use (fire exits, etc.) that is big enough and cheap enough and preferably in central Bordeaux. Some churches have said that we can use their premises on Sunday afternoons - but they're in the suburbs. Another has pulled out of a suburb (ours, Pessac !) leaving a sort of cinema available to rent, but it's not central Bordeaux and it's expensive. It is hard to express how frustrating this is ! However, God is able and he will guide us as he works out his plan for us.



And family life ? Things are good. The children are well, though Catrin has been seeing a dermatologist who has been removing warts from her fingers with liquid nitrogen. Ouch ! Alan had that done at about her age and almost fainted with the pain. While Alan was in Britain Gwilym went with his class on a short trip to visit Windsor, Oxford, London, Canterbury. Catrin leaves the école primaire this year and begins at collège. But before that we're looking forward to summer holidays visiting family and friends in Britain.

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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