

We hope Pat and Catrin have learnt how to tell the gender sooner and so separate the sexes to prevent further expansion. If not it's guinea-pig kebabs for Christmas lunch.

Gwilym is happy in his new school. In December he has a week of work experience and we are waiting to hear if he has a placement, but generally all is well. Sadly his school timetable this year means he can't continue his football, but his guitar playing is coming on and he played in the same youth service too.

During the summer we had to call off our planned holiday in Normandy, but we were able to spend a couple of days with friends in the Dordogne and to spend half-term in Carcassonne. The weather was wonderful and it did us good to get away and spend time together. It was also good to preach in the church there and strengthen our links with them.

There's a lot of sowing going on. Please pray that God will continue to give the increase !

Thank you for your faithful prayers.

Every blessing,

Alan, Pat, Gwilym & Catrin

To start or stop receiving this prayer letter, or to change your address please either e-mail phil.harman@harpeople.net, or fill in this slip and return it to:

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

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Daveys in France N° 20, November 2009

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He shall come down like showers, upon the fruitful earth and love, joy, hope, like flowers, spring in his path to birth

(James Montgomery's setting of Psalm 72)

Dear friends,

The summer was long, dry and hot but the rainy season has returned to Bordeaux with force. Meanwhile the city is spiritually dry. Here and there life springs up in response to dew from heaven or to scattered showers. Those drops are great, but we long for a good drenching. Please pray with us for times of refreshing that bring new life.

The student work is encouraging. The English classes were very well publicised this year and we had a lot of people sign up. Lots have dropped off since, but the classes are still a decent size. Alan enjoys teaching the beginners but they are suspiciously good. Are they *REALLY* beginners, he wonders. Bible studies and evangelism on the campus and in town are encouraging. Friday has special theme evenings to build relationships. An evangelism workshop is planned for November 22 to encourage the students in their witness. We plan to do some carol-singing and leafleting soon. The best news is that many - maybe most of the people coming to the centre are French ! This is a real answer to your prayers. Please pray now that these people will come to faith ! (www.facasso.org)



Things are good in the French church, too (ere.gironde.free.fr) . The new pastor, Dik, and his family are now well settled in and things are happy and good. We see some new faces and we plan to leaflet the area surrounding the church before Christmas. Alan shares in leading some different groups like the Pessac men, etc. Pat coordinates the Sunday crèche. Alan preaches in Bordeaux-Cenon and in Blaye-Anglade.



Dik's installation service brought people from the church planting committee of the Eglises Réformées Évangéliques and friends from our South-West region and they were very impressed with our building. We had been looking reluctantly for other, larger premises - though we've moved location so many times, it's really good to be settled. However after

their comments we are thinking again and planning how best to use the building we have, and how to buy it and adapt it to maximise the use of space. This may involve knocking down most of the inside walls and major remodelling of the inside. Watch this space. There may be an opportunity soon to get that sledgehammer out of the shed and use it in God's service in Bordeaux ! Over the 9 years of the church's existence we have paid out 120,000 euros in rent. We currently pay 1400€ a month just for the church building. Another 900€ houses Dik and Hetty. Buying the church building would reduce our repayments immediately and of course in 10 to 15 years' time there'd be nothing more to pay.

There are significant decisions to make in the Blaye area, too. One of our church buildings is in very good condition, but it's out in a satellite village. There's a new housing estate across the road but most of the houses are still empty - the effect of the crisis here. Meanwhile our other church building in another village is not fit for use at the moment, and we have no meeting place in the heart of the town, where we need to be.

Meanwhile for the English congregation, meeting regularly through the summer was a great encouragement, with visitors from Britain (thanks !), Holland, Sweden, etc. It was good to find new friends in this way. Now we continue to meet each Sunday evening and we have a nice core group of some 12 - 15 from all over the world, including some French people who come regularly. We are busy planning our Christmas Carol Service for the 12 December. Dik and his family are regulars with us too. Alan is preaching through John's gospel and Ben has just finished Ruth. We need to build relationships so we are considering how to fit in meals together or how to put home groups into the schedule, but meanwhile Pat has a growing group of women who meet up to read, discuss and pray together. At present they are using Jerry Bridges' book, 'Respectable Sins'. Highly recommended ! (www.bordeauxchurch.info)

And the Chinese group? Yes ! For some time Alan met up with S until the pressures of his studies grew too much. Meanwhile A and Y continue to organise and to lead the group and Alan built a website in Mandarin and French to publicise the group. *With help, of course !* In order to try and coordinate all that's going on in the two congregations, the student work and the Chinese group we all meet up once a month to plan and pray. Thank God for our unity and love, and please pray that we will continue to commend the God of grace, even when our diaries overheat ! One Chinese girl is battling with depression and this reminds us of the very real struggles the Chinese have with the language, the culture and homesickness. (sites.google.com/site/gccbordeaux)

For Alan there's been more travels. A two-week trip to Britain was a real blessing with visits to new churches, and a France weekend shared with Fiona at Gloucester. Alan also attended a meeting of the Association of Evangelists - it was a privilege to breathe the same air as these people! And thanks to your generosity and to Roger Carswell's eye for a bargain Alan was able to stuff 24 Bibles into his bags for the English services. We've LONGED to have Bibles for so long, as you know. You can get poor quality cheap ones sent from the USA but carriage is very expensive. We planned to get some next year when we return to Britain with the car, and we probably still will, but these little ones are great for now !

Another highlight in Britain was to meet up with students who hope to come and work with us in Bordeaux next year as part of their degree studies in French. A real encouragement ! This year's student, Liz, has brought special freshness and vigour to the work as well as sharing with us the joy of her engagement - to a super young guy from Paris.

Other trips have included the annual Pastors' conference in the Cévennes, this year considering Muslim evangelism. It was a great time of relationship building, too. Soon Alan is off to the meeting of church officers from the South-West, which is another three-hour journey by car. France is very big !

Family life continues well. Pat is happy, healthy and busy with her involvement in the student work as well as the English group and the French church, and generally trying to keep everyone sane. She normally succeeds relatively well.

Catrin is happy in school with some good friends. Her flute playing continues to progress and she played for a youth service recently. She also enjoys her vast and expanding colony of guinea-pigs.