



Spring 2018

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The American and Foreign Christian Union (AFCU) is a US-based 501 (c) (3) organization that supports the American Church in Paris, the American Church in Berlin, and the Vienna Community Church. Focusing primarily on alumni and friends of these churches, the AFCU manages endowment funds to support these churches, stimulates donations to grow these funds, and offers consultation and direct support to assist these churches in their operations. Please visit www.afcubridge.org for more information.

President's Message

Dear Friends in Christ,

I am writing again from the beautiful Rocky Mountains of Colorado. I am always amazed by God's magnificent artistry, now at a time when the mountains are covered in snow.

At this time, as we take account of our blessings of the past year, I am truly thankful to God for your many prayers and support of our churches in Berlin, Paris and Vienna. The work of these churches is not possible without your generosity.



Fellow board members from all over the USA and I are busy preparing for our Annual Board and Development meetings in Tucson, Arizona on April 13-15. We continue to be excited to work with leaders and pastors of our three churches as we focus on ways to support their missions, programs and facilities. We remain thankful for their diligence and wisdom. These churches play a critical role in their communities as is evidenced by their strong attendance at services and programs. In today's Europe, they provide a strong message of Christian fellowship to the immigrant communities as well

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Have you moved recently? Please update your contact information with us by sending an email to

AFCUeditor@afcubridge.org



The Mission of the American and Foreign Christian Union is to support the International, English speaking, ecumenical churches whose ministries bear witness to Jesus Christ. In partnership with our member churches, we will strive to develop and manage a strong financial base to further their programs. We will nurture and strengthen our alumni ties and lend support to the pastors, leadership and members of these churches through our care and prayers.



President's Message, *continued from page 1*

as their traditional English-speaking members.

When I attend services there, I truly believe we are "bringing Christ to the nations". What a blessing we have to proclaim the saving grace of Jesus Christ as we enter the Easter season!

I encourage you to visit these congregations when you travel to Paris, Berlin or Vienna. See what a blessing they are to their communities. Be a Friend by supporting the churches with your prayers and financial support. Remember that when you give through the AFCU, your gifts are tax-deductible in the United States since we are a 501 (c) (3) organization.

Also, if you have a desire to continue serving these churches with your time and talent after returning to your home country, please contact me or another member of the AFCU board. We welcome new members.

"Now may the Lord of peace be with you always in every way." 2nd Thessalonians 3 v.16.

In Christ,



Ted Ziemann

AFCU President

Attention Alumni of the American Church in Paris, the American Church in Berlin and the Vienna Community Church

You are invited to join the AFCU Board at a social evening during the upcoming Spring Board Meeting in Arizona. It's a great chance to meet the board members and swap memories with fellow alumni over an informal dinner and drinks!

April 14th, 2018 - Oro Valley Arizona

Meet the AFCU Board at Resurrection Lutheran Church at 4:30 PM. We will attend church together at 5:00 PM and then proceed to an informal dinner and drinks hosted by board members Ken and Marcia Rislov at their home. Overnight reservations available at Marriott Fairfield Inn and Suites, Oro Valley, AZ at AFCU rate of \$109/night (plus tax).

For more information or RSVP, contact Ken Rislov at 1-520-744-8781, or klrislov@yahoo.com.

We look forward to seeing you in Arizona! But don't worry, if you can't make this one, you can join us at the next meeting in October in the North East. Contact kris@richardson.net if you would like to hear more about our alumni gatherings.



The Heritage Society

The AFCU Heritage Society was founded 17 years ago to encourage supporters of our partner churches (the American Church in Paris, the American Church in Berlin, or the Vienna Community Church) to include them in their estate plans. To date we can report that over 50 individuals have reported they have made plans to support one or more of these churches in their estate plan.

For many, the contribution of a gift as part of an estate plan represents a significant decision on the part of the donor. This gift may represent many years of a lifetime of savings on the part of the donor. The care used by donors to accumulate these funds is very much appreciated and is followed on by investment care by the AFCU.

Separate endowment funds have been set up to support each of our partner churches. These receive professional management at U. S. Trust. Furthermore, the AFCU Board has several experienced financial professionals who oversee the activities of U. S. Trust. In this way we try to insure that AFCU funds are being prudently managed.

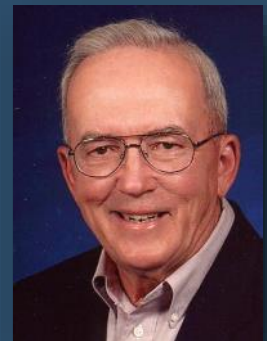
How are people donating to the AFCU in their estate plan? As you probably know there are many

vehicles that are used when planning for an estate distribution. Examples include direct bequests from wills or trusts, donations from retirement plan assets, charitable gift annuities, charitable lead trusts, life insurance policies, and many other possibilities.

For the most part donors have indicated that their bequests to the AFCU will be specific amounts as stated in their will. A few have indicated their bequest will be a percentage of their IRA Retirement account. Donor advised funds and life insurance policies are also represented.

If you would like more information or to discuss the Heritage Society further, please contact me at afcuheritage@afcubridge.org.

Robert DeSuryea
Heritage Society



2017 AFCU Donors

The American and Foreign Christian Union would like to thank all of those who made donations in support of our ministries during 2017. Your support is

valuable to the ministries we serve: The American Church in Paris, the American Church in Berlin, and the Vienna Community Church.

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During January 2018 donor statements were mailed to all those for whom we have current addresses. If you made a contribution during 2017 and your name does not appear on the above list and/or you have not received a year end giving statement, kindly contact the Finance Secretary Russ McNaughton at russmacton@aol.com.

Welcome to a New AFCU Board Member

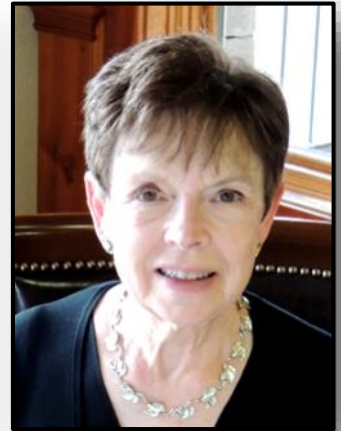
Betty Ziemann

Betty has been the “trailing spouse” throughout her husband’s many corporate transfers. Each new location brought opportunities for serving both at church and in their children’s school system. Now calling Colorado her permanent home, she currently serves on the Board of the Castle Pines Village Garden Club as Programs Co-Chair, originator of the Mentor Program for the Castle Pines Village Garden Club and continues chairing that committee, is a committee member of Membership/Reciprocity in her local chapter for P.E.O., a international sisterhood which promotes education for women, and serves on the Altar Guild at Bethany Lutheran Church.

Past positions held were: Board member of Bethany Lutheran Church Early Childhood Preschool, Chair of Membership/Reciprocity for her P.E.O. Chapter in Castle Rock, and one of the original members of the Douglas County, CO, Reciprocity for P.E.O. Betty was a member of the American Church in Paris where she served on the Board and was secretary/treasurer for Women of the American Church.

Together, Betty and her husband Ted have raised a son and two daughters, and are now doting grandparents to 3 granddaughters and 3 grandsons.

She has a degree in Elementary Education from the University of Iowa with an emphasis in Child Development.



Sanctuary during Fred Gramann's
Gala ACP Farewell Celebration

The Paris Connection



www.acparis.org

Spring, 2018

Dear Members and Friends of the AFCU,

In between snowfalls, we have hints of Easter with the first daffodils blooming on the quai. I can hardly believe we are already in the middle of our Lenten journey. It was a painful beginning to Lent this year, with the tragic school shooting in Florida and the death of one of the great pillars of the ACP, Charles Mitchelmore, on Wednesday, February 14th.



The memorial on Saturday, February 17th in the sanctuary was an extraordinary service of worship and Fred and the choir and other soloists and musicians put together a fitting tribute to

Charles. Rebecca Brite was kind enough to write a summary article about the service for your consideration as a part of this Bridge edition. It was encouraging to see the ACP family rally to show our sympathy, love and support for Laurana and their children who flew in from the USA.

Many of you knew Charles. We all will miss him. He was a member of the ACP, staunch supporter of the music program, and beloved husband of Laurana who has been the piano accompanist to the choir, for the past 42 years. There is already talk of a Memorial Concert for the larger community. Do keep Laurana and her family in your prayers.

Please also pray for Victor Greene who is scheduled to arrive March 13th and begin his call to serve as our new pastor for the Youth and Young Adults ministries. We have been waiting and praying and finally the day is coming when he will come and join our church family.

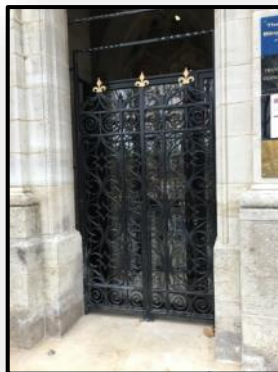
On Palm Sunday we will be having our Annual

Congregational meeting to receive annual ministry and financial reports and vote to approve the operating budget for 2018. This will be a day

when we have one joint worship service at 11:30 and enjoy some food together to sustain us as we meet and faithfully meet to review how God has been at work, and to dream, discuss, discern and decide on how God is calling us forward in the coming year. You will also be delighted to know that we are planning a ribbon-cutting ceremony the same morning to

celebrate (finally!) the inaugural use of the universal access lift.

Finally, it's not a joke that Easter is on April Fool's Day. If you're going to be in Paris, come join us as we celebrate the resurrection on April 1st. And if you'll be around, plan to join us for all of the special services during Holy Week: Monday through Wednesday at 19:00 we will be enjoying what has become a favorite tradition of an adapted version of the Holden Evening Prayer service around communion. On Maundy Thursday



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Pastor Herr, *continued from page 6*

at 20:00 we will remember Jesus' greatest commandment, and on Good Friday we will share in a traditional Tenebrae service. Easter celebrations will be held at 7:15 (sunrise service on the quai) before enjoying our annual Easter breakfast; 9:00 & 11:00 traditional communion; and 13:30 contemporary communion.

I look forward to the AFCU annual Board Meeting in Tucson. In the meantime, amidst the ups and downs, the losses and griefs of life, may God's Spirit continue to break forth into our lives anew, and lead us through this season of wilderness wandering and perplexing pilgrimage. May we look to our Lord who alone has faithfully gone the way of the Cross, and who meets us, *very much alive*, full of grace and truth, and offers us a sure and certain hope of new life!

In Christ,



Rev. Dr. Scott Herr, American Church in Paris

Seeking the Presence of God: A Pilgrimage to Chartres

On Tuesday, October 31, eight women from ACP began a five-day journey walking from the Tour de Saint Jacques in Paris to the Cathedral Notre Dame of Chartres, following the Chemin de Saint Jacques de Compostelle. Our small group was made up of diverse individuals: the hopeful newcomer, the reluctant comedian, the joy-filled millennial, the enthusiastic administrator, the uninhibited entrepreneur, the wise matriarch, the observant consultant and the steadfast team player. Different backgrounds yet all wanting to step out of the busyness of life and make space to seek God's presence.

The 103 km route, which takes a train only an hour to complete, took us through beautiful villages,



newly plowed fields, forests, parks, along slow meandering rivers, and wooded areas full of

pheasant. The first day was a challenge. It seemed an eternity before we could shed the crowds and noise, the hard pavement and roads of Paris. And maybe it was difficult to shed the thoughts of things we had left undone or worries we normally carry on our backs.

The second day was enjoyable, sharing stories about our lives, joking about "life in the forest"

among other things, and getting acclimated to the pace of the group. But we all sensed something more challenging on the third day. We each found ourselves straining in different ways. For some it was the physical toll of blistered toes and aching

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Seeking the Presence of God, *continued from page 7*

muscles. For others it was more relational; living in close quarters exposed parts of ourselves that we would have possibly preferred to keep hidden: we were being, rather than seeming. We dragged ourselves into Rambouillet, putting a bit of distance between ourselves as we walked. Our dinner together was somber and our shared time in the evening, maybe more guarded. I went to bed wondering what tomorrow would hold.

We were all thankful for the shorter distance of day four. Heading for Epernon, the sun was shining on the most spectacular views of nature. We stopped for lunch beside a beautiful pond filled with ducks, and reflecting the old church in the distance. Initially we began to divide ourselves into two groups. But as I watched, we all came back together, squishing ourselves around a small picnic table, sharing our food and laughing together. It's hard to resist an inviting table when Jesus is the host!

On our final day's walk, the longest distance we'd cover, there was a hopeful anticipation that pushed

us along through the rain and headwinds. I think there was a touch of sadness as well; our time together

was drawing to a close. As the kilometers passed by and we started seeing the spires of Chartres Cathedral in the distance, our pace quickened and the laughter increased. We just needed to climb that final hill, because the church is always built on

the summit! Our destination was only a hundred meters away. And then, we had arrived!

Before entering the Cathedral we embraced one another, to offer those who had traveled with us a thank you and a congratulations. We had a celebratory dinner that night, knowing that the following day we would return to Paris. We woke up Sunday to a beautiful sunrise over Chartres. We had breakfast together and moved into a time of quiet, individual

reflection as we walked the labyrinth. Then we gathered as the body of Christ and celebrated communion, remembering that Christ wants to accompany us on the journey, we just need to take the time to invite him to join us.

While it was a shared pilgrimage, it was also very much an individual journey. We will each need to spend time unpacking all that we experienced. Each day offered its lessons of the beauty of nature, the peace of silence, the weariness of bodies, the determination of the will but most importantly, the wonderful grace and love of the Father who met each of us in our devotions, quiet moments and our group interactions.

I'm glad I didn't take the fast train to Chartres. I don't want to race to the next goal for the day, for the week, for the month, for the year. I'd like to slow down and focus on the journey itself. It really is all about the journey and Christ wants to be present with each step I take.

Kim Herr, ACP



Charles Hugh Mitchelmore

Charles Mitchelmore, an active member of ACP for more than 40 years, died on 14 February from leukemia, surrounded by his wife, Laurana, and children, Vivian LeWine, Jennifer Trimble and Jonathan Mitchelmore.

Charles was born in Spokane, WA in 1937, and grew up in Oregon. His father, grandfather and great-grandfather had been Presbyterian ministers, but it was journalism that called to Charles: he began his career at age 13, writing sports articles for The North Bend News. In 1958, he graduated Phi Beta Kappa from the University of Oregon with a BA in journalism and experience as editor of the school newspaper, The Emerald.

Charles then worked as an aide for Senator Richard Neuberger in Washington, DC, and served in the US Air Force Reserve in 1959-62. The bulk of his career was as a reporter, columnist and foreign correspondent for the Associated Press, The New York Times, Newsweek, Reuters and other outlets. He spent most of his adult life in Europe, living in London, Milan, Vienna and Paris, and traveling widely. In 1971, he earned a master's degree with honors in modern history at Cambridge University. From 1980 until his retirement in 2002, he worked at the International Herald Tribune in Paris, much of that time as a senior editor.

In Vienna in 1969 he met Laurana Rice Trimble, a pianist, at the Vienna Community Church. They married in 1970, with Charles becoming a loving stepfather to her daughters, Vivian and Jennifer. They spent 1975-76 in California, as Charles had won a National Endowment for the Humanities Professional Journalism Fellowship at Stanford University. In 1976, they moved to Paris, and their son, Jonathan, was born.

Charles was a great music lover, having played clarinet

in a Dixieland jazz band as a teenager and later singing bass in the ACP Adult Choir, where Laurana has long served as accompanist.

At Charles's request, the memorial service at ACP on 17 February consisted mostly scripture readings and music. In his remarks on Charles's life, Pastor Scott Herr noted what a devastating loss Charles's death was not only for his family but for the whole ACP community. His service to the church included not only singing in the choir but also serving on Council and a Senior Pastor Search Committee, and donating his mellifluous speaking voice to more than one ACP radio show.

"He loved his family first and most, but Charles cared deeply about people. He made friends easily, and regularly put others before himself," Scott said. "... He had a strong intuition, even psychic ability that translated into anticipation of others' needs. ... He took a special delight in the young and up-and-coming singers, musicians and opera performers and was a natural mentor, encourager and supporter of artists."

In his concluding comments, Scott noted that Charles had waited until his whole family was together before "slipping into the arms of God."

"And with characteristic subtlety, of all days, he chose the unique mashup of Valentine's Day and Ash Wednesday to bid farewell. It's as if his last editorial comment on life was this: *Death is inevitable, but love will conquer all.*"

Adapted from the biography provided by the Mitchelmore family and from Pastor Scott Herr's remarks at the memorial service.

Rebecca Brite, ACP



www.americanchurchberlin.de



DYING!

Season toward the Cross and its brutal crucifixion and death of Jesus, what kind of thoughts and feelings run through your heart, mind and soul? A hymn that is new to me has captured my heart, mind and soul. It is **Seed that in the Earth is dying** by Svein Ellingsen (#330 in ELW). I share it as a meditation for each of us as we journey during this Lenten Season.

Seed that in earth is dying grows into ears of grain.

Grapes that are crushed in the vessel turn into golden wine.

God, through this mystery grant us faith in our deepest darkness, life in our night and death.

We were baptized in Jesus, into his death and grave,

To resurrection's promise: praise and eternal life.

Heaven's own praises begin here where you yourself are near us,

Deep in our night and death.

Seed that in earth is dying rises to bear much fruit.

Christ, as we meet at your table,

Praise and eternal life. Heaven's own praises begin here!

Unceasing praise of the ages rises from night and death.

Seed that is dying grows; grapes that are crushed turn into golden

wine – God in this mystery grants us faith in our deepest darkness, life in our night and death! I find this to be a profound paradox!

What recurring anxiety, unkind word, cold shoulder, angry outrage, frightening experience, abusive behavior, shattered relationship or dishonest word are you ready to let die? Are you willing to let God grant you faith in this deepest darkness that will transform your life? Are you willing to let God grant you faith to give life with His love and service to other people – even your enemy?

“For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it.” (Mark 8:35)

In this Lenten journey to the Cross, let us build Godly relationships by sowing seeds of grace with honesty and integrity. Then pray for rain!

Blessings in Hope,

Pastor Ben

An Internship Project of Dwelling and Discernment

It's no secret—the American Church in Berlin is in a time of transition. In the first chapter of Mark, we hear how, immediately following his baptism, the Holy Spirit drove Jesus out into the wilderness to dwell among the devils, beasts, and angels (1:9-15). This was an important time of transition and discernment for Jesus as he prayed and fasted, preparing for his earthly ministry.

As I listened to the congregation during my first few months of internship it became apparent to me that ACB is in a time of wilderness, tempted by the devils of despair and defeat, dwelling with the beasts of finance, property, and mission discernment, and waited on by the angels of sacraments, volunteer ministries, and supportive partners. On the other side of this wilderness lies the question, how can ACB partner faithfully with God in God's ministry to the world? As a student at Luther Seminary, I am invited to launch an internship project that engages a need in the congregation. ACB, it seems to me, needs to dwell in the wilderness with prayerful, reflective, and guided discernment.

My internship project is titled, "Listening to God and Neighbor: Dwelling in the Word with the American Church in Berlin." The project consists of two components. The first component is a book study with church leadership. Together we are reading Patrick Keifert's *We Are Here Now*, a resource for developing missional churches who seek to discern ways they can partner with their local communities to participate in God's ministry to the world. Keifert makes the obvious, yet profound point that congregations must start from where they are; yet many congregations struggle to be honest about current circumstances. Keifert invites readers, then, to "draw an X on the map," to speak honestly and openly about present circumstances. Together, through this book study, we are learning to draw Xs on the map so that we might better discern the future to which God calls us.

The second component of the project is a spiritual practice called Dwelling in the Word. I am teaching the congregation this practice and encouraging all

committee chairs to start their meetings with this twenty-to-thirty-minute time of reflection. In Dwelling in the Word, a leader opens in prayer and then reads through a Bible passage twice, allowing time for reflection between readings, and inviting people to listen for one thing that stands out to them. Practitioners are invited to dwell in the same passage of scripture, Luke 10:1-12, weekly for at least a whole year. After reading the passage, the leader then invites everyone in the group to partner up with a "reasonably friendly looking stranger," someone they've not partnered with before. Partners then share with each other that one thing that stood out to them. But there's a catch! Individuals must listen closely to their partners because it is their responsibility to report back to the larger group what their *partner* said. After all have reported on their partner's observations, the time of dwelling then ends with a brief discussion of the question: "In light of what you heard, what do you believe God is calling us to today?"

Through the book study and Dwelling in the Word, my goals for this internship project are: (1) ACB leadership will engage in serious self-reflection, laying the groundwork for future ministry with a new permanent pastor; (2) ACB will develop better active listening skills toward God and neighbor, fostering clearer communication throughout the congregation; and (3) ACB will better understand their role in God's ministry to Berlin and the world.

It is true that, like Jesus, ACB is dwelling in the wilderness with the devils, beasts, and angels. But the good news for us, and for all those who partner with God in God's ministry, is that Christ has gone before us into the wilderness and Christ dwells there with us now. And, as we take time to dwell prayerfully and faithfully in this season of wilderness, Christ will lead us out and into a new season of ministry in the kingdom of God right here in the heart of Berlin!

Jim Viotale, Pastoral Intern
American Church in Berlin



Jim, Isabel and baby Ezra



Worship Café

The Vienna Connection



www.viennacommunitychurch.com

Dear Friends at AFCU,

We have wonderful news to share! By the grace of God, the Vienna Community Church is no longer a church that is trying to survive and maintain its membership, but with the help of the Holy Spirit, we have become a growing, flourishing and attractive congregation in Vienna!

We are regularly visited by many English speaking friends and families and we frequently welcome new members as well! Our Sunday School is growing so rapidly that we have needed to start a second class for our older children. Our Music Ministry now includes a sparkling Praise Band

and an expanding Choir! Our Prayer Chain is actively keeping all of us and our families in its prayers. We now have Bible Studies for all age groups, an advanced Bible+ gathering, countless children, young adults programs, a new, outreach oriented cultural event series and so on. Most recently we reached a Sunday worship attendance of over 100 people!

What is this if not a miracle? God is great, God is good and *"if God is for us, who can be against us?"* (Romans 8:31) The majority of our members want to see our congregation grow, are happy with what we do as we set new goals and new priorities to help the church get to where God wants us to be. *"Soli Deo Gloria!"*

However, we just recently realized, that if we want to continue our godly progress, it is vital for us to unite for one faithful goal: to give the Lord a *"blank check"* for our future! We must turn to the Lord for guidance and grace and our faithfulness is not about our dreams and hopes but about obedience and trust in God. There is a wonderful time waiting for us if we all stay together, serve together and strongly believe in the power of the Holy Spirit upon our beloved church in Vienna!

What is our next step on this road? We decided, that we would like to sign a humanly unfair-looking contract with God and give Him back the power, obey His will; giving up our own power, our own territory, our own comfort zone, our ideas, plans, dreams, imaginations about the church, our decisions, our own importance and pretty much everything in order to have God on our side! This is our new contract, this is our *"blank check"* to the Lord!

Some people have to have everything figured out before they will step into a new situation or a new contract with somebody else. They have to know every detail, have every base covered, have the whole thing mapped out. But God doesn't operate that way.

In 1 Corinthians 2:9-10 we read: *"However, as it is written: 'What no eye has seen, what no ear has heard, and what no human mind has conceived' - the things God has prepared for those who love him*

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Vienna Connection, *continued from page 13*

- these are the things God has revealed to us by his Spirit. The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God."

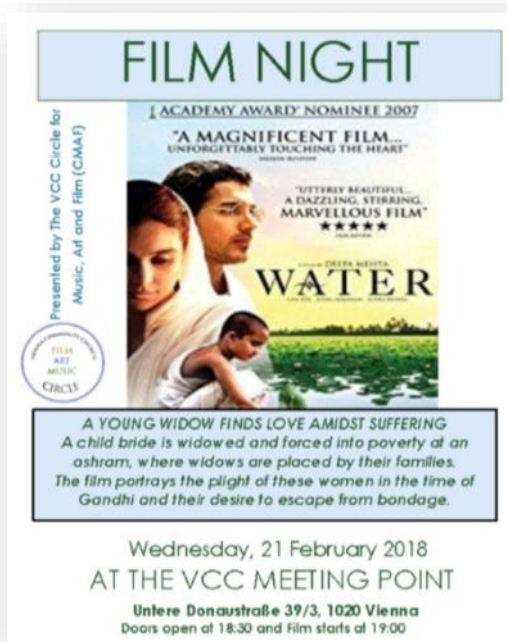
Do we want God to take care of us? A new future has already been given to us with the purpose of spreading the good news in the city of Vienna, helping those who are in need, and moving together in a new direction! I believe that with God's help we can enter into this new life and see what the Lord has prepared and done for us.

All that we have to do is to believe in Him, obey Him, love Him and each other and keep the "*blank check*" ready that we have already signed with Him!

Thank you all of your faithfulness and loving care for the Vienna Community Church. Please keep our church family, our life and our new commitment in your constant prayers as we move forward under the protection of the Lord!

Blessings,

Pastor **Gábor**



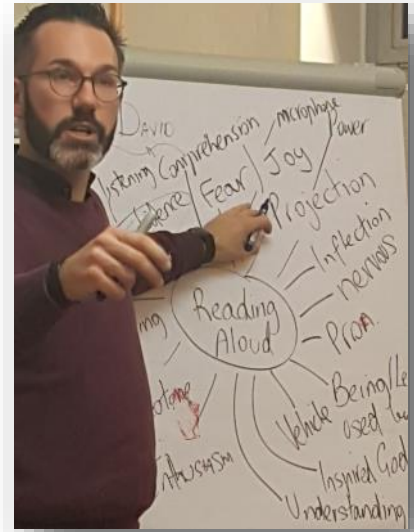
The VCC Circle of Music, Art and Film (CMAF) is an outreach initiative by VCC members Maurine Mellinger-Deroy and Mickela Moore. It is intended to be a meeting point for like minds within and outside of the VCC to enjoy music, art and film in a relaxed environment, encourage fellowship and friendships, and to introduce the VCC to the outside community by asking people to bring friends. Our first programme was a fascinating view about the myths and truths of Mozart's life as presented in the award winning film, *Amadeus*. Prentiss Dunn, former VCC Choir Director and an ordained Anglican priest was our guest speaker. Since then, we have had Film Nights of art house films on topics that have some spiritual or moral message, such as redemption and courage. Our upcoming program this year includes get togethers on a photographic journey of the Galapagos, lecture on Victorian mysteries, such as Agatha Christie, Old Testament music, and an architectural tour of important religious buildings in Vienna.

Mickela Moore

Bible Study

Studying the Bible together is a wonderful thing, and we are blessed to have numerous opportunities to do so in the Vienna Community Church, from the biweekly College & Career Bible studies led by Francesca Lim, to the monthly Adult Bible Study on Romans led by Pastor Gábor, to the Women's Bible Study led by Marie-Thérèse Hartwig. And let's not forget the children, with our new Sunday School coordinated by Edson Dorneles providing exciting new study opportunities for our older kids. Our monthly Bible+ meetings extend this with scientific and cultural topics relating to the broader context of Christian faith; past meetings have covered the history of science, Christian art, the poetry of T.S. Eliot, psychotherapy and faith, thinkers such as Boethius and Augustine, and workshops on reading the Bible more confidently. Coming up are evenings devoted to Maximus the Confessor and the music of King David.

David Nolland



Sunday School

The Sunday School has grown over the fall that for our Christmas pageant we had 22 children participating! We now also have a few additional teachers, so that we are able to now offer nursery, one group for the children aged 3-7 and one for those aged 8-12. We are also enjoying more singing with the children; we are lucky to have Chanda Rule and Cassandra McConnell leading the music. This has made us enthusiastic to start

practicing for our Easter service, when our tradition is for the children to decorate a "floral cross" that stands by the altar. We then will sing and praise God for this special day!

Linda Bednar

Vienna Connection, *continued from page 15*

C&C

At C&C, we endeavor to create an environment where students, expats and professionals working and living in Vienna can build friendships and ask probing questions about God. We meet every Thursday evening and alternate between Bible Study and dinner for fellowship. We have recently finished our studies on



Ezekiel and the Gospel of John, and are currently working through the book of Acts. In our Bible Study sessions, open discussions and debates are very much welcomed, in humble recognition that no matter where we are in our faith journey, God can use anyone of us as instruments to encourage, teach and support one another. In our times of fellowship, we exchange stories and prayer needs, cultivate friendships and build trust, following the example of Jesus in learning to love one another. Our group has since grown in numbers, from an average of 4 people to an average of 6-8 each week. Recognizing the transient nature of our group, as people come and leave Vienna, we trust that our members will continue to impact their own communities as they return to their home countries. We praise God for leading this group, and we pray that God will continue to use us to reach others with His love.

Francesca Lim



VCC Praise Band

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