



## March News January 2012

First of all we want to wish each and every one of you a very Happy New Year ! May God bless you and keep you in the coming twelve months ! Grace and peace be with you!



As we look back over the past 12 months there are many highlights. The above photo of the guests and team members on our second ALPHA course in Sombernon is one of these. To be involved in presenting the good news of Jesus Christ to French men and women in cooperation with our Catholic brothers and sisters is an incredible joy and a wonderful answer to prayer! It has been fantastic to see people coming along to these sessions which are both fun and yet also open up a space for exploration and discovery of the most important aspects of human life – “Does life have any meaning, if so what?”, “Did Jesus really exist, if so who was he and how can he be significant for me today?” Seeing our guests exploring these questions, discovering what their own beliefs are and finding out how these relate to the Christian faith has been amazing! It has been wonderful to see many of them start to call themselves ‘Christian’ for the first time!



Along with ministry highlights, there have also been family highlights. Here we are in Canada visiting Stephen’s sister Sarah and her husband Glen and their family. Sarah and Glen kindly paid for us to visit them so that we could be there as a surprise for Stephen’s mom’s 70<sup>th</sup> birthday! A wonderful surprise for Mom and a great opportunity for us to get to



know our nephews and nieces and discover their life and ministry in Canada.

Another great experience was a trip to Paris where we accompanied our friends Gordon and June Bell, as a celebratory trip for Gordon's 60<sup>th</sup> birthday. We had a great time doing all the tourist sights – see us here at L'Arc de Triomphe et la Tour Eiffel - and generally experiencing the wonders of the beautiful city of Paris. It was great to visit Sacré Coeur and discover that this year they are celebrating 125 years of unbroken prayer! Gordon also helped us appreciate some of the wonders of French Impressionism as he shared his passion with us as we visited the Musée d'Orsay – brilliant!



This year we have also really enjoyed developing our relationship with our parish priest Father Yves Grosjean. We really feel spiritually close to him and share the same vision for evangelism and discipleship. He invited us to visit him as he did his yearly health spa. So we went to Bourbonne les Bains – a town renowned for its hot thermal springs – and Yves paid for us to do an introductory spa session. So we were alternately liberally covered with hot mud and plunged into bubbling baths! Great fun!

As for 2012 we face many challenges. For the boys the coming year is one of important exams. Caleb sits his Baccalaureat exams in June and he needs to work very hard if he is to be successful in these. He also has no idea yet about a direction for 'life after school', so we would appreciate your prayers for him. Benjamin also has important exams that he must pass in order to progress into the final two years of his five year course. If successful then he must find two six-month work placements, these are an essential part of the course but often difficult to find, again your prayers would be appreciated. Joshua also continues his second-year studies at Stirling Uni facing the joys and pressures of student life on campus. He is also responsible for the 'Small Groups' project of the University's Christian Union, so we would appreciate prayer for him too.

Sharon is still getting used to working full-time at Linguaphone and finding it quite tough and tiring. She has had to draw back from some parish work as it is very difficult for her to be home early enough in the evenings. A daily two-hour commute plus a full-on day of 'face to face' English teaching is a lot to cope with!

I hope to finish my Masters dissertation in the early part of this year. This will complete my theological studies and we wait to see what God has lined up for me to do next?! Again, I would appreciate prayer for this to be made clear.

We continue to enjoy our life in France and we look forward to what this coming year will bring. God bless you all!

*Stephen, Sharon, Ben, Josh and Caleb*