



# Prayer in the Center

*News from the Morris family*

Dec. 2008

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In 1988, on his way out to Benin and a new ministry in church planting, Richard had a chance to visit London. Twenty years would flow under the bridge before he would return again. While there he never thought that one day he would work in France, nor come back to London to participate in a conference on church planting in France. Only the Lord could know that! And so it came to be when last October he traveled to London for France-Mission Trust's annual conference to talk on prayer and the occult in France.



The day of the conference, things started poorly as the train from Paris was stuck at the last French train station (Calais) for over 90 minutes. Due to a mechanical problem inside the Channel tunnel, our train wasn't allowed to enter the tunnel. Turns out that Richard only missed the first few minutes of the conference. The rest of the day went extremely well in every way: the hospitality, the discussions, the new friendships that were formed.



From his arrival in France back in 1992 until the London conference, Richard had never taught or preached in English (except while in the US). Having a second occasion just two months later to teach in the language of Shakespeare was unimaginable! The Baptist church in Orléans was looking for a native English speaker to give an evangelistic message at their English-language Christmas carol service. The church was decked out in boughs and illuminated only by candlelight. It was simply gorgeous; something we don't often see in French churches. The church was packed with guests (both native English-speakers and French who like know English). Richard's message was on Isaiah 9.1-7 and the Prince of Peace, an essential message for a world which knows no peace.

While we're talking about Christmas, the Blois church celebrated Christmas for the first time in its new building. Because of sound and size limitations, we actually celebrated Christmas twice! On Dec. 7<sup>th</sup>, we held a concert entitled "If Christmas was told to me" (the French title is actually better). Florence, one of Valérie's friends from Bracieux, accepted our invitation and came with two of her boys. A few days later she told Valérie how much she loved the concert and that her boys thought that Sunday school with us was way better than the catechism in the Catholic church in Bracieux. To which Valérie replied, "now that you know the way, the services are open to all!" We are praying that she start coming as she has already talked about it more than once.

The following Sunday the church celebrated Christmas with a traditional service followed by a meal and games (such as turning a boy into a Christmas tree). We had planned for 65 people, but finally ended up adding more chairs and tables.



While we haven't yet held an inaugural service (and it's not yet on the schedule), what a joy to hold services every Sunday in the building and to proclaim why we are there: "Unto us a Savior is given!"

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Slowly but surely new churches are starting to contact us. Like the Baptist church near Paris that organized last November an youth meeting with 3 other churches on the subject of the occult. The discussion following the teaching was very open and positive and many questions were asked.

Mixing together humor (did you heard about the fake voodoo doll of French President Sarkozy?), true occult experiences and Bible verses, Richard talked about several wide-spread practices in France, such as psychics, soul travel, spiritism and contact with "angels". The number of questions asked showed that there's a real need for clear teaching in this area.



### The kids' corner

#### Timothy

During the fall vacation, Timothy went to a soccer camp held on an island just off the west coast of France. Morning runs on the beach, practices, games; perfect ingredients for making one happy boy! Once home he said his mind was made up: he wants to become a pro goalkeeper. We were not in the least surprised. In the house he's constantly kicked anything that rolls: balloons, balls, paper wads...



#### Jonathan

Jonathan is started to get interested in middle school (he starts next year). However, his main interest continues to be anything Pokemon (and for Tim as well). It's to the point that we had to forbid them from talking Pokemon during the meals!

#### Marie-Anne

The trip to the US left its mark upon Marie-Anne. She's become a big fan of Miley Cyrus/Hannah Montana, the Jonas Brothers and the Cheetah girls.

When she's not doing her homework, she sings and she signs and she sings! She wouldn't have any problems becoming an American teen-ager!

With all the singing, music, the boys' sliding on the floor, headers, passes and juggling different balls, life at the Morris home is definitely full of animation.

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### A new partnership?

France-Mission is not SIM France's only partner mission. A second partnership exists with the Alliance of Interdependent Evangelical Churches (A.E.E.I. in French), a union of 27 churches. Richard recently met with their national council to discuss how, within this partnership, we might be of service. We are in the process of becoming associates, an official status which will allow us to minister to the different churches according to their needs and interests. This coming March, God willing, at the A.E.E.I.'s national convention, Richard will make a presentation of our ministry. This does not mean that we are leaving France-Mission. We will definitely continue to fully work with France-Mission. However, this partnership gives us an incredible opportunity to work with another church group.



## *And how's your support?*



That's a good question. In our last letter we mention that our support situation was serious. In the past two months we've received a number of gifts. Thanks to many generous donors to whom we express our heartfelt thanks, we're out of the danger zone (let's say that we've gone from "red" to "orange"). How much will it take to move from "orange" to "green"? Just **\$430** or **£270** a month (according to current exchange rates).

However, if we don't make our goal by the end of January, we will either take an important reduction in salary and/or Valérie will take on a part-time job (reducing the amount of time available for ministry).

Knowing that the economic situation is difficult, how grateful we are for your gifts. Because of you, we can bring God's blessing and eternal life to many who are bound in darkness. We pray that as you serve alongside us in the Lord's work, our loving Father will bless you and meet your needs.

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### Prayer requests

- For the non-believers who came to the Christmas carol service in Orléans; that they might turn to Jesus and find peace and life.
- For the Holy Spirit's work in the life of our friend Florence in Bracieux.
- That Valérie have occasions to talk more openly about the Lord to several of her friends – Nathalie, Laurence, Véronique B., Véronique Y., Isabelle, Joëlle, Madoka and Marielle.
- Our financial situation and the \$430 or £270 a month needed in new support before the end of January 2009.
- For the ongoing discussions with the A.E.E.I.

May our Lord and Savior bless you abundantly

Richard & Valérie

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### Your support gifts can be sent to:

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Charlotte, NC 28241-7900

SIM-UK  
Wetheringsett Manor  
Wetheringsett  
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Suffolk IP14 5QX

### Agenda

#### December

**28** : Sermon, Rosny-sous-Bois

#### January

**04** : Sermon, Blois

**11** : Sermon, Montreuil-Bellay

**17-18** : Spiritual care  
discipleship counseling training,  
Firminy

**25** : Sermon, Blois

#### February

**08** : Annual members meeting,  
Blois

**15** : Sermon, Blois

**21-22** : Spiritual care training,  
Firminy