

News from Normandy – September 2006

Greetings from Normandy

We have been in to our new home in Dives-sur-Mer for about three months now and have been blessed by so many people giving us things that we need to furnish it. To Simone's delight a Craft shop – a rarity in France – has opened up just at the end of our road.

We have been very busy throughout the last few months: setting up home, preparing the English language services each Sunday, taking part in the French services, organising the Autumn Seminar programme, learning French, getting to know people in the church better, researching contact details for all the churches in Normandy, preparing publicity for the English services and the Seminar programme, helping in practical ways at the church, meeting people around Normandy, answering emails and telephone calls about our work – the list could go on and on... We even had a call from Australia, and it is a great encouragement to know people from so far away are interested in what we are doing, and pray regularly for us and our work.

We are very grateful to all of you who are supporting us in our work for the Lord here in Normandy. Thank you for all your prayers for us. There is so much that needs to be done, so much that could be done, and plenty of opposition too, so please pray for us that we will know the direction and protection of the Lord in all that we do, and that we will see much blessing coming to the people of Normandy.

Philip & Simone Loose

Baptismal Service at Houlgate



The Sunday morning service of Houlgate Evangelical Church on August 27th included the baptism of two ladies in the sea. The church was full for the service, for which we were joined by a French choir of Madagscan origin, who sang several lively songs during the service. After the "indoors" part of the service was finished, the congregation moved outside, first of all to the area at the front of the church, where the Madagascan choir sang another song, before we moved down to the beach just outside the church.

The weather was not ideal, with a strong wind off the sea, dark, cloudy skies and big waves!

Despite that, quite a few people joined us on the beach, coming down to the water's edge to witness the baptisms. Pastor Tom Fohner performed the baptisms, helped by Philip Loose, who went into the sea with him to make sure the same number of ladies came out of the water as went under it! Given the state of the waves, this was not a certainty! There are others in the church who also want to be baptised.



For more information see:
www.normandyvision.org/news300806-2.asp

English Language Services

The summer tourist season is now all but over, and the season of English language services held at Houlgate Evangelical Church (pictured on the right) has also come to an end. The first service was held on Sunday, July 10th at 9 a.m. and the last one on Sunday, September 3rd. Numbers attending have typically been in the 10 to 20 range, with a high percentage being Dutch during July and at the beginning of August.



Contact Details

Philip and Simone Loose's address is:
12 rue de l'Hôtel de Ville,
14160 Dives-sur-Mer
FRANCE
Their phone number is:
+33 (0) 2 31 28 38 04

Don't forget to keep up to date with Normandy Vision's work by regularly visiting their web site at:
www.normandyvision.org

On July 23rd we were joined by a Dutch couple, Geert and Martien van der Veen, who work with a Christian organisation that gives Bibles to and shares their testimony with Jews throughout the world. They spoke at the service about their work, and the openness of many Jewish people to receive their gift of a Bible and to listen to their testimony. It was Martien's grandfather who built the now famous "Hiding Place" in the house of the ten Boom family in Holland during the Nazi occupation of WWII.

Philip Loose led the services from the keyboard, and also preached the sermon, except on Sunday, August 20th, when Pastor Peter Michell from Iden Green Congregational Church in Kent was the guest preacher. For many of the services we benefited from the musical talents of Mary Fohner, the wife of the Pastor of Houlgate Evangelical Church, playing the clarinet, and of Stephen McIlwaine, an Englishman living in Houlgate, playing the guitar.

We received encouraging feedback from several people, which indicated that they were pleased to be able to find a worship service on holiday in a language that they could understand.

For more information see:
www.normandyvision.org/news300806-1.asp

News in Brief

Conference Season

Philip Loose, accompanied by Pastor Tom Fohner from Houlgate, will be visiting the UK during September to attend part of the United Beach Missions' Reunion Weekend on Saturday, September 9th, and then the "Mission in Europe" conference at the John Owen Centre in North London on Monday, September 11th and Tuesday, September 12th. United Beach Missions, through their *Missions Vacances* section, have run a Beach Mission in the summer at Houlgate for many years, though circumstances have prevented them being able to do this for the past two summers.

For more information see:
www.normandyvision.org/news300806-3.asp

Normandy Vision UK Trust

Progress on setting up the Normandy Vision UK Trust registered charity has been put on hold during the summer holiday months, but we are hoping now that September has arrived, and the holiday season is over, we will be able to complete the application and registration process for what is an important step at this stage of the development of the work of Normandy Vision in France.

Autumn Programme of Seminars

The first seminar in the autumn programme organised by Normandy Vision takes place at Houlgate Evangelical Church on Saturday, September 23rd. The speaker for the first seminar is Pastor David Brown from France Mission. He has planted two churches in Nancy, and is currently pastor of a church that he has established at Blanc-Mesnil in the Paris region. For the last three years he has also been the General Secretary of the GBU (Groupes Bibliques Universitaires - Students Christian Unions).



David will be speaking on the subject: "The Emerging Church - the future for the church in France?". In the first of his two expositions, he will be speaking under the title of "What do we make of the Emerging Church movement?", and in the second one, "What approach should we take in order to build the church in France today?".

Advance notices were sent out at the beginning of August to well over 80 churches throughout Normandy, inviting them to come to the seminar. Publicity reminders are due to be sent out at the start of September for the seminar programme and with more details about the first seminar.

Seminar Program

Saturday, September 23rd: Pastor David Brown - "The Emerging Church – the future for the church in France?"

Saturday, October 21st: Dr André Eggen - "The Bible and Science"

Saturday, November 18th: Pastor Xavier Lukins - "The Holy Spirit."

All seminars run from 2.30 to 6.30 p.m.

For more information see:

www.normandyvision.org/news300806-4.asp

Ladies Craft Club (Club de Dames)

The new season begins with a meeting on Saturday afternoon, September 30th at Houlgate Evangelical Church. These meetings are organised by Simone with the help of Mary Fohner, and are a time for ladies, young and old, from within the church and from outside it, to get to know each other better in a pleasant, relaxed atmosphere while enjoying a wide range of Craft activities, and then having a short time thinking about a topic or passage in the Bible together.

Ladies Bible Study

Starting from mid-September, Simone is going to be running a home Bible study group, bringing together English, American and French speakers. This will be not only an opportunity for studying the Bible and praying together, but also to help the French ladies to improve their English. While the study will be primarily in English, French conversation will not be banned!

Students Work Parties

In May and June, various groups of American Christian students, in Normandy to learn French in the summer, came to Houlgate Evangelical Church to help with tasks including: painting fences, cutting hedges and grass, improving the large courtyard area at the front of the church with a new surface of small pebbles. The pictures on the back page show a few of these activities in progress.

La Fête de la Mer

On Saturday morning, August 5th, we were involved in Dives-sur-Mer's annual town "Fête de la Mer". While the town's links with fishing, leisure and sailing were being celebrated, there was also an open-air Christian service by the large marina, organised jointly by the Catholic and Evangelical churches. Philip helped to lead the music for this. He was also asked to do the English version of the Bible readings.

Students Work Parties at Houlgate (see p3)



The Future

How do we expand our work here? A few of the many plans and ideas are:

- A monthly service in English at Houlgate, probably on a Sunday afternoon. We already have people wanting to come to this!
- Work is still being done towards the setting up of a Christian Centre.
- Ways of getting the gospel to the people, e.g. market stall.
- While still working on preparations for the Autumn Seminars, plans must be made for a programme in the new year.
- As our French improves, visiting other churches in Normandy.

Prayer

“Pray without stopping” (1 Thessalonians 5.17)

- As you read through this edition of “News from Normandy”, pray for all the people, meetings and events that are mentioned.
- Pray, too, for the plans and ideas for the future, particularly that a door would be opened wide for the gospel throughout Normandy.
- Pray for discernment and wisdom to know which contacts and possibilities to follow up on, and which to leave aside.
- Pray for Philip and Simone, that they would know the way the Lord is leading, and then be faithful to follow it.

Normandy Vision can be found on the web at www.normandyvision.org.

They can be contacted by email at info@normandyvision.org.

Their UK postal address is 13 Danbury Vale, Danbury, Essex CM3 4LA