

## Happy Chinese New Year 2009

After living in France for so many years, we have almost forgotten how beautiful and magical the Canadian winter is. In fact, Ottawa was frozen and snow covered even before winter had officially arrived. On January 1, New Year's Day, we skated on the Ottawa canal with temperatures of -15° C.

Last June, we left Paris to return to Ottawa for our Home Assignment -- a year to reconnect with our supporting churches across Canada, the U.S., and even as far as New Zealand, and to encourage them on in their faithful support and involvement in our ministry overseas.

### As we look back to 1996, the year we first left Canada to serve in France, we have much to praise God for:

- **Passing the baton**: Since 2002, we transferred the pastoral leadership role and church responsibility in Paris to Pastor Ho, who became the lead pastor of the Paris Chinatown church. Pastor Ho is a home-grown pastor and was recently ordained by the national France C&MA.
- **Sabbatical for national worker**: After serving the Chinatown church for 6 years, Pastor Ho was given a 3 month sabbatical-leave-with-pay in 2008 to study at the Alliance Bible Seminary in Hong Kong. Hopefully this will be a good "role-model" for other churches in Europe to follow in order to encourage their own pastors to receive rest and personal development.
- **Church-planting in 2004**: The St Maur Chinese church, located in the suburbs of Paris, was planted in 2004. Pastor Nguyen, our second home-grown pastor, took leadership of the church with 10 core family groups from the Chinatown mother church. The St Maur church became autonomous in 2007 and its regular attendance is now 35 adults in the Chinese service and 35 adults in the French service.
- **A mission-minded church**: Although small in number, the St Maur church has started pioneer work to minister to North Africans in the St Maur area. To lead this work, the church hired Pastor Belkacem in 2007, as well as to serve as the pastor of the French congregation. Pastor Belkacem is a native of Algeria and fluent in French, English, Arabic, and Kabyle. We believe that an "Arab reaching an Arab" would be an effective model in Paris at this time.
- **Building an autonomous church**: The two Chinese churches (13ème Chinatown & St Maur) are now independent -- both churches are led by national full-time pastors; both are financially sustained; both have paid-off the property mortgage; and both are actively engaged in evangelism and mission work.
- **Québec & France**: It makes sense to see the two "cousins" to be more connected and to support one another. The Chinese church initiated the

“match making” in 2002 when Norbert Clement (the President of the France C&MA) was invited to go to Canada to meet with C&MA leaders in Québec, Montréal, and Ottawa. Likewise, Jean Martin (a ministry leader in Québec) was invited in 2003 to train leaders of the French-speaking second-generation Chinese young adults in Paris. As a result, it paved the way for an IBVIE-like program (a lay discipleship training program from Québec) to be introduced to all the C&MA churches in France.

For the past 6 months in Ottawa, part of our daily routine is to walk our daughters to the street corner to wait for their school bus. How thrilled we were to discover that many of the children at our daughters’ school, and particularly those who wait at the same bus stop, are from various ethnic backgrounds: Afghanistan, Belarus, Ethiopia, India, Iran, Pakistan, Sir Lanka, Somalia, China, etc. What a rich mosaic of international people living in our neighborhood! God has brought the world to our doorstep and we need wisdom and compassion to reach out to them.

Our plan is to return overseas to France in July 2009. Do pray for us as we complete our ministry here in Canada and make preparations for the move.

**We wish you a Happy Chinese Lunar New Year!**  
**Nous vous souhaitons une bonne année bénit et rempli de la paix de notre Seigneur Jesus-Christ!**

新年蒙福!

**Dick & Karin, Ottawa, January 2009**





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