

Chamonix Church

Newsletter No. 5 December 2011

TO ALL ANGLOPHONES LIVING IN OR VISITING CHAMONIX. Welcome to our **fifth** newsletter specifically for you. We are the little church opposite the Chamonix station and would like to let you know what is going on for the community in conjunction with us. You are very welcome - whatever your belief - to join in any of the offered activities or simply to contact the team here if we can be of help to you in any way. We look forward to serving you whilst you are here in Chamonix.

A Message from Isabelle Pierron, the Pasteur.....
Born in a Stable.....

In the light of the wave of anti-begging arrests in French cities such as Paris and Marseilles, and in light of the fact that earth now supports seven billion inhabitants, it is worth thinking about poverty.

Jesus told his disciples when they were amazed at the actions of women pouring perfume on His feet.. (Jn 12): "The poor will always be with you ". Realism or cynicism? Jesus said it that our behaviour serves to generate poverty? Is this fair? We like to think he is talking to other people, and not us necessarily. We like to think that OBVIOUSLY we ourselves do not contribute to poverty. However.....We may think that there are too many of us on earth and it is impossible to feed everyone because resources are limited. But we can be sure that over-consumption is largely responsible. "It's the greed of the consumer rather than the number of people that represents the main environmental challenge of our time" * For example, North America accounts for 5% of humanity but for 17% of its consumption. Population growth slows, consumption increases. The danger to humans is because of over-consumption rather than overpopulation.

"Overconsumption" means that we eat too much, we waste, we throw away, we allow things to go off & we do not share. And certainly we consume portions of the share that could go to others!

Christmas is a good time for these reflections. Indeed, the gospel of Jesus is a path of poverty. Not in the sense of living in poverty, but in the sense of humility, sharing and giving. Re-read Paul in 1 Corinthians 1 vs27....Instead, God chose things the world considers foolish in order to shame those who think they are wise. And he chose things that are powerless to shame those who are powerful."

Jesus' heart is for the poor, the small, the disadvantaged in society. It is not an accident that Jesus was poor. Jesus was born in a stable: Here is the Messiah poor for the poor. One who is the Saviour is not someone who reaches out to disadvantaged people, condescending to the poor, but a Saviour who is one of them.

This is why the Gospel of the birth of Jesus launches two calls to believers as we hear about it: the first is that we are called to help the weakest among us. And the second is that we are called to become poor. Poor in the sense of giving up accumulating things, things that are a superfluous luxury. That is the ideal of poverty, not living in misery, but living simply, gratefully and generously. We are asked not to have too much so as to encroach on what others could have. And to work for a fair distribution of goods. This is a requirement of brotherly love.

We all prepare Christmas meals, buy presents, etc. Maybe this year we could think about reducing costs and giving the little bit that we save for those who need it? There are plenty of associations who help the poor, who could do with our support. In this vein, thanks to all who participate in the EpicerieSociale. This is not a moral issue ... but a fairness issue. By helping the poor with food or clothing, you give meaning to your Christmas with your family! You follow in the footsteps of Christ ... Merry Christmas to you and yours!

Isabelle Pierron

EPICERIE SOCIALE

Last newsletter we mentioned the endeavour happening in conjunction with the church and the Mairie. The Social Grocery Shop or Epicerie Sociale.

This has been an enormous success. Thanks to the help of all the volunteers, those who give time and those who have given goods. As this is an ongoing effort, please carry on popping dry goods into the box outside Isabelles' house.

Important Dates for your diaries....

4 December 2011

All Age English Christmas Service

Taken by the Kids Club children.

10.30am

This is a gift service where we would ask that you consider giving a Christmas financial gift to the church!

10 February 2012

Valentines Fund Raiser

Buffet and Dancing....

Save it in your diaries - venues and times to be confirmed....

There is an Alcoholics Anonymous Meeting in English every Tuesday at 19h, in the Presbetry. Please look on AA International Website for further details, or contact Isabelle Pierron.

Are you worried? Do you need help ?

Would you like to pray with, or be prayed for by others?

Call Barbara Falkiner on 0962542562, Isabelle Pierron on 0450558560

Egliseréformée de France, Pasteur Isabelle Pierron

Téléphone 04 50 55 85 60 - 06 13 05 04 43

24, Passage du Temple, Chamonix, 74400

For information on baptisms, marriage, blessings and funerals.

What is going on?

Mums (Dads, au pairs, grandparents) & Tots Group

Restarts on 8th September 2011 at 10am till noon in the Presbetry at the church. All Welcome - even without a tot!

For information call Barbara Falkiner 0623047810

Kids Club

For children 6-8 years old (CP-CE1)

18h-19h30 first Friday of the month.

For children 9-11 years old

18h-19h30 third Friday of the month.

Please note that in February we will have one combined meeting on the 3rd February 2012.

TeenClub (KT)

For teens 12-15 (College)

10h-14h00 including lunch

26th Nov, 11th Feb, 26th May

Weekend KT 14-15th January

Day in Geneva Saturday 3rd March

Confirmation weekend 5-6th May 2012

Please contact Barbara or Isabelle for further details.

English Bible Studies

First Friday of every month

9h30 for 10h start

Les Bossons, Chamonix

0623047810 for information

English Church Services

1st Sunday of the month 10h30

2nd, 4th, 5th Sunday 18h

(Franch service on 3rd Sunday morning to which all are invited)

CHRISTMAS SERVICES

Christmas Eve - Carols in the Square at 16h00

Followed by bilingual service in the church at 18h00