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together, they grieve together, they process together. So, we decided to hold the event anyway, letting people know that we would not be canceling, but of course we would understand if anyone chose not to participate given the circumstances.

Last night we held our second annual Gala for Ça Vient Du Cœur, and it is was all heart. Much of the church came out for the event. When John and I arrived at 4 pm, there were so many disciples already there serving. Some were setting the tables, others were hanging decorations from the ceiling, others were setting up the stage and sound system and the kitchen crew was in full swing already. Each table had a gorgeous floral and fruit centerpiece set upon fresh linens. French elegance was everywhere. No detail was overlooked. While the mood was initially a bit somber everyone was doing their best to serve and to encourage one another.

At 5 pm, all of students and teens arrived dressed to the guilds, as it was a black tie event. They would be the waitstaff for the evening. As we ran our sound check with the event's entertainment crew, a group of talented professionals, my own heart was finally lifted. This was the right call for the church and our friends. This is what we all needed. We needed to be together.

We enjoyed an evening of sweet fellowship, a delicious meal and fabulous entertainment. Former members were also in attendance and several guests, friends of our members came out in support for the event in a spirit of true French solidarity. This is a strong people, a nation that values its freedom and has fought for it many times. Young and old came together, serving and encouraging one another. New friendships were built. Old ones were restored, and money was raised for the poor and needy. Love was present. God was present. It was a beautiful night.

Your brothers and sisters in the Paris church want to thank you all for your prayers. We have received and continue to receive messages and beautiful expressions of love and encouragement from brothers and sisters all over the world. Thank you. Thank you for standing with us, and with France. Keep praying but not just for us.

Pray for our brothers and sisters in Beirut, and Syria, and other parts of the Middle East. Pray for Europe. Pray for our world and its leaders. Pray and fast. Pray for our own hearts to share the love of God boldly as we should. Pray for greater faith, greater love, and greater compassion for a lost and hurting world. Let us shine for him in the darkness. Love our neighbors. Knock on their doors and check in on them. Invite them over for a meal. Spread kindness and love. Bring food to the office. God will work all things for our good. That is just what he does and who he is. He is good.

Light shines brightest in the darkness. There is a light in the city of Paris right now. It is not the Eiffel Tower. It is something much more glorious. It is the the children of God, the body of Christ, his church.

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• UPCOMING EVENTS

THRIVE Children's Ministry Conference
San Diego, California
November 20-22, 2015

New Year's Conference/Party
Marietta, Georgia USA
December 31 2015 - January 3, 2016

New Year's Eve Masquerade Weekend
Dalla-Ft.Worth, Texas USA
December 31 2015 - January 2, 2016

Johannesburg Church 30th Anniversary
Johannesburg, South Africa
April 29-May 1, 2016

Asian Discipleship Summit
Bali, Indonesia
June 16-19, 2016

North American Discipleship Summit
St. Louis, Missouri, USA
July 7-10, 2016

CONNECTING DISCIPLES IN CHURCHES AROUND THE WORLD

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Paris Church Faithfully Holds Fundraiser for Homeless in Midst of Tragedy

Written by John and Carol McGuirk — Paris, France



Saturday morning, we awoke to a very quiet city. Normally the city is full of sounds as people are going to work, running errands, taking kids to activities, walking their dog, meeting up with friends, or taking in the cultural opportunities that are always around us here in this wonderful city. Yesterday, it was quiet. Strangely quiet. People kept their curtains drawn. The sidewalks were empty. A few people dared to venture out with their shopping carts to pick up some groceries. Some were unaware of the horrific events of the night before until they turned on the morning news or opened up their Facebook account only to find a news feed full of information about the attacks, French flags, and friends from all over the world wanting to know if they were safe. Even Facebook itself wanted to know if we were safe.

John and I sat there together after talking to several brothers in the church by phone and email trying to discern if we should have our Gala. For months the church had been preparing to celebrate the accomplishments of our benevolent organization called Ça Vient Du Cœur, which means, "It comes from the heart." Our brothers and sisters were doing all the cooking, decorating and entertainment, for this fundraising event, to help feed the homeless.

President Hollande had declared a sate of emergency the night before. All public events in the city were cancelled, and all major tourist cites were closed. Disneyland was closed. We had already heard from our Sunday morning location that we would not be able to meet for our regular worship service. France was and is in a state of official mourning for three days.

The church however wanted to meet. The family of God wanted to be together. That's what families do during tragedies, they spend time

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