

For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the LORD, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.

At the beginning of February, Janette and I had the privilege of representing Agapé France at the 50-year anniversary of Agapé UK. Janette started with Agapé as a student. The conference gave her the opportunity to meet old friends : Maggie who disciplined her for a couple of years and who introduced us, as well as Chris and Steve, the Campus team leaders in Birmingham at the time, with whom she spent many hours in their home. They had a real gift for hospitality which she learnt from them. One thing that impacted us over the



weekend was to hear the story of the first group that started the movement in the 70's. Bill Bright challenged 50 Americans to take a boat and start a ministry there. It was their obedience to God that struck us. Ten of them came to the celebration as well as some of the disciples they'd made. What a joy to see how the ministry has grown in Britain !

Annual French staff conference



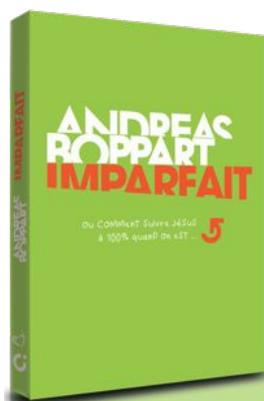
Every February the whole staff team of Agapé France gather for a time of teaching, fellowship and celebration. This year 120 of us, including children and a few friends of the ministry, came together in the Ardèche around the theme *Emotional Intelligence*. As speakers we hosted Barry & Deedee Rush, who lead this workshop in various places throughout the world, usually in a secular context. Though the subject sounds a bit philosophical, it is actually quite helpful to all of us in ministry. The basic idea is for us to master our emotions rather than letting them control us which leads to wiser decision-making, better understanding and relationships with others, better stress management,

and the list goes on. Emotional intelligence is a hugely popular subject at the moment, which is an opportunity for us to share biblical content and talk about Christ with non-believers. Because Barry and Deedee don't speak French, I helped with some of the translation like last October which, as always, was great fun.



More translation

Recently I did some written translation work – a bit more unusual for me. Along with my colleague Katia, we re-read and revised a draft translation in French of the book *Unfinished, life as an ordinary Jesus-follower*, by Andreas Boppert (aka "Boppi"). The author is the director of our ministry in Switzerland and he writes about his struggles as an imperfect or unfinished person in a close relationship with God. Boppi gets up to some real adventures in Africa and Asia, seeing God work in amazing ways – not because Boppi is some sort of spiritual giant or rock star, but, as flawed as he is, and as hard as it might get, decided to trust God. It was enjoying to work on the translation, and challenging to think through what Boppi has to say. If you're interested, you can get the English version from Amazon (US and UK) or the French version from Agapé France.



For Prayer

- * Please pray for the couples' ministry and the "retreat" we'll be having over a long weekend in May. We'll spend time praying and seeking the Lord about the future of the ministry.
- * Please pray for a national project we're involved in : In July will take place *Bouge ta France* ("get France moving") a gathering of 3000 Christian youth in Le Havre. Agapé France are official partners, in particular for the evangelism day where the young people will be involved in outreaches all over Normandy. We want to equip them with dvd's of the *Jesus* film to give away as they share Christ, as well as giving each one a copy of the *Unfinished* book and the witnessing bracelet called "The Four". The event culminates on 14th July (the national holiday) bringing together 15 000-20 000 Christians of all ages. We want to give each one a copy of the *Jesus* film with this challenge : to ask God to show them one person they can give the film to. Janette and I are on a committee to do some special fundraising to finance the 31 000 dvd's we'll need as well as the books and bracelets.
- * Pray for Paul & Julienne in the final months of preparation for their wedding 10th June, for both practical and spiritual preparation.

With thanks for your prayers and support

Rick & Janette