



PERSPECTIVES

No. 12 | Autumn 2022 | www.francemission.org

Registered Charity 1176433



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Paul's page: Vive Sa Majesté!

Reflections by Paul Cooke, France Mission's Director

While visiting France a few years ago, I was kindly put up by a couple who had an entire corner of their living room devoted to the UK and especially to Her late Majesty **Queen Elizabeth II**. The wife had worked in the UK for a while as a young woman and had retained extremely fond memories of her time here. And when the late Queen's death was announced, the couple sent me a very kind message expressing their condolences to everyone involved with France Mission. I was deeply touched.

But over the next few days, as I followed the French media, I realised just how many other people in Republican France held the late Queen in high regard. On 9th September, the entire front page of the daily *Libération* was given over to a striking 1968 photo of the Queen wearing a black gown – the prelude to 17 pages of coverage from this left-leaning “serious” newspaper originally founded



by Jean-Paul Sartre and Serge July. *Le Parisien*, a more middle-of-the-road daily, published its special edition with a full-page photo of an older Elizabeth II under the title “We loved her so much”.

President Macron's official statement was a model of sympathetic respect: “She held a special status in France and a special place in the hearts of the French people. No foreign sovereign has climbed the stairs of the Élysée Palace more often than she, who honoured France with six state visits and met each of its presidents. For her, French was not a mere relic of Normandy ancestry that persisted in so many customs, but an intimate, cherished language. **The Queen of 16 kingdoms loved France, which loved her back.**”

I very much doubt that Her late Majesty would ever have heard of France Mission. But I like to think that our love for France, motivated first and foremost by our love for the Lord Jesus, would have resonated with her own Christian faith. Significantly, her son, King Charles III, has chosen France for the first state visit of his new reign. We pray that the Lord will continue to **bless the relationship between our countries**, especially in terms of gospel partnership.

Every blessing
in Christ

Paul



Paul Cooke

Front page photo: InterAction Camp



Changes at Paris-Cardinet



Jonathan & Rachel Vaughan give thanks for a good start to the new church year

The new school year has seen a number of changes at Paris-Cardinet church. We're encouraged by the **new people** God has brought along to our morning and evening services, and by the **new small group** that's been launched (in addition to the five already meeting regularly). The church **website is being redesigned** to give it a fresh look, as it is a key way that people find out about the church and come along.

“We're encouraged by the new people God has brought along to our morning and evening services.”

In the morning service, several of the children who have now reached secondary school are staying in for the whole service, making room downstairs for the **growing crèche and Sunday school**. To help them follow the sermon, the preachers are making more use of PowerPoint, handouts to fill in, and interactive Q&A times (which the adults are finding helpful too!). As we study the book of Proverbs together, we pray that we would all **grow in wisdom**, both young and old.

We're preparing our **next art exhibition** for November, this time on the theme of



Church weekend away at Villebon-sur-Yvette

despair and hope. This is a joint project involving eight artists, mostly non-Christians, who've accepted our invitation to engage with Bible verses on the theme and contribute a work of art in response to one of them. The exhibition is planned for 18th-26th November and we hope to include a writing workshop and an evening talk on Christian hope, in addition to the usual opening and closing events. **Please do pray** for many people to visit the exhibition and be challenged by the subject. Pray particularly that visitors and artists would accept invitations to Christmas services and events, and that we would clearly proclaim the great news of hope in Jesus.

You can contact Jonathan & Rachel at jony.vaughan@gmail.com



“Intergalactic Bake Off” and the gospel!

FM supporter Emma Rutter reports on InterAction 2022



Emma is a languages graduate who now serves on the staff team of All Saints' Church, Belfast, where she oversees ministry to women and international students.

In July 2022, I jumped on a plane from Dublin to Paris and headed off to join the team of leaders for the InterAction 1 camp in Pré-en-Pail (Mayenne). It was my first time back in France since the Covid pandemic and I was a little apprehensive about speaking French again, but a trip to the bakery before arriving soon eased me back in to both the culture and the language.

Campers and leaders came from across France and England – some even from as far away as Singapore! Many campers were from Christian homes, but there were a number who'd been invited by a Christian friend from school. I was **encouraged** to see how summer camps can be used as both an evangelistic opportunity and to disciple young Christians in their faith.

We started and ended our days with a main meeting where we sang songs (often alternating a verse in French and a verse in English) and listened to a talk on a passage from the Bible. This year we started the week by thinking about who God is, what sin is, who Jesus is, and why He had to die. The **gospel was very clearly presented** over the course of the days, line-by-line as talks were translated into the other language at the front. This teaching was expanded by small discussion groups in the afternoon



where we looked at the “Two Ways to Live” study, which explains the gospel in a series of six drawings, accompanied by Scripture. I'd been nervous about running this group in French, but had a very supportive co-leader, and it was a good way to help the girls look at some of the Bible for themselves – some of them for the first time. One Bible study by the lake stands out in my memory, where both



Peter Calvert leading one of the sessions



I and the Christian camper in our group shared our testimonies of coming to Christ at a young age. We were **overjoyed** when, following the study, two girls in our dorm group told us they'd decided to follow Jesus at that moment! Other non-Christians in the group commented that they'd been challenged to think about some new things, and they were intrigued by how we trusted and loved the Bible. **Praise God** for those

developments and **pray** for His continued hand in their lives to draw these girls towards Him.

The rest of the week was filled with **fun activities** that included a high ropes course, a hike, laser tag, and craft and games back on site. Evening fun included a campfire and a “night-game”, which had a well-earned reputation for being one of the highlights of the camp. Many of these activities also came under our camp theme of “Intergalactic Bake Off” – a *mélange* of Star Wars characters and the famous TV show. This spirit of fun characterised the week and led to some new expressions such as “Use the fork, Luke!”



I was really encouraged by the **wholehearted service** of the leaders, even when campers seemed disengaged or difficult, and we were so thankful for the way the team of cooks and junior leaders served us by cleaning, washing up, and helping with games. It was so good to serve with people who love the Lord and love France. Although many of us will have very little contact with the campers until next year, we trust that our labour has not been in vain and that, at the right time, a harvest will be reaped from this summer.

You can contact Emma at egrutter32@gmail.com

From Brazil to Châteauroux (via Guinea and the UK!)



Pastoral couple Elcio & Sueli Rocha share about the Lord's leading

Before providing an update on the church in Châteauroux, it may be helpful to introduce ourselves. Sueli and I (Elcio) are both Brazilian and I received the **Lord's call** to serve as a missionary-pastor at the age of 20 while working for an export company at São Paulo airport. I'd been brought up in an evangelical family but had never thought about learning another language or going to live in another culture. However, after completing my theological studies, I did missionary training with YWAM and started working with **Amazonian people groups** before moving to southeast Brazil where I worked among the poor in the slums of Belo Horizonte. In 1994, Sueli and I moved to West Africa with our two small boys, Eduardo and André, to start work in **Guinea** where missionary activity had been re-authorised in the 1980s. We learned our French in Guinea and would end up spending 12 years there.

After a short period back in Brazil, we returned to the mission field – this time going to serve a Portuguese-speaking church in **London**. After four years there, we met up with Paul Cooke (FM's UK Director) who introduced us to France-Mission before they merged with Vision-France to become Perspectives. This led to

us moving to the Paris region in April 2013 as the pastoral couple at the Perspectives church in **Asnières-sur-Seine**. We spent eight happy years there, with the last 15 months being particularly marked by the Covid pandemic. We were thankful to the Lord for providing Patrick Butsapu to take over as pastor when we moved on.

In August 2021, we arrived in the Indre department to take over from **Paul & Marjorie Dowling** as the pastoral couple in Châteauroux. It was a good time to start as it coincided with *la rentrée* – the back-to-school period that always signals the start of a new church year in France. In addition to our Sunday worship services, we also have in-person midweek prayer meetings and we've recently restarted a fortnightly Bible study. **Our prayer** is that increasing numbers of new people will join us for these activities.

We were delighted that the service we held to mark this year's *rentrée* was full. We had a wonderful time of praise and thanksgiving, which included a presentation of the various ministries in the church and committing those involved



The Châteauroux Church Council



A recent Sunday service

to the Lord's leading and care. The service was followed by a shared meal. **Please pray** that the Lord will enable us to grow both in numbers and in spiritual maturity as we seek to focus on four key values: service, unity, sharing, and joy. We've been pleased to welcome a number of newcomers over recent months. **Please pray** that they'll

"We've been pleased to welcome a number of newcomers over recent months."

become increasingly deeply rooted in the Lord and will want to commit to a life of discipleship with us.

Over the summer, our **young people** spent a countryside weekend together – a wonderful time of relaxation and learning from God's Word. We've also been blessed by visitors from the UK who've come to worship with us while on holiday. By the time you read this, our **joint weekend** with



Countryside weekend

the Perspectives church in Argenton-sur-Creuse will just have taken place (15th-16th October) following a two-year break caused by the pandemic. **Please do pray** that both our churches will continue to witness faithfully in this part of central France. Thank you!

Elcio & Sueli will be visiting Yeovil Community Church on 6th November, God willing. Please contact paulcooke@francemission.org if you'd like more information.



Putting the Education & Training Fund to work

Paul Cooke reports on how your gifts are being used this year

In the last issue of the magazine, I asked you to pray for wisdom for the Trustees as they assessed applications to France Mission's Education & Training Fund. I can now share with you how those prayers have been answered.

Firstly, let me introduce you to **the Lamonnaie family**: dad Harris, mum Ornella, and their children Sam and Léana. Harris & Ornella have recently started three years of training at the **IBN** (Institut Biblique de Nogent), just 10km east of



The Lamonnaie family at the IBN

Paris. Until recently, the family were living in **Nantes** and were active members of the city's established Perspectives church (eglise-boissiere.fr). Professionally, Harris worked as a painter and decorator while much of Ornella's time was taken up with their children.

Encouraged by their pastor, Patrice Alcindor, Harris & Ornella felt the call to

pursue biblical training. Hence the move to the IBN, with both Perspectives and their home church in Nantes providing support. **Thanks to your gifts** for FM's Education & Training fund, we've been able to make up the shortfall for their first year. The Lamonnaies will continue to seek additional sources of support for years 2–3, with Harris offsetting some of the training costs through practical work at the Institute.

When I spoke with them last month, I was struck by what a big move this was for them as a family (new schools, new friends, new rhythms, etc.) and was also delighted to learn that they're living in the **new accommodation block** that the prayers and gifts of FM supporters helped see completed earlier this year! **Please do pray** for them all as they continue to settle into their new life in Nogent and seek God's will for the future.

Secondly, there's **Adrien Ropert**. I first heard about Adrien a few years ago in one of the reports from the Perspectives church in **Romorantin** sent in by Graham & Pauline Stevens. Now that Peter Calvert has taken over as pastor at the church, he too has been keen to commend Adrien to us as a humble young man with a great love for the Lord and His Word, willing to take risks for Jesus. Following studies at the IBG (Institut Biblique de Genève), Adrien is now starting a **year of practical application in Amiens** (350km north of Romorantin)



Adrien Ropert with his IBG certificate

where he'll be working partly for the FEU (Foyer Évangélique Universitaire: amiens.lefeu.org) and partly for the Perspectives church in the city. Without the support from FM's Education & Training Fund, this next step for Adrien simply wouldn't have been possible. **Our prayer** is that the Lord will continue to lead Adrien as he commits his ways to Him.

“Without the support from FM's Education & Training Fund, this next step for Adrien simply wouldn't have been possible.”

Finally, here's **Joy McClean**. Joy only moved to France in early October 2022 and will spend the academic year serving the Perspectives church in **Le Pré Saint Gervais**, on the eastern edge of Paris. Joy already speaks fluent French, having graduated with a degree in modern languages in 2021. She's spent the past year working as a Church Apprentice at Eden Baptist Church, **Cambridge**, and will be fulfilling a similar role at Le Pré. For



The FEU building in Amiens

Nathan Millet, pastor at Le Pré, Joy's arrival has been a real answer to prayer, and she will no doubt prove a great help to the church as it continues to grow under the Lord's hand. Eden is doing a wonderful job of supporting Joy as her sending church, but FM is delighted to be able to contribute to her support. **Please pray** that the Lord will help Joy to adapt quickly and show her whether He might have plans for her in France beyond 2023.



Joy McClean



Jesus fell on one of our pilgrims!



FM supporters Joy & Graham Brodier share a novel approach to evangelism in France

Sharing the gospel is hard in France. It's all too common for evangelical Christians to be lumped together with Mormons and Jehovah's Witnesses! However, our location in **Reims** has proved helpful in circumventing such misunderstandings as we're on the **Via Francigena**, the ancient pilgrimage route from Canterbury to Rome.



Hundreds of walkers, cyclists, and even a few horse riders follow this route every year. During a visit to the cathedral, we chatted to the ladies who run the help desk for pilgrims. They said that they're always looking for more people to host travellers. With both our children back in the UK, we had three spare beds and so our details were added to the ladies' list.

Our **first guest** arrived with a dog and was obviously exploiting the generosity of well-wishers. He didn't have any money but was walking to Rome. Lesson 1: don't accept dogs who sleep on beds resulting in expensive dry-cleaning bills. Lesson 2: ask if they have their pilgrim "Credentials" – an official card that gets stamped along the route.



Official stamps for pilgrims

Our next guest was a **Catholic nun** who was taking a year's sabbatical and was walking to Rome. She was the same age as me (Joy) and was very interested to receive a Gospel in English to carry with her. When shown the bedroom, she said: "Oh, I don't need a bed!" and unrolled a sleeping mat. She sent us a postcard from Rome four months later.

Reims is not only on one route but two. One of the **Chemins de Saint-Jacques de**



Reims Cathedral

In mid-July we had **three young Italians** who were doing a section of the route from Reims to the Swiss border. When they came down to breakfast, one reported that he'd been woken in the night by the large drawing of Jesus on the wall above his head falling on him. We all hooted with laughter and his friends cried, "It's a sign!"

We've been in France now for 16 years, far longer than we ever imagined. We have cute little grandchildren in the UK whom we'd like to see more often. Is there anyone out there who wants to **try the mission field** in France? We have a nice little town house, near to all the facilities, schools, bus stops, TGV, and motorway to Calais. Would anyone be interested in a **house swap** for chunks of time so you can get a taste of life in France? We have all the cutlery, tea-sets and linen needed, and fruit in the garden that will keep you supplied with jam and crumbles. The young men so enjoyed blackberry and apple crumble with Bird's custard, that they ate it again at breakfast!

Although Jesus didn't fall on our guest in a spiritual sense, **we pray** that it's an image of things to come – that Jesus might be at work in the pilgrims we meet and that something will touch them and draw them to Him.

You can contact Joy & Graham at joy.brodier@gmail.com

Compostelle starts in Belgium and passes along the road adjoining ours. I can accost backpackers and chat with them even if they haven't booked to stay with us!

Covid reduced the number of walkers significantly, but so far this year we've had **27 guests**. We love it! We enjoy finding out about them and can share our testimony of God's call to come to France. As they class themselves as "pilgrims" the door is open for **conversations about faith** and whether they're seeking God. Only one has refused the offer of a Gospel, but that was on the grounds of weight! When I suggested that I could put it in the post for him, he had no objection. This week we've talked about Alpha courses to a couple involved in their parish church in Belgium and slipped in a brief four-point gospel outline (see thefour.com/en/).

Les Courmettes 2023 – an invitation from missionary Rachel Calvert



A holiday for English-speaking Christians supporting mission in France



It's easier to pray well for people you know personally. As gospel-workers here in France, we're thankful to the Lord for those who pray for us and support us financially. We thought it'd be great to have an extended opportunity to get to know some of you better... and for you to get to know one another better!

That's why we're inviting you to join us for a week at Les Courmettes, a conference centre managed by Christian environmental charity A Rocha France (arocha.fr/). The 600-hectare *Domaine des Courmettes* is situated on the edge of the Southern Alps, about one hour inland

from Nice, with stunning views over the Mediterranean.

There'll be optional times of worship and Bible teaching in the mornings, as well as seminars on various aspects of mission in France. In the afternoons, there'll be plenty of time to relax, discover local wildlife, and explore God's wonderful creation. You can participate in the activities on offer as much or as little as you wish. There'll be opportunities to learn about the vision and work of A Rocha from the team on-site, including David Nussbaumer (Director of Les Courmettes) and Jean-François Mouhot (National Director of A Rocha France).



Who else will be speaking?

- Paul Cooke is the UK director of France Mission and helps lead a large evangelical church in Exeter. The earlier part of his career was spent working in university French departments.
- Rachel Vaughan is part of the team at the Nogent Bible Institute (ibnogent.org) and coordinates the Réseau des scientifiques évangéliques (Network of Evangelical Scientists: scientifiquesevangeliques.org), as well as working alongside her husband Jony in the Paris-Cardinet Church.
- Simon Allchin brings insights from his many years' experience of urban ministry in a multi-cultural part of Marseille.
- Rachel Calvert has worked mainly in church planting and currently chairs the Board of A Rocha France.

What are the dates?

Arrival: 5pm, Sunday 17th September 2023

Departure: 9am, Saturday 23rd September 2023

How much will it cost?

- 255€ if you bring your tent
- 335€ in dormitory accommodation
- 385€ / person, double room without en-suite
- 445€ / person, double room with en-suite
- 525€ / person, single room without en-suite
- 585€ / person, single room with en-suite

Book early to avoid disappointment! All prices are full board.

How do I get to Les Courmettes? We're not able to organise transport from the UK, but you'll find details of how to get to Les Courmettes at bit.ly/Courmettes. Please add 20€ if you're coming by public transport and will need a lift from Vence.

How can I reserve my place? Sign up at bit.ly/LC-book by 30th April 2023.

Any questions? Please contact rachel.calvert@eglises-perspectives.org

How can French churches reach out with the gospel in secular France?



Pastor Dave Brown introduces a new report

For almost ten years I chaired the **Evangelism Commission of the CNEF** (National Council of French Evangelicals). Our aim was to help French churches in their mission to bring the gospel to those around them.



We organised **three surveys** to try to identify the best ways to communicate the gospel today. The first one was among CNEF pastors, another one was among people who'd recently been converted from a non-Christian background, and thirdly we commissioned a study from a professional survey company to find out what non-Christians thought about the subject. We received a lot of interesting data but in every case the **stand-out conclusion** was the same: the gospel is best communicated through building relationships with unbelievers (e.g. over a cup of coffee at work or with neighbours). The Commission organised the making of **two short films** called *Envoyé-s* ("Sent") to encourage



church members to do this, based on the saying of Jesus in John 20.21: "As the Father has sent me, I am sending you."

The Evangelism Commission continued to work on the subject between 2019 and 2021, particularly as far as local churches were concerned. Our **resulting report** is a call to prayer and action, presenting an approach to evangelism which we hope will enable evangelical churches to **remain relevant** in the contemporary world and to reach the many secularised French people who live without any religious affiliation. Indeed, millions of French people have no contact with the Christian faith, sometimes for several generations. There is a huge lack of religious knowledge in general and a negative attitude towards Christianity in particular.

In order to better appropriate its recommendations, the report also includes a **workbook** intended for group use, so that churches can think through the implications in their local context. This report is already available online and a book version is due to be published on 23rd November this year. **Please pray** for its Kingdom impact.

You can download the report at bit.ly/CNEF-ER and contact Dave at david.brown.paris@gmail.com. For free copies of the *Envoyé-s* DVD with English subtitles, please either use the response form or contact Paul Cooke.



Other news from Paul Cooke

Thank you, Colin!

Former Chair of FM Trustees, Colin Judkins, has decided that the time has also now come to step down as France Mission's Area Rep in the northwest of England.

I'm very grateful to Colin for all his faithful service in this role and pray for the Lord's blessing as Colin continues to serve in other contexts. If anyone would be interested in exploring the possibility of volunteering as an Area Rep, do please let me know – I'd love to discuss that with you!



Colin Judkins

Serving in Strasbourg

Student Dan Rees arrived in Strasbourg in September for his Year Abroad. Dan will be serving as a student volunteer in the larger of the Perspectives churches in the city (L'Église de la Krutenau). Dan will be sharing more about his experiences in a future issue of the magazine but, in the meantime, do **please pray** for him as he settles into this new life.



Dan Rees

they've been helping churches cope with the new "anti-separatist" legislation. A new practical result is a 72-page guide to legal and financial aspects of the Law – a real boon for those dealing with church administration! Your prayerful generosity has helped make this possible – thank you!



Education & Training Fund

Thank you so much for enabling France Mission to set this up! Turn back to pages 8–9 of this magazine to see how we'll be using the Fund over the next 12 months. Thank you for the £3,500 already given this year! The Fund remains open and gifts can be made via any of the usual channels (see francemission.org/donate).



Photo by Atil Mazumder on Pexels

France Mission: Love France – Love Mission – Love Church

France Mission's vision is to see increasing numbers of people in France encountering God – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit – through the work and witness of local evangelical churches. As a support organisation, we provide targeted, strategic support to help the French evangelical church move closer to achieving its own goals. To find out more, please visit francemission.org.

If your church or small group would like to hear more about the Lord's work in France, please contact Paul Cooke to book a speaker:

- Email: paulcooke@francemission.org
- Phone: (+44) 07980 450462 or (+44) 01392 213275
- Post: PO Box 743, Exeter EX1 9RN, UK

Support France Mission when you shop online

We've registered with two websites – **easyfundraising** and **TheGivingMachine** – that enable you to raise funds for France Mission whenever you shop online. Both sites provide access to a wide variety of popular retailers, are easy to use, and don't cost you (or us) a penny!



So, if you shop online, please do consider signing up either at easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/francemission or at thegivingmachine.co.uk/causes/france-mission and help us raise more funds to support the Lord's work in France.

We're also registered with **AmazonSmile**. If you already have an Amazon account, you'll be able to use the same account details for AmazonSmile.



On your first visit to smile.amazon.co.uk you need to select a charitable organisation to receive donations (please select France Mission).

Amazon will remember your selection and, as long as you make purchases through *smile.amazon.co.uk* (rather than the standard Amazon website), eligible purchases will result in an automatic donation to France Mission at no extra cost to you.

Also, your Amazon mobile app can now be linked to your Amazon Smile account so that purchases made via the app will also generate income for France Mission.

Thank you!

