

action

Missionnaire

Croissance de la Parole - Croissance de l'Église !

avec Étienne Lhermenault

Congrès de Fusion Vision-France / France-Mission

10 et 11 mai 2018

À l'église « La Bonne Nouvelle » de Strasbourg



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- Introducing "Perspectives"
- Supporting refugees in Lille
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New Perspectives



Reflections by Paul Cooke, FM's UK Director

The merger I've been asking you to pray about for the past couple of years is finally official! Church representatives from France-Mission and Vision-France came together in Strasbourg for a special "merger congress" over the Ascension holiday (10th-11th May), during which the two church unions voted to become a single entity called Perspectives, with the strapline: *Des églises, une mission* ("many churches, one mission"). It was a privilege and a joy to be able to attend this important event and, as I type these words on the journey home, I have a great sense of hope and excitement for the future. (You can read more about the congress in the article on pages 10-11.)

In one way, the congress marked the culmination of a **5-year process** during which the national leadership teams of France-Mission and Vision-France worked hard to establish the necessary framework for the merger. But the hard work is far from over! For the remainder of 2018, various systems will be integrated to ensure that, by 1st January 2019, Perspectives will be fully operational at all levels. **Please pray** for all those involved in implementing the various changes – inevitably most of it will be "backroom" work, but ultimately supporting those engaged in "frontline" evangelism and discipleship.



What about **France Mission here in the UK**? Well, we won't be adopting the name Perspectives. It works in the French context but isn't right for an English-language support organisation. Our name needs to

make it clear that we exist to support Christian mission in France. The two names which best encapsulate that goal are probably France Mission or (wait for it...) Mission France! If you have a preference for our name going forward, **I'd love to hear from you!** The easiest way to do that is via the form at <https://goo.gl/oSba99>. Thank you very much in advance for your continued partnership as we enter this exciting new phase of supporting the Lord's work over the Channel.



Some of Perspectives' new directors answering questions from the floor: Daniel Liechti, Patrice Niveaux, Gaël Archinard, Jean-Georges Gantenbein, Patrice Alcindor (L to R)

Every blessing

Paul

If you'd like to receive a document (in French) explaining the thinking behind the name "Perspectives", please contact me at fmtrust@france-mission.org.

FRANCE MISSION IN BRIEF:

- 61 Churches and centres across France
- 123 Missionaries & trainees
- 16 Workers from the UK

Church growth through multiplication

Vision-France: the "other half" of Perspectives

The movement that would eventually become Vision-France had its origins around 1820, when the **Pietist Revival** within the Lutheran Church led to Ami Bost establishing churches in Mulhouse, Munster, and Colmar. In 1840, Christian Friedrich Spittler founded the **St Chrischona Pilgrim Mission** near Basle, Switzerland, and started supplying ministers to the various "Evangelical Societies" engaged in church planting in Alsace. The connection between Vision-France and Chrischona International continues to this day.



Vision-France currently has **20 churches** in its network, together with a youth centre, a holiday centre, and a retirement home. The network has 14 mature churches in Alsace-Moselle, with an additional 6 plants in the Doubs, the Jura, the Ain, the Vendée, and Strasbourg. As you can see from the map, the distribution of VF's churches (red dots) nicely complements that of FM's churches (green dots).

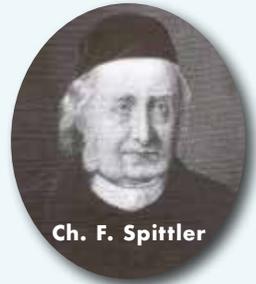
Perspectives will be organised on a regional basis: the majority of VF's churches will fall under the Eastern region whose Director will be **Jean-Georges Gantenbein**, currently President of VF and a Professor of Missiology at St Chrischona Seminary (www.tsc.education). In an article that Jean-Georges wrote about the merger last year, he underlined the need for both idealism and



Jean-Georges Gantenbein

realism. **Idealism** in believing that the kind of Christian community described in John 17:17-21, Acts 2:42-47, and Ephesians 4 is achievable as the Holy Spirit increasingly shapes us. **Realism** in recognizing that the Early Church faced many challenges and that our contemporary experience will be no different. Straining towards the ideal will multiply church planting, develop various ministries, and lead to a deeper understanding of church. Keeping reality firmly in mind will lead to greater lucidity, more willingness to seek and offer help, and increased synergies which allow people's gifts to be focused more effectively.

Please do pray that the Lord will guide Perspectives as they seek faithfully to live out the vision to which He has called them.



Ch. F. Spittler

Perspectives' churches



You can find out more about Vision-France on their website: www.vision-france.net



Church planters' "Learning Community"



Peter & Rachel Calvert, church planters in Blois, report on this new initiative

Church planting is definitely a learning experience! But, in the ups and downs of ministry, it's not always easy to find the space and the opportunity to **hear and digest** what God might be trying to teach us.



Getting inspired: Elise Duchemann, Patrice Alcindor, Lorenzo Monge, Daniel Liechti (L to R)

Inspired by their positive experience of a two-year interdenominational "Learning Community" organised by the French equivalent of the Evangelical Alliance (the CNEF), **France-Mission and Vision-France** decided to bring together their church-planting teams for four weekends of collective learning and exploration. They would not only seek to harness the collective intelligence of a diverse group of people, but also to discern patterns in the ways the Holy Spirit is currently working in France. **Lorenzo Monge and Daniel Liechti**, who between them have a wealth of experience in church planting and in mentoring

You can contact the Calverts at pierrerachel.calvert@gmail.com

other church planters, would be the facilitators for the weekend.

The first session was programmed for 22nd-23rd March, near Paris. For us, along with team members Annelicia, Marcio, and Anne-Line, it was good to take a step back from our day-to-day commitments in the Blois Centre church plant and **focus on the big picture**. As teams, we were given tools to help us evaluate progress so far, and to adjust our strategic planning as necessary. We were encouraged to **share across teams** about the obstacles we were facing, noticing that many of us were asking similar questions and facing similar tensions in our work. We heard of encouragements and trials, conversions to Christ and opposition, significant growth for some church plants while others have, as yet, seen little fruit. We shared each other's burdens, and we prayed for one another.

FM & VF teams learning together



Over breakfast we enjoyed chatting with Jason, from a Vision-France team in **Strasbourg**, who are in the early stages of a new church plant in the multicultural area around the **Central Train Station**. Their long-term vision is to plant out into some of the tougher multicultural estates around Strasbourg where gospel witness is thin on the ground. What's particularly encouraging is that their "sending

"Church planting is definitely a learning experience!"

church" in central Strasbourg is itself only a few years old. We listened to moving testimonies of lives won for Christ in Paris from FM plant "My Gospel Church". We heard of creative outreach to families in Pompey, near Nancy, and in rural Argenton in the centre of France. Whether in urban centres, historic towns, leafy suburbs or lake-side resorts... **all over France, God is at work and churches are being planted.**



The March venue: a retreat centre near Paris

We're very grateful to all those who've contributed to supporting this venture through France Mission UK. Many church planters and their teams are on a **tight budget** (team-members will often have reduced their working hours or taken a lower paid job to have time to invest in the project, **team leaders may be either bi-vocational or be supported as full-time missionaries**). Your investment enabled

Thanks to your generosity, France Mission UK has so far been able to raise £6,500 to support this two-year programme. This represents about 60% of the total cost. If you'd like to contribute, you can do so at www.give.net/CAi. Thank you!

Capturing vision and strategy



the organisers to offer this tool to participants at an affordable price.

Three more weekends together as a Learning Community are planned (October 2018, spring 2019, and autumn 2019). **Please pray** that relationships forged would continue to be a source of support and encouragement over coming months and years. Pray for God's protection

over each of the teams represented, that God would keep us faithful to His call. And pray that, as the gospel is proclaimed, churches would multiply and grow to the glory of Jesus.



Planting in Strasbourg

A Learning Community in action



Stepping Out



Missionaries Chris & Fiona Lloyd continue to lay foundations in Auray

For the last few months we've been meeting on Saturday mornings with Nicolas, Nolwenn, Dante, and Elisabeth to work through the *Parcours Découverte d'Implantation* (The Discover Church-Planting Course). We're nearly at the end, with a couple more sessions to go.



Nicolas & Nolwenn



The course is a translation and condensing of Tim Keller's Church-Planting Manual, which some of you may be familiar with. We proposed the course to help the participants understand what starting a church involves and how it differs from involvement in an established church. Many of the topics challenge the status quo. For example, can you accept that enjoying your local church does not necessarily equate to

your church fulfilling its mission? Or asking, do you expect newcomers to adapt to your way of doing church or do you make the effort to try and understand how it might feel to be a first-time visitor? Or can you accept that your church plant cannot evangelise everybody?

Dante and Elisabeth, who are our "trainee students" from the Geneva Bible Institute, live in a town the other side of Lorient called Guidel, where they would like also to start a church. Dante had a business in the town before taking early retirement and has lived there for nearly 30 years. They're heavily involved in their local church in Lorient and the course has given them greater awareness of what starting a church involves. At the same time, they're learning the tools to evaluate the context of the Lorient church, what its profile is and where it's heading.

For Nicolas and Nolwenn, we want to use the course to start planning the church here in Auray, rather than planning it all out ourselves and then asking them to join in. We want them to be part of the process. Please pray for fruitful collaboration in both situations.



An aerial view of Guidel

Chris & Fiona continue to search for suitable premises in Auray and have been in touch with donors about this recently. If you'd like to find out more, you can contact the Lloyds at chris.lloyd@orange.fr

Missionaries Paul & Marjorie Dowling are seeing change in Châteauroux



English conversation group enjoying Bath...

There is a sense of stepping out into uncharted waters at the moment in Châteauroux. A number of people are stepping out by taking on new responsibilities – preaching or leading services for the first time, for example, or joining the worship group. Others are stepping out by asking to be prepared for baptism – two are to be baptised in July, one other has started the process, and a fourth has expressed interest. Our young people also stepped out recently by leading the worship at a Sunday service. They did very well. Lots of hope for the future!



Youth-led service

The members of our English conversation group stepped out in a big way in April by going for a long weekend to England, hosted by our friends at Yeovil Community Church. It was a new experience for many of them, not least for those who are not church members, especially as the programme included the service on Sunday morning (in a lively church with 400 members, not something on offer in our part of France!). They all came away very positively impressed by the whole experience and speak in glowing terms of the welcome we were given, a great testimony to the love of Christ expressed in the church. Please pray for ongoing spiritual fruit in the lives of those who went.

We are also stepping out into the unknown as we continue to pray for someone to come to lead the church when we move on in two years' time. The trip to Geneva did not produce anything, but we are continuing to follow up on other leads, still hoping to find a trainee to work alongside us for a year or two before taking on the leadership when we go. We contacted all the other evangelical Bible schools in France. One replied with a possible lead that we are following up, but it is very early days. Please continue to pray for the right person/people.



...and some English cuisine!

You can contact the Dowlings at paul.dowling@sfr.fr

La stagiaire: on placement in a church plant



Student Eliza Worrall reflects on her time in Blois

As I stepped off the train in Blois for the first time, I had no idea what to expect. I was about to spend seven months as a part of a church-plant team, away from my loved ones and home church, with a pastoral couple I hadn't met before, in a town I didn't know. I was nervous, scared even, but **God was with me** in every moment.



Christmas service at a local hotel

The first half of my placement, I began to get used to my life in Blois. I got to know the **Calvert family**, as well as the team and the church plant's congregation. I got to know the **parent church in the north of the town**, in particular the team behind the children's ministry and community events. I also got used to working as a part of the community in the town, being a scouts' leader, teaching English at a community centre and being a part of the Language Café.



Scouting activity



Crafts at kids' club

There was a lot to adapt to. The church plant was so small, and the team even smaller! The church presence in the town was difficult to establish due to the size. For children's work, I didn't have the range of resources in French that would have been available to me in the UK. Alongside the ordinary difficulties of adapting to moving abroad, **it was a shock**. However, **my confidence grew**. I was able to lead children at a church weekend, teaching about living as everyday heroes. I helped Rachel organise a weekly kids club for children in the town, teaching them stories from the Bible, many for the first time. I worked as part of a team, organising events for the parent church, including a Pirate fun day and a Christmas show.

I also gained confidence in **community work and social interaction**. I'm not very social at all, and I struggle with interaction much of the time. The Calverts encouraged me to be more outgoing and social. I saw through their lives – inviting people for meals every other day, going to community events often, and being open and inviting in general – that **church ministry encompasses everyday life**. Much of the church ministry was outside of Sunday celebrations. It included mealtimes and gallery exhibitions that we'd hold in the town. I saw clearly how God works in our conversations and our interactions. By the second half of my placement, my confidence was growing stronger. I was able to do more teaching at the scouts group and I began to work on a full programme for the children at the church plant. I was also able to be far more social and I got to know so many interesting people, both within the church



Pirate day!

"I was nervous, scared even, but God was with me in every moment"



Superheroes theme for church weekend

and outside. Already, I was able to lead Bible discussion and prayer with children and adults alike. The scouts group was a challenge as I'm not too good outdoors, and the days were often quite full on. In time, however, I began to see how important the time was that we spent with those children. The kids were able to understand concepts such as salvation and many useful skills through the scouts. I was encouraged to do more **outside of my comfort zone**, if it meant God could do His work. In all, I don't think I could have ever been more **blessed to work for a beautiful God in such a beautiful country**. The God I serve is the same God no matter where I am. Seeing His work in all the children and people I got to meet made my placement so valuable. I can only hope another student in future can be as blessed as I was.

Eliza will be resuming her university studies this autumn. You can contact her at erworrall@outlook.com

The Merger Congress

Although France-Mission's annual congress has been held on the outskirts of Paris for many years, this year's "merger congress" was held in the beautiful Alsatian city of **Strasbourg**. That meant a longer journey for most of those attending from FM, but going the extra kilometre for the sake of their brothers and sisters in Vision-France was a lovely symbolic enactment of "each esteem[ing] others better than themselves" (Philippians 2:3). Given that Alsace is the historic home of Vision-France, and that they have a church plant in the city (which has a strong Protestant tradition stretching back to the Reformation), Strasbourg was an entirely appropriate location for the congress. In the **Église de la Bonne Nouvelle** (one of the city's larger evangelical churches, but not part of the VF network), we had the perfect venue.



Old Strasbourg

The speaker was **Étienne Lhermenault**, a Baptist pastor who is President of the CNEF (National Council of French Evangelicals) and also Director of the Bible College at Nogent-sur-Marne. His theme was "Growth of the Church, Growth of the Word", and he did an excellent job of unpacking this rich



Étienne Lhermenault



Worship time

biblical subject with good humour and practical challenge. He reminded us that church growth can sometimes lead to problems (Acts 6:1), but that a godly approach to addressing these problems can lead to even more growth – a growth firmly rooted in the preaching of the Word (6:7). He showed how true growth is:

- i. the fruit of new life in Christ
- ii. produced by Word and Spirit working together
- iii. based on the centrality of Christ
- iv. geared towards maturity

Alongside Étienne's talks, the congress also saw no fewer than **three AGMs!** The first two took place concurrently on the Thursday afternoon and enabled France-Mission and Vision-France to vote separately



A presentation beer from Perspectives as a thank you to all FM supporters...



...We're the yeast

UK Director Paul Cooke shares his impressions from Strasbourg



on the merger (as well as conduct all the "normal" business for an AGM). I found the opening section of **Patrice Alcindor's last ever report as President of FM** particularly inspiring:

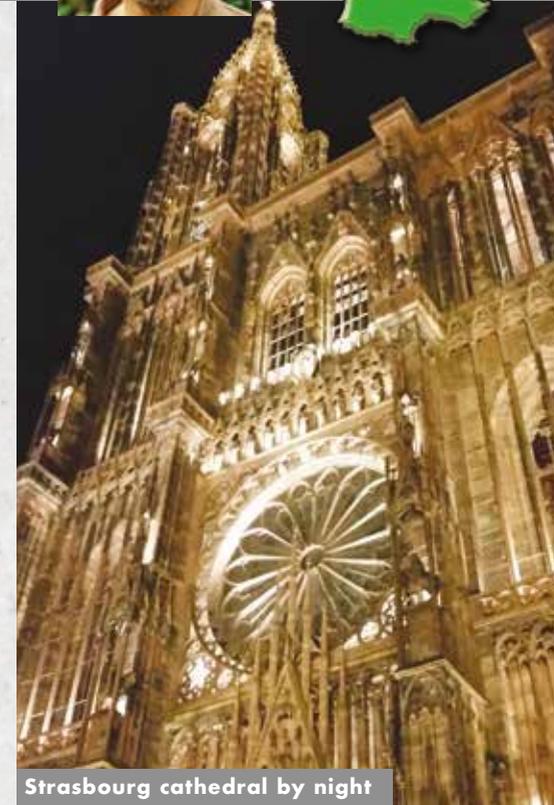
In choosing the name "Perspectives", the 350 church representatives who voted clearly expressed their desire that the merger shouldn't just result in yet another institution in the FEL (French Evangelical Landscape), but should mean continuing in the adventure of faith, focused on the future, full of hope, and expecting to see the Lord's work progress in France. France-Mission isn't on the scrapheap – far from it! The pioneering spirit that has characterised its activities from the beginning is more than ever present, as can be seen from the numerous church plant projects currently underway and also in the encouraging growth of churches requiring larger premises. At the same time, of course, we feel a certain sense of dissatisfaction – which only serves to stir up our faith – and we long to see God working in new ways among us, leading to genuine multiplication rather than simple addition.



Patrice Alcindor

On Friday morning, in the third of the AGMs, the newly formed Perspectives **voted for Patrice** as its first President.

In addition to the main sessions – which included some **uplifting worship and prayer times** – there was an opportunity to hear more about the new regional structure for Perspectives. Two **regional directors** have already been appointed – Jean-Georges Gantenbein for *le Grand Est* and Patrice Niveaux (pastor of the FM church in Vitry)



Strasbourg cathedral by night

for Brittany & Central France – but the other two appointments remain to be made. **Your prayers for these key roles** would be greatly appreciated.

There was also plenty of time to enjoy catching up with various missionaries (over lovely Alsatian food!) and hear more about the joys and challenges of serving the Lord in France. Being able to do this within the picturesque setting of Strasbourg was an additional pleasure!

You can contact Paul at fmtrust@france-mission.org

Two down, one to go!

Trainee missionary Hannah Prior looks back on her second year at Vaux



The end of the academic year is fast approaching. Next year will be my third and final one at Vaux, but here are a few examples of things I've been learning this year and the difference it's been making in my life. Interestingly, the very fact of **studying theology can intrigue people** and lead to unexpected comments such as: "Does God really exist then?" – great potential for springboards into further conversation!

This semester we've been learning about **other religions**; it's fascinating to know more about what other people believe, and to consider how people who become Christians from a background of another religion might think about the Bible and the Christian faith. It's been a challenge and an encouragement to think about the uniqueness of Christ. In another class of Systematic Theology, we've been learning about **the Bible and its authority** and importance in our lives. All in all, a great challenge and motivation to pray and act and seek to share and live out the gospel.

In another class about **Dechristianisation and Secularisation**, we've been thinking about the way in which Christianity in Europe is becoming increasingly marginalised. We considered the very beginning of Christianity, when it was a minority religion, often suffering persecution,



COLLOQUE FLTE 2018 – 1ER ET 2 JUIN 2018

L'inévitable chemin de la persécution ?

Vaux's 2018 conference on the persecuted church

and then we saw how it became an "official" religion: if a king or ruler became a Christian then Christianity became the religion of his subjects. It could be argued that whilst some people did of course become Christians individually, Christianity carried great cultural, social, and political influence as it was imposed as the majority religion. It was a lot about culture and society without necessarily implying a personal faith in Christ. In this sense we could ask if we can really

"I saw how many good relationships I had with people, particularly non-Christians."

Christianity carried great cultural, social, and political influence as it was imposed as the majority religion. It was a lot about culture and society without



Faculté Libre de Théologie Évangélique

Hannah is just completing the second year of her theology degree at the Evangelical Faculty of Vaux-sur-Seine. During a recent visit there, Paul Cooke (France Mission UK's Director) learned more about the institution's plans to develop new library and accommodation facilities to enable future generations to study and train there in good conditions. We'll be sharing more news about this important project later in the year.



Artist's impression of the proposed new library

NOUVELLE BIBLIOTHEQUE

talk about "Christianisation" and "Dechristianisation", given that becoming a Christian is a personal matter and not something that can be imposed on another person or nation. There seems to be a sense in which we're going back to the way that Christianity spread in the beginning. **This is an encouragement** in a time where Christians are increasingly likely to be mocked or scorned: difficulty and hostility is the normal pattern of life. What matters is less being in the majority, but rather living out and speaking the gospel faithfully to the people around us and to our culture and society. How should we do that? That's the next part of the course!

On a more personal note, during the time of **my eye operation**, many people helped me out. I saw how many good relationships I had with people, particularly non-Christians, and how willing people were to help, e.g. with shopping, attending hospital appointments, going to the chemist's. I appreciated it so much – both the practical help and the warmth of the relationship behind

the offer of help. Sometimes as a Christian it can become so easy to be centred on how we should help others, but it's also important to be able to accept help from other people; I think that's a mark of genuine relationships. In turn those contexts are great places to be seeking to share the gospel.

Thank you so much for your continued prayers and support.



View from the current library

You can contact Hannah at hannah_prior@hotmail.com

Supporting unaccompanied under-age migrants in Lille



FM Supporters Karen & Bob Wheatley share about Christ's love in action

Following a decision to raise the profile of the refugee situation among our congregation at **St Paul's Church Dorking**, our World Church Team (of which Karen is a member) set about finding a suitable project to support. With some information from Paul Cooke, a project in the city of Lille was identified supporting **unaccompanied under-age migrants** (MIEs – *mineurs isolés étrangers*). In April 2017, we made an initial visit to meet those involved. This April, a small group made a second visit to discover how the work has been developing.

These young migrants, aged from 14-18 and 90% boys, have fled their own countries and often additionally survived perilous journeys to reach the relative safety of Europe. It was interesting to learn that the population of MIEs



A maths class at the École sans Frontières



The church's website

in Lille is very different from that of the migrants found just an hour's drive away at Calais. The vast majority of those arriving in Lille were from **French-speaking Africa**, in particular DRC, Cameroon and Guinea.

Many MIEs do not have any identifying paperwork and are unable to prove themselves as "minors", thus they are not automatically eligible for the state's resources for young people. A long process with the authorities has to be gone through, which can take many months. In this period, many have found themselves **on the streets of Lille** with no resources and vulnerable to unwholesome influences.

As the refugee situation in Lille worsened about 5 years ago, **La Réconciliation Baptist Church**, pastored by Christian de la Roque, opened the doors of its church building to the MIEs every night. Over time, a network of 200 host families has been assembled, with currently about 80 young migrants being hosted on a rota basis.

In addition to hosting in the Lille district, an agreement has been drawn up with local Catholic schools to **educate these MIEs** on a free-places basis. This means that the MIEs are able to continue with

schooling at the appropriate level for them. They apparently prove to be model students and a great asset to their schools, even though their educational attainment may be a little behind that of their French peers.

For those who arrive in Lille with few reading or writing skills, and for those waiting for a place in a regular school, Christian has set up the **École sans Frontières** (School without Borders). Classes are run by volunteer teachers in basic reading and writing; for those more advanced there are daily classes in maths, French, and some other subjects like IT and history. The École sans Frontières has three classrooms in a church centre in the city. We were able to visit a maths class, where about 16 students took every available seat in what was clearly a popular activity.

While the work is headed up by Pastor Christian and supported by his church, he has assistance from two young adults doing a Civic Service placement and a number of other **local volunteers**. Together with other supporting activities such as church youthwork, assistance with official documentation and legal processes, and signposting to psychological and medical support, the aim is to help the young people make the transition from being heavily traumatised and lost in a foreign country to becoming active citizens. In this process, **some have come to faith**, and we had the privilege of meeting some refugees who were now

Christian de la Roque is also the President of the Social Action Pole of the National Council of French Evangelicals (www.cnef-solidarite.fr).



The church's premises

beginning to find their feet and identity in their newly adopted country.

For those who can understand spoken French, this **video** is about one of the young people we met on our first visit; it demonstrates the positive effect of the love of Christ shown by the Centre de la Réconciliation: www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ad93J7-kMyA



Témoignage de Sarata
Une jeune fille venue de la Guinée, jusqu'en France.

You can contact Karen at karen.wheatley1@gmail.com

Discovering Loches and Descartes



Ministry trainee Lucy Robinson reports on a fruitful fortnight in central France

Having completed my degree last year, I've spent 2017-18 working as a ministry trainee at St Bart's Church in Bath. As a part of the scheme, I asked if I could take a trip out to France with France Mission and my vicar was (fortunately) very keen! **St Bart's partners with France Mission**, and with the churches in Loches and Descartes in particular, so it seemed like a wonderful opportunity to strengthen our relationship with them.

So, after much planning and prepping and liaising, I hopped aboard the Eurostar on 6th March and made my way down to **Loches**. I stayed with a family there for eight days before heading to Descartes for the following eight days. While in Loches, I visited and spent time with various members of the church doing a wide variety of activities including a family Bible study,

Me with families from Loches



The Descartes team: Greg, Manu, Nikki, me, Laura, Becki (L to R)

helping with some translation work, and helping out in a pottery shop, as well as plenty of food/coffee-based interactions (good ol' France). I also spent a lot of time with **Jim & Annette Wheeler**. They were a wonderful point of contact and were able to tell me all about the struggles of evangelism in France and the background of the Loches church. (There was also the added bonus of them speaking the same language as me!)

In **Descartes**, I spent a lot of my time hanging out with and getting to know the missionaries and seeing what missionary life looks like. They are in the middle of doing up a space to use as their church centre, so I donned some overalls and mucked in with some sanding and polyfilling as well. The town of Descartes has a very different feel to Loches, and the church even more so: it's about half the size. It was really interesting to spend time in both places, as well as visiting some of the surrounding area to begin to get a feel for the culture of that region.

I learnt so much on my trip, especially about the French attitude towards Protestantism. I was shocked to find out that the team had been refused buildings

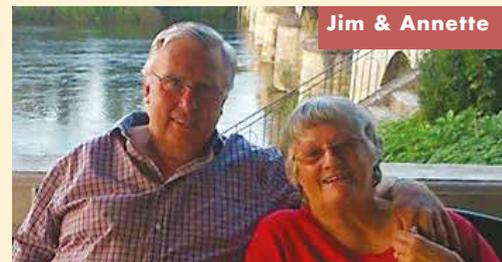


Me outside a chateau with Lémy Lapin (a missionary bunny rabbit from St Bart's)

in Descartes because they are a religious organisation, and that the locals perceive the evangelical church as a cult, on a par with the Jehovah's Witnesses or the Mormons. On the flip side, however, it was encouraging to hear how the mayor in Loches had issued a statement saying that they were not, in fact, a cult, and how the church have been seeking to further dispel this image through their involvement in various local events. The Descartes church also now has a wonderful space in which to set up camp. **These things can only be an answer to prayer!** God is good.

One of the biggest encouragements from my trip, however, was getting a sense of **how big God's kingdom is**. It sounds silly because I know that there are Christians all over the globe, but meeting them, doing life with them,

Jim & Annette



"I learnt so much on my trip, especially about the French attitude towards Protestantism"

and especially hearing them reading the Bible, singing praise, and praying to our Father in another language is like the tiniest foretaste of heaven. **Praise God** for each and every one of our brothers and sisters in France and across the globe, and pray that He will use them in each of their individual situations to bring more and more people into His Kingdom. **And pray** that God will continue to raise people up to go and spread the gospel to those who so desperately need it.



Nikki & Greg Saldi on what was the line of occupation in Descartes in WW2

If you want to know more about Lucy's trip, or would like to contact her, check out her blog: www.anothertrainee.wordpress.com (it's a great read!)

Building the church in Le Pré Saint Gervais



Other news from Paul Cooke



Missionaries Jonathan & Rachel Vaughan report on recent developments

Thank you so much for your prayers for our church AGM in March. We now have a list of people who have committed to church membership (16 people, from 9 different countries!), two of whom were elected to the church council. Whilst this is a small step in terms of the church's development, we're encouraged by the unity shown by the members, and that more people are involved leading and organising different activities.



Charity jumble sale at church

As well as our welcome team, we now have a small group of musicians who organised our first ever *soirée louange* in May – an extended time of worship through song, prayer, and Bible readings. Other church members organised two charity jumble sales, one in church and one as part of the town's annual *vide-grenier* (literally "empty-attic", i.e. a flea market). Several more people have joined the children's work team, and next year, God willing, they will be joined by two language students from the UK who

You can contact the Vaughans at jony.vaughan@gmail.com

are planning to spend 6 months each with us, which is a great encouragement.

We were pleased to be able to restart "Café church" in March, our monthly Sunday evening service with discussion around tables (using Dave Brown's *Passerelles* material). We remain convinced of its value for reaching those outside church. The two small groups that had been struggling were merged in April to become a Wednesday evening Bible study at church (currently looking at Ecclesiastes). We are encouraged to see new people attending these activities and the good times of discussions and sharing. In addition, one student, Mélie, is preparing for baptism in July.

However, while new people arrive, others seem to drift away or attend less regularly. There have been a few challenging pastoral issues and we still long to see conversions among friends, artists and choir members. We would appreciate your prayers for wisdom, perseverance and boldness in our evangelism.



The Vaughn family outside the church: Rachel, Naomi, Leah, Zoe, Stephanie, Jonathan (L to R)



The evangelistic DVD used for Café Church

Brand new DVD



Dave Brown and a team from the CNEF (National Council of French Evangelicals) have put together an excellent new DVD called *Envoyé-s*. The title means "Sent" and is based on Jesus' words in



John 20:21: "As the Father has sent me, I am sending you." The DVD comprises two 25-minute films providing a powerful reminder of the biblical basis for mission and a fascinating overview of the history of Christian mission, with a particular focus on French contributions. It also presents a couple of engaging contemporary scenarios designed to help all of us think about how we can be "missionaries" in our everyday lives. The aim is for the film to be screened in every evangelical church in France but, thanks to the subtitles, the DVD is entirely accessible to English-speaking viewers too. You might like to offer it to your church's mission group or consider it as a resource for Home Groups. We've spent about £10 per DVD getting them made but, if you'd like one, we're offering it to supporters completely free of charge. To order a copy, please use the response form that came with the magazine or email me at fmtrust@france-mission.org.

Next France Day (13th April 2019)

In the last issue, I asked if anyone would be willing to host the



next France Day at their church. As a result of that invitation, I'm delighted to give advance notice that the event will take place, God willing, on **Saturday 13th April 2019 at Brook Lane Community Church in Bromley** (www.brooklanecommunitychurch.org.uk). We were originally thinking of an event in autumn 2018, but spring 2019 has subsequently emerged as a better time. More details will be made available in due course, but please do save the date. It would be great to see you there!



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Each area representative offers your church or Christian
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- Up-to-date news about God's work in France.
- DVD presentations.
- PowerPoint presentations to explain France Mission's strategy.
- France Mission literature.

Please contact your local representative direct by
email, letter or phone as above.

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FRANCE MISSION is a French-based Protestant evangelical mission organisation founded in France in 1957. Our French headquarters is at 36 bis rue du Borrégo, 75020 Paris. We are a fellowship of over 120 church-planting missionaries of all nationalities, of whom the majority are French nationals and 14 come from the United Kingdom.

FRANCE MISSION (UK) is a registered charitable incorporated organisation, number 1176433; it succeeds a charitable trust of the same name founded in 1974. Our UK Trustees are: Bob Crockford, Colin Judkins, Helen Robinson, and Adrian Walter. France Mission (UK) is a member organisation of the Evangelical Alliance, Global Connections, and the South-West Agency Network. Donations should be made payable to "France Mission" and sent to the Exeter office. Gifts designated for particular missionaries or projects are forwarded without deduction.

This newsletter is also available in large print. It is published three times a year, and is available free of charge from:

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