

PERSPECTIVES

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Paul's Page: Unity and collaboration

Reflections by Paul Cooke, France Mission's UK Director

On 2nd March 2025, FM's main partner organisation in France – Perspectives – trialled their first ever “church-planting Sunday”, providing an opportunity for congregations to pray for church-plants in their area and to seek the Lord's guidance about whether they themselves should consider planting.

On 1st March 2026, the initiative was repeated, but not just in Perspectives churches. This time all 500 or so churches in the Réseau FEF (French Evangelical Federation) were invited to take part. As I write, the event is still future, but I'm excited to hear about how the Lord might have used it. It's certainly important: over 4,000 churches still need to be planted before the goal of one evangelical church for every 10,000 people in France is reached.

This coordinated event is a great example of increasing unity and collaboration within the evangelical world. The volunteer training programme discussed by Peter Calvert (pages 4-5 of this magazine) is another example – as it happens, another



Perspectives initiative that's been taken up by the Réseau FEF.

This spirit of unity and collaboration was very important in last year's *Célébrations 2025* – joint regional services coordinated and promoted by the CNEF (French Evangelical Alliance) on 5th October. Over 85 such services took place, with more than 70,000 people attending. As David Violleau from Agapé France told me: “Our joint service with churches from across the *Ille-et-Vilaine* department was attended by around 1,000 people. A historic first! It was such a powerful witness to our world that Jesus is still worthy of celebration today! It was also deeply encouraging to see over 1,000 evangelical Christians from the region, united in their diversity, lifting up the name of Jesus with one heart. This is a truly significant moment for the gospel in Brittany.”

This was just one of the projects that France Mission supported last year through its **General Fund**. And, as I share on page 14 of this issue, the General Fund needs your prayerful support. Many thanks in advance.

Every blessing in Christ

Paul



Paul Cooke

Front page photo: Gathering in Berry-Sud



Nurturing discipleship, art, and intergenerational discussions



Pastoral couple Jonathan & Rachel Vaughan appreciate your prayers for Paris-Cardinet

This month (March) we're starting a monthly discipleship course, aimed particularly at those who've been baptised recently, with monthly sessions after the Sunday morning service. We'll cover topics in Christian doctrine and practical lifestyle issues; the participants will prepare for each session by reading a section of a book (or watching a video, for those who are less keen on reading) and answering questions which we'll discuss together. Please pray that the sessions would help the group to grow in their faith.

Our next art exhibition will open on 29th May and run throughout the month of June. This year's theme is “silence”; we're curious to see what the artists will contribute in response to the Bible verses we've chosen. The exhibition is a chance to continue conversations about faith with the artists, give people from the neighbourhood (including those who live in the same building) a reason to visit our premises, and maintain the positive relationships we have with the local council. Please pray that church members would use the exhibition as an opportunity to invite their friends or colleagues, and that it would prompt meaningful discussions about the Christian faith.

In our morning services we're working through the second half of Judges (picking up where we left off in 2024), followed by a series on Romans 7–12. Once a month



Last year's art exhibition

we now have an interactive all-age service

on the theme of identity, using the fantastic “Who Am I?” material created by Faith in Kids (translated into French by CERIE). The congregation appreciates the different format, where in small mixed-age groups we have the chance to use our creative talents and discuss the everyday implications of what we're learning from the Bible. Praise God for this new way of exploring the Bible and pray that our hearts would be changed by what we learn together.



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



Equipe! – Perspectives rolls out its new grass-roots training programme

Missionary pastor Peter Calvert shares his thoughts on this initiative



One of the main differences between the French and British evangelical worlds is the disparity in the amount of available resources. For some time, Perspectives has been looking to develop resources to help local church leaders train the members of their churches in practical

“One of the main differences between the French and British evangelical worlds is the disparity in the amount of available resources.”

skills for Christian living and church service. Last year, a new programme entitled *Equipe!*, headed up by Arnaud Schrodi of the Perspectives national leadership team, was launched nationwide. It's an **ambitious venture**, intended to run on a 4-year cycle, covering 12 topics, from discipleship to leadership and from preaching to personal piety. Supporters of France Mission in the UK have contributed to funding this project, for which we're all very grateful.



Session on leadership for eastern/central Paris group

Though the material (consisting of a training manual and a series of videos) is produced at the national level, the **sessions are organised at a regional level** with several local churches grouping together. Any other churches in the area (beyond the Perspectives network) who share our philosophy of ministry are welcome to join in. The aim is to benefit from the stimulation of sharing experiences with folk from other churches, whilst keeping travel to a minimum. In areas where churches are thinly spread, there will be maybe only two churches grouped together, such as the Berry/Sologne region, where I worked until last summer. In the Paris region, where I now work, or in Alsace, where there is a higher density of churches, there can be six or seven churches grouped together.

Each session lasts a whole day, and there are six of them in the year, but participants



Session on Bible interpretation in southern Central region

can choose the topics they want to study. The material is good quality and the teaching style very interactive, so **we don't get bored**. Those who've made the effort to come have generally found the experience rewarding. Nevertheless, it's not always easy to motivate church members, particularly those who already give a lot of their time to church activities, to give up a whole Saturday for training. And yet these are the people it's most important to train!

We'd value your prayers for the ongoing development of this programme:

- For the inspiration of the Holy Spirit on Arnaud and the team who make the training material. They work to a tight schedule. Pray that their teaching would be biblically faithful and stimulating.

- For the Lord to raise up large numbers of local church members, especially those with leadership responsibilities, to make the most of the training sessions.
- For those who organise and lead the sessions in each of the 14 different sub-regions; that they would do it with grace and enthusiasm. The next session is on the topic of discipleship.

Paul Cooke adds: “A really big thank you to everyone who contributed financially to help this important initiative become a reality. Thanks to your generosity, France Mission has been able to send over £9,000 to Perspectives to pay for the creation and production of materials.”

You can contact Peter at pierrezachel.calvert@gmail.com



Introductory video with Arnaud Schrodi



An example from the resource site



Studying at the Nogent Bible Institute



Pablo da Silva shares his experiences

[Note from Paul Cooke: Thanks to the generosity of FM supporters, Pablo is one of the students France Mission has been able to support this year from the Education & Training Fund. I'm grateful to Dawn Pineda Meunier for translating his news.]

Hello, my name's Pablo. I'm a student in my **second year** at the Institut Biblique de Nogent (IBN) and I've recently celebrated my 24th birthday. I'm Brazilian, born in the Minas Gerais state, and I arrived in France at the age of eight. Today, I live in the Val-de-Marne department, near Paris, with my wife of 2 years, Raffaella.

“My first year at IBN was incredible and impacted me both spiritually and personally.”

My first year at IBN was incredible and impacted me both spiritually and personally. It was the first time that I'd dedicated a whole year to **studying the Word of God**. I've also formed great friendships that mean a lot to me.



IBN campus where Pablo & Raffaella have a flat

I've learnt a lot through the **various courses**. Lydia Jaeger's classes on doctrine helped me to better structure my faith and theology. I also learned a lot from the course on the prophets and proclaiming the Word of God with Matthieu Gangloff.



Lydia Jaeger



Matthieu Gangloff

Alongside my studies, I'm an administrator on the **student committee**. It's a joy to help "behind the scenes" with events. We've organised an induction day, a neighbourhood party, and a big Christmas party, as well as planning for a future student residence. At the Christmas party, I had the opportunity to be a host, and my wife and I met the families of classmates and teachers, which brought us closer together.

I'm also grateful for the opportunity to serve at **my church**, IBNJ France in Sevran. At Halloween time, we put on a concert which local residents attended and we've been encouraged to see some of them at our meetings since. We also organised our first Christmas market and shared the true meaning of Christmas with many people from the area.

God is continuing to teach me through this second year at IBN. I really appreciated the



Pablo and wife Raffaella

classes on doctrine given by Matt Mory. The idea of exams was **stressful** for me but with work and perseverance I passed the first doctrine exam, for which I'm very grateful. While studying Hebrews, I gave a presentation with my classmate Márcio, which went very well.

We've finished a course on Revelation with Matthieu Gangloff, which I found enriching. At first, I didn't know what to expect, but the content was explained with **great clarity**. I was very happy to see our former director, Etienne Lhermenault, back from sick leave to teach pastoral care, which I really enjoyed. In the first semester, I also took classes in hermeneutics, ethics, the Synoptic Gospels, and a public speaking course that has given me confidence.



Pablo and fellow IBN students

This second year at IBN has been a real blessing. I'm grateful for all the teaching, every friendship, and each opportunity to serve at church and on the student committee. **I can see the Lord's grace** in my personal life, in my marriage with Raffaella and in all that He allows us to experience and accomplish.

To conclude, I have a few **prayer requests**:

- Thankfulness for 2025 – for the Lord's faithfulness, for all He's already accomplished and for the opportunity to continue my studies at IBN.
- Gratitude for our current situation – for our accommodation and God's daily provision for our household.
- Prayer for my wife's pregnancy – we give thanks for this pregnancy. Despite the anxiety caused by a miscarriage last year, we want to choose to trust and give our fears to the Lord, asking for His peace, protection, and grace.
- Prayer for wisdom and financial stability so that we can organise our finances well and continue studying while taking care of our household and family.

You can contact Pablo at dasilvapablo2014@gmail.com
To find out more about the IBN, go to ibnogent.org



Building for the future of evangelical theological training in the francophone world



News from Acacia Martinez, responsible for Communications and Fundraising at FLTE

In 1965, the four main French-speaking Bible Institutes, in partnership with the Association of Professing Churches, decided to establish a university-level theological training institution: the **Faculté Libre de Théologie Evangélique (FLTE)** was founded in Vaux-sur-Seine, 40 km west of Paris.

The construction of the student residence in the 1970s provided on-campus housing for students, some of whom came from far away. This was followed by the creation of a library and new classrooms to accommodate the growing student body. Beyond the buildings, the training programs have also **diversified over the years**, notably with in-service training, distance learning, and the introduction of e-learning. Since the 2010s, the teaching

staff has grown and become more diverse, particularly with the creation of new full-time positions.

“Since its inception, the impact of FLTE on the French-speaking evangelical world has been considerable.”

Since its inception, the impact of FLTE on the French-speaking evangelical world has been considerable, both in Europe and in Africa and Canada. Since 1965, nearly **1,300 students have graduated** from FLTE! The quality of theological reflection it’s fostered and the influence of the ministry of those it’s helped to train have made it a leading faculty serving the Church and mission.

Today, **FLTE comprises:**

- 377 students across all programs
- 36 rooms, 1 studio, and 1 apartment (all renovated)
- 3 hectares of parkland along the River Seine
- 25 professors (7 full professors, 5 associate professors, and 13 lecturers)
- 29,000 documents in the library

But **we need to expand:** we have 100 students on campus for a maximum



Staff and students worshipping together on site

capacity of 78, the current buildings no longer meet standards, and the university library is overcrowded.

That’s why, in our 60th anniversary year, **construction of our new building** began last summer. This long-planned project marks a significant milestone for our Faculty. The new building will meet all legal requirements, allow for the renovation of the existing building, the creation of two new classrooms, and will double the space dedicated to the library and group work.

Currently, FLTE has only one academic building of 680m², comprising three classrooms with a total capacity of 78 students, a meeting room, and offices for eight people, but without accessibility for



Groundworks are underway

people with reduced mobility. The 250m² library is already completely full.

In the future, the campus will have two academic buildings totalling 1280m²: four classrooms (capacity: 160 students), four meeting and collaborative work rooms, new offices, full accessibility for people with reduced mobility, and a new 400m² library and research centre.

Beyond the square footage, a **vision is taking shape:** to offer a modern, welcoming, and open learning environment, serving the mission that has always driven us.

We’re **hugely grateful** that we’ve already received nearly €1.1 million in donations and €680,000 in loans to finance this project. Only €430,000 is still needed to cover the entire cost.

This project is more than just a real-estate endeavour: it embodies our desire to share knowledge, to welcome, and to educate in the best possible conditions. And it’s only possible thanks to the generosity of those who believe in the importance of a grounded, vibrant, and forward-looking evangelical theology. **Thank you** to all of you who support this vision through your prayers, your commitment, and your donations. Together, we’re building more than just facilities: we’re laying the foundations for the generations who will serve the churches and Christian ministries of tomorrow.

Thanks to the generosity of supporters, France Mission was able to contribute €10,000 to this project in 2025.

You can contact Acacia at acacia.martinez@flte.fr
To find out more about FLTE, go to flte.fr/discover-flte/

To visualise the building project, go to youtube.com/watch?v=JeeqCac3OXo



Computer-generated impression of the new library



Encouraging French churches by praying and visiting



FM Trustees Annie & Mike Nixon report on a recent visit to central France

During a recent stay at our house in France, we had the joy of visiting three Perspectives churches in central France. The first one was in **Châteauroux**, led by **Elcio & Sueli Rocha**. This church is growing, baptising new believers, and welcoming young people and families. "We try to live what we preach", shares pastor Elcio. "Every person here is encouraged to fully engage and take some responsibility for sharing the gospel in the area in which we live." For Elcio and Sueli, getting to know and understand the local Berry culture has been an important part of the journey. At this

with us, but he also felt very welcome and could follow the service. The church would **appreciate prayer** for their ongoing development in habits of prayer, Bible study, and mission during the week, not just on Sundays.



Berry-Sud

Our next visit was to the **Berry-Sud church in Argenton-sur-Creuse**. They meet in a small countryside village. We were made very welcome, enjoyed worship and a Bible discussion with them, and were invited to stay for a shared lunch after the service. Pastors **Elise and Michaël Duchemann** recently moved to plant a church in Fougères in Brittany and remain as *pasteurs accompagnateurs* to this small but faithful church group 4 hours' drive from Fougères. The church are very close



Enjoying a meal with Elcio & Sueli Rocha in Châteauroux

church we were given a wonderfully warm welcome – the French habit of everyone greeting everyone as they arrive really helps here! We had a non-French speaker

to completing work on a building in the town centre, where they hope it will be easier to attract new arrivals. **Luc Bonin-Bouchillega**, who currently leads the services locally, admits that it's a challenge developing the church and getting the building work finished. He shares that Christian growth can be very slow in the Indre region, which is historically hostile to the evangelical church, a centre of New Age religion, and known as "the cradle of witchcraft". This church would **appreciate prayer** and financial support to get their building finished.



Loches

For our third visit we went to the beautiful town of Loches. This church has been established for 15 years in a good location. It's been through a quieter period recently but now appears to be ripe for growth again, with a definite focus on attracting local residents. New initiatives are starting such as young people's groups and men's group breakfasts. With a *pasteur accompagnateur*, **Marc Van Eijden**, based in Tours, the church is organised locally by **Naomi Berthonneau** in any time she can spare from running her beautiful B&B. She **asks for prayer** for growth and

raising awareness of their ministry among locals, for volunteers to start up the new initiatives, for a better understanding locally of Catholicism and evangelicalism, and for unity within the church. She says that their evangelism is all about building relationships with people and that this process can take a very long time in France before someone is likely to step into an evangelical church. American missionaries **Bethany and Joe** with their three school-age girls have recently joined the team and would **appreciate prayer** for settling in, for developing their language skills quickly, and for the girls settling at school. We were given a very warm welcome here, enjoyed the service, and were invited back to dinner afterwards.

When asked what France Mission supporters can best do to encourage them, as well as giving financially, two things were said by all three church leaders:

"Your prayers for us pastors, for the church, and for France make all the difference."

Please pray: "Your prayers for us pastors, for the church, and for France make all the difference."

Please visit: "When people from other parts of the world are interested enough to come and support us and pray with us, it's so encouraging!"

If you visit a French church, you may find that you start a life-long friendship of prayer and encouragement.

You can contact Annie & Mike at annnixon@btinternet.com



Over 30 years as a missionary

Recently retired pastor Chris Lloyd reflects on what he's learned

We started out as missionaries in 1994 and I retired on 1st January 2026 – not from God's work, but as pastor of the local church and as regards French administration. Being retired is actually a more normal status to most French people than being a pastor!

What have I learnt, or rather am still learning? What am I convinced of after 30 years of ministry?

To begin with, God's unchanging ambition for every one of His children. Whatever your life is or has been, God has an unwavering will to make you holy and to conform you to the likeness of His Son.



Churches where Chris has served as a missionary pastor:

- 1 - Châteauroux (1994-2007)
- 2 - Auxerre (2007-2014)
- 3 - Auray (2014-2020)
- 4 - Bourg-en-Bresse (2020-2025)



Chris & Fiona in 1994 (being introduced to FM supporters for the first time)

The human heart, or mine at least, resembles a Gordian knot of motivations, desires, ambitions, beliefs, and attitudes. Perhaps at the beginning of our walk of faith, we believe that we're more or less alright, we may trust our own judgement and think that our vision of the world is true and real. I don't know the details of your life, but I do know that being a missionary has revealed the unsoundness of my heart. And by heart I don't mean my emotions, but beliefs, attitudes, thoughts, and desires.

At the beginning of missionary work in Châteauroux I thought I knew what was in my heart, what was expected of me, and I was ambitious to see church growth. Thirty years later **my heart is a mystery to me**, even though God has used many different situations to confront my attitudes and beliefs and reveal what I am to myself.



Chris & Fiona today

“God is completely given over to conforming us to being like Jesus.”

God is completely given over to conforming us to **being like Jesus**. He's patient in doing so. He may build up a situation over a long period of time, using frustration, anxiety, pain, and grief to show falsehood, unbelief, and sin. He can transform in a very short period of time, and He can wait for a very long one, but all is oriented around making me like Christ.

I wouldn't have naturally chosen to be a missionary. It's too uncomfortable and has put me in situations I'd rather not have gone through. But it wasn't my choice, and I'm not sure that I'd have **grown down into Christ** in the same way if I'd chosen a career more suited to my personality.

I like being appreciated for what I do and for who I am. When you work in a public role with people who are volunteers, each person has an opinion on what you should do and be. An unholy motivation needs to be transformed into a **godly ambition** – personal security in the gospel of redemption and knowing oneself loved

completely by God, for whose glory we live.

After three years of Bible college, I thought I knew what **success in missionary work** looked like and was anxious to succeed. Two out of the four places I worked in seemed successful and two seemed to be failures. Conflict was present in each. Were my criteria for judging success correct?

I believe **God accomplishes His will** and He mysteriously weaves our lives into that will. What seems to us to be a catastrophic failure can in fact be the means for God to accomplish His plan, just as what seems a categoric success can be an expression of pride.

What does **the future** hold? For the next few months, we'll spend time thinking and praying about how we might best be of service to God, either where we are or moving on to pastures new.

Thank you to all those who've supported Chris & Fiona through prayers and finances over the years. Praise God for what He's accomplished through them and ask Him to direct their steps for the future.

You can contact Chris & Fiona at chris.lloyd@orange.fr



The France Mission General Fund

UK Director Paul Cooke explains why this fund is so important

I quite understand why giving to the General Fund seems less appealing than giving to individual workers or specific projects. The "General Fund" just seems... well, a bit dull and generic! But it's actually **vital to the functioning of France Mission**. Without a healthy General Fund, we wouldn't be able to do anything else.

"Without a healthy General Fund, we wouldn't be able to do anything else."

Here's how our general funds (that is, your gifts) were spent in 2025:

Employment	34%
Grants to workers & projects in France	34%
Communications (print & social media)	19%
IT	4%
Accounting	3%
Travel & accommodation	2%
Insurance & subscriptions	1%
Advertising & exhibiting	1%
Legal	1%
Other	1%

I hope you feel this represents **good stewardship** of resources. We rely totally on the generosity of FM supporters for the General Fund; we don't levy any charges for central costs on the gifts we receive (apart from the very rare occasions when

we administer external grants). At least, that's been our practice so far... However, we're now **facing a problem**. One-off gifts to the General Fund dipped significantly in 2025, from an average of £3,926 per month in 2024 to £2,660 per month in 2025. That's a decrease of almost a third. And although the value of regular gifts (standing orders, direct debits, etc.) to the General Fund has remained fairly constant over the past decade, that actually equates to a significant decline, since the UK's **cumulative inflation** has been about 43% over that period. In other words, you'd need £143 today to buy what you could buy with £100 in 2015.

Although I try and find cost-effective solutions for everything we do, I'm sure you'll have noticed that the prices of nearly everything continue to rise. Those **price rises affect our costs** as an organisation. That's why the next France Mission appeal letter will focus on the General Fund.

I'm immensely grateful to everyone who gives to the General Fund, whether one-off or regular gifts. **Your prayers and generosity are essential** to supporting the Lord's work in France. Thank you in advance for prayerfully considering whether you might be able to respond to what I've shared here.

You can contact Paul at paulcooke@francemission.org

News in brief from Paul Cooke

France Day: 10th October 2026

God willing, this year's France Day will be held at **Pannal Village Hall** (near Harrogate in North Yorkshire: HG3 1JG) on Saturday 10th October from 10.30am to 4.30pm. Our main speaker from France will be either **Jack or Sarah Winterburn** (depending on childcare arrangements). Jack & Sarah are ECM missionaries who've been the pastoral couple at the Perspectives church in Saint-Brieuc (Brittany) since summer 2025. We'll also have the pleasure of **Chris & Fiona Lloyd** joining us to mark Chris' retirement from full-time ministry. The day will include times for prayer, worship, structured discussion, Q&A, conversations, and food!



Jack & Sarah Winterburn



Chris & Fiona Lloyd

If you'd be interested in coming along, please drop me an email at paulcooke@francemission.org for catering purposes. If you're making a weekend of it, Premier Inn's **Harrogate South Hotel** (HG2 8RA) might be a convenient base, being close to Hornbeam station, which is just one stop by train from Pannal Station, right by the venue. Pannal is well connected by road, rail, and air (Leeds Bradford Airport), and there's ample parking at the Village Hall. I'm really looking forward to it!

The Faithful Traitor

FM Area Rep **John Adamson** has written another "**biblical novel**", this time focusing on **Elijah**. It's called *The Faithful Traitor*: "An unexpected visitor from his hometown brings more than memories of childhood to Eran. Already suffering banishment by his traitorous family, he accepts a legacy of bitterness and isolation. Yahweh's faithfuls are trapped by the despotic, authoritarian regime of Ahab and Jezebel. Eternal truths are decried, distorted and denied as their stormy relationship brings chaos, uncertainty and fear, through idolatry, immorality, torture and murder. The Lord chooses Elijah for the dauntingly high-risk mission of confronting these traitors to His people and His covenant. He threatens justice, but will He ever deliver?" John is kindly donating sales income to France Mission. **If you'd like a copy, please use the response form or email me.**



Theology Week with A Rocha France

A Rocha is organising a week at **Les Courmettes** entitled "Hoping Against Hope: Theology for an Anxious Age", **16-22 August 2026**, with Dr Andrew Shepherd from the University of Otago, New Zealand. For more details see courmettes.com/en/hoping-against-hope-theology-for-an-anxious-age/

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 **Give as you Live** – 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 bit.ly/FM-GAYL and help us raise more funds to support the Lord's work in France.

Thank you!

