

**AMP 5-24-15 | 9:00 - 9:30am**

**Today's Service**

- That God would draw unsaved people to our service, and into his kingdom.
- That Pastor Jon would preach in God's power as he finishes 1 Corinthians.
- That God's presence would be palpable and that all in attendance would be changed by the goodness, power, and love of God.

**RPC Outreach**

- That we the people of RPC would desire to be a word and deed church.
- That God would open up great and lasting opportunities of community service for RPC.

**Regional Church**

- Pray for the other churches of our presbytery: Westminster Orthodox Presbyterian Church, Jonathan Holst (Hamden, CT); Orthodox Presbyterian Church in Bohemia, Meindert Ploegman (Bohemia, NY); Orthodox Presbyterian Church in Franklin Square, William Shishko (Franklin Square, NY), Trinity Church, Ben Miller (Syosset, NY), Westchester Orthodox Presbyterian Church, Dan Osborne (Mt. Vernon, NY).

**France | Basic Country Facts:**



**Operation World Denomination Statistics**

Christians	Deno ms	Pop %	Affiliates	Ann Gr
<b>Protestant</b>	100	1.91	1,193,000	1.1%
<b>Independent</b>	31	0.14	86,000	3.7%
<b>Anglican</b>	1	0.03	18,000	-1.1%
<b>Catholic</b>	3	57.58	36,068,000	-0.7%
<b>Orthodox</b>	12	1.05	660,000	1.1%
<b>Marginal</b>	16	0.56	350,000	0.1%
<b>Doubly Affiliated</b>		-0.13	-80,000	0.0%

**Ethnic Breakdown:** European 83.5%: French 69.5%. Germanic 5.1%: Alsatian 2.6%; Fleming 1.3%; German 1.0%. Other European 8.9%. Italian 1.7%; Basque 1.4%; Portuguese 1.4%; Slav(6) 1.4%; Spaniard 1.1%; Armenian 0.7%; Catalonian 0.5%. North African/Middle Eastern 9.2%: Berber (Kabyle, Shawiya, Riff, others) 5.6%; North African Arab 2.0%; Levant Arab 0.6%; many other Middle Eastern/West Asian peoples. African/Caribbean 4.0%: Representing every francophone nation, most West and Central African ethnic groups and French Caribbean ethnicities. Asian 2.0%: Vietnamese 0.9%; Chinese 0.4%; Lao/Hmong 0.2%. Other 1.3%. Jews 0.8%; Romani 0.4%.

**Major Languages:** French (official) 100%, rapidly declining regional dialects and languages (Provençal, Breton, Alsatian, Corsican, Catalan, Basque, Flemish)

**Religion:** Christian (overwhelmingly Roman Catholic) 63-66%, Muslim 7-9%, Jewish .5-.75%, Buddhist .5-.75%, other .5-1.0%, none 23-28% Note: France maintains a tradition of secularism and has not officially collected data on religious affiliation since the 1872 national census

**Population:** 62,814,233 (metropolitan France only - July 2014 est.)

**Life Expectancy:** male: 78.55 years female: 84.91 years (2014 est.)

**Government:** Republic.

**Economic Conditions:** The French economy is diversified across all sectors. The government has partially or fully privatized many large companies, including Air France, France Telecom, Renault, and Thales. However, the government maintains a strong presence in some sectors, particularly power, public transport, and defense industries. With more than 84 million foreign tourists per year, France is the most visited country in the world and maintains the third largest income in the world from tourism. France's leaders remain committed to a capitalism in which they maintain social equity by means of laws, tax policies, and social spending that mitigate economic inequality.

**GDP Per Capita:** \$40,400 (2014 est.)

**GDP - composition, by sector of origin:** agriculture: 1.7% industry: 19.4% services: 78.9% (2014 est.)

**Education:** the schooling system in France is centralized, and is composed of three stages, primary education, secondary education, and higher education. The Programme for International Student Assessment currently ranks France's education as the 25th best in the world, being neither significantly higher nor lower than the OECD average. Primary and secondary education are predominantly public, run by the Ministry of National Education. Higher education in France is divided between public universities and the prestigious and selective Grandes écoles.

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**State of the Church:** France is a secular country, and freedom of religion is a constitutional right. French religious policy is based on the concept of laïcité, a strict separation of church and state under which public life is kept completely secular. Catholicism has been the predominant religion in France for more than a millennium, though it is not as actively practiced today as it was. Among the 47,000 religious buildings in France, 94% are Roman Catholic. While in 1965, 81% of the French declared themselves to be Catholics, in 2009 this proportion was 64%. Moreover, while 27% of the French went to Mass once a week or more in 1952, only 5% did so in 2006.

Evangelical Christianity has grown over the last 50 years despite the systemic secularization of society, religious indifference and decline in church involvement. In 1960, evangelicals in France numbered 180,000; by 1990, they had reached nearly 400,000, and in 2010, they were 600,000. Evangelicals meet in over 2,500 fellowships with dozens more forming every year.

### **Prayer Points:**

- Protestants were accepted at the Reformation, and at one stage some estimate that up to 25% of the French population had embraced the new teaching. But persecution (from the mid-16th Century until the late 18th Century), humanism and nominalism (in the last 200 years) have reduced this to 1.9% in 2010. Protestantism – though widely respected – is spiritually compromised by liberal theology, universalism and the acceptance of contradictory doctrinal and ethical views. Protestants are more numerous in Alsace and the south, but nominalism and decline are common. Yet there are staunch evangelical believers in most Reformed and Lutheran congregations. Pray for restoration to the faith and commitment shown by their martyr forebears. (OW 5)
- Evangelical Christians are few (1.0% across all confessions), split between many denominations and confessions. They demonstrate high levels of commitment and are a younger population than France's average. Growth is steady, and a new congregation is planted almost every week. Pentecostals and charismatics are the fastest growing. This is all in the face of strong secularizing trends in public life. To most French people, the evangelical message is still seen as an alien ideology of immigrant groups and of the American right wing rather than an indigenous expression of spirituality. This bias has led to discrimination and difficulties in dealing with local authorities. Pray for transparency and good conduct by evangelicals that will demonstrate the positive impact on society their faith can have. Physical and human resources are a key to church growth in France. Having a visible building gives the Church credibility. But pioneer churches have to face two challenges simultaneously: hiring a pastor and finding a building. Pray for God to provide solutions to these formidable challenges. (OW 6,a,d)
- On 17 May the United Protestant Church of France, France's largest Protestant Church, the fourth-largest religious group in the country (about 110,000 active members and 400,000 believers), has voted for its pastors to give their blessing to homosexual couples. It was created back in 2012-2013 after the merger of the Reformed Church and the Evangelical Lutheran Church. The decision was supported by 94 delegates out of 100. Only three voted against blessing homosexual couples. However, the vicars who oppose the practice won't be forced to perform it. France legalized gay marriages and adoption of children by gay couples in May 2013. Pray for the conservative Christians still in the church would not be compelled to provide the blessings. (<http://rt.com/news/259489-france-protestants-gay-marriage/>)