

## Diversity makes us stronger

*“There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus.” —Galatians 3:28*

Dear Friends,

*Bonjour! Comment allez-vous?* (Pronounced “bohng-ZHOOR, kuh-mahng tah-lay VOO.”) In French, that means, “Hello! How are you?” In Mennonite churches in France you can also hear greetings in Lingala (Congo) and Malagasy (Madagascar)—in fact, there are 13 different countries represented in our churches! Can you name 13 countries?

“Diverse” is a good way to describe our churches. It means that there are people who are different from each other. Some have brown hair, black, or blond. Some are rich, and some don’t have very much money. Some have lived in France their whole lives, and others have recently moved from another country.

In some ways our differences are like our potlucks at church! (And who doesn’t like a potluck or carry-in?) Our diversity represents all the different dishes on the table, with different ingredients and flavors, and together we make the meal more delicious and beautiful than it would be if everything looked and tasted the same!

We can gain a lot by making friends with people who are different from us:

1. We can share with others the songs, food, and other things from our culture, and learn from our differences.
2. We can learn how Christians live out their faith differently in their culture or country.

3. We can learn to be tolerant. When you are young and learn to be friends with people who are different from you, it will help you when you grow up not be scared of people who are different from you.

So when you go to school or church and see someone who is different from you, don’t make fun of them! Say “hello” and get to know them. Ask about their favorite food or a special birthday tradition ... it may be similar to yours, or a lot different from your own. After all, life becomes boring if we only spend time with people like us!

From,

Your friends in France

*\*Written with the help of Brad Graber, Brenna Steury Graber, and youth from the Châtenay-Malabry Mennonite congregation.*

### Questions for discussion

1. What does diversity mean?
2. Read 1 Corinthians 12:15-20. According to this verse, how do you think Jesus feels about diversity?
3. Where do you see diversity in your school or church?
4. How can you be kind to people even though you each have differences?

### Prayer

*Dear Jesus, thank you for creating people who do not always think, look or act like me. Thank you for the gifts and ideas that they bring. Help me to be kind to everyone regardless of our differences.*



Photo by Karen Spacher

**Celebrating diversity**—The children of *Eglise Evangelique Mennonite* are asked during Sunday service what they want to be when they grow up.

### Our gifts can help support mission in France.

Mission Network supports a variety of ministries in France. One of the primary ways that mission happens is by sharing the good news of Jesus through friendships and loving our neighbors. In Paris, that means gathering people from all over the city. Our mission workers use cars, buses and trains to get around the city. We want to help make this “getting together travel” possible. **For example, did you know that \$2 helps pay for one metro ticket to church?**

**Gift designation.** All gifts to support ministries in France should be sent to Mennonite Mission Network, PO Box 370, Elkhart, IN 46515-0370. Please indicate that the funds are for **“Mission Bank—France”** or **“Project #1618.”**

▶ For more activities and stories, visit [www.MennoniteMission.net/FranceMissionBank](http://www.MennoniteMission.net/FranceMissionBank).

FRANCE



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