

Franco-Belgian Union Conference

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The Franco-Belgian Union Conference was created in 1928 and has been in operation since then overseeing the work of Seventh-day Adventists in Belgium, France (including Corsica), Luxembourg, and Monaco. It is a part of the Inter-European Division of Seventh-day Adventists.

Territory: Belgium, France (including Corsica), Luxembourg, and Monaco. It is composed of the Belgian-Luxembourg, North France, and South France Conferences.

Statistics (June 30, 2020): Churches, 174; membership, 18,940; population, 77,124,000.¹

Creation of the Entity

The Franco-Belgian Union Conference was created in 1928 and became effective on January 1, 1929.

In a meeting held in Darmstadt, Germany, the committee of the European Division decided to divide its territory into four new divisions, one being the Southern European Division. This new division opted for the dissolution of the Latin Union Conference and the reorganization of its territory. Consequently, France and Belgium would form the Franco-Belgian Union Conference.²

The Franco-Belgian Union Conference was officially organized at its constituency meeting held in Dammarie-les-Lys (Seine et Marne, France) on July 30, 1928, and its main task was to establish this new organization.³ On September 2, the committees of the Belgian, East France, North France, and South France conferences met in Paris, France: they specified certain aspects of the new union and chose its leaders.⁴ Oscar Meyer was elected union president; Jules Robert, secretary, treasurer, and auditor; Walter Raymond Beach, departmental director of Sabbath School and Mission; and Dr. Jean Nussbaum, who served as editor of the *Vie et Santé* magazine from 1923 to 1939,⁵ director of the medical department.⁶

In January 1929, the first plenary committee of the Southern European Division, in a meeting held in Gland (Vaud, Switzerland) and chaired by Albert Victor Olson, ratified the dissolution of the Latin Union Conference and the creation of the Franco-Belgian Union Conference (FBUC), bringing together the four conferences of Belgium and France.⁷

At its organization, the FBUC had 1660 church members including 50 workers for a general population of about 50 million inhabitants.⁸ In addition, the FBUC was blessed to have two important institutions in its territory: the publishing house *Les Signes des Temps* located in Dammarie-les-Lys (Seine et Marne, France) since 1922, which was then directed by H. L. Henriksen; and the Adventist Seminary of Collonges-sous-Salève (Haute-Savoie, France), created in 1921. There was also a small food factory called *Pur-Aliment*.⁹ The churches had provided missionaries for Madagascar, Mauritius, Cameroon, and North Africa. Its main office, with the one of the North France Conference, was located in Paris in the 13th district, 1 rue Nicolas Roret, on the 4th floor.¹⁰

Development before World War II

Establishment of an Administrative Headquarters

One of the concerns of the North France Conference was to have a building for both the local church of Paris and the Conference administrative headquarters. The new Franco-Belgian Union Conference also needed an administrative main office in Paris. In 1928, a plot of land, situated at 130 Boulevard de L'Hôpital in the 13th district of Paris, was purchased.¹¹ Later, the building was built with the financial support of the General Conference. Opened on April 4, 1931, the headquarters was officially inaugurated on June 20, 1931, in the presence of numerous delegates from different missionary territories who were on their way to the General Conference session.¹²

Administrative Functioning

In addition to the administrative meetings of the four conferences¹³ that constituted the FBUC, two union administrative assemblies were held in Paris during this period: The first was from July 1st to 10th, 1932.¹⁴ The quadrennial rhythm of these assemblies was decided then. The second took place from August 25 to 30, 1936.¹⁵ This rhythm was later interrupted during the war period.

Missionary Progress

At the end of 1935, the FBUC had 2,160 church members. There had been 681 baptisms and an increase of 303 members since its creation. At the end of 1939, the FBUC counted 70 churches and 2,494 members.¹⁶

The Home Missionary department organized regional conferences¹⁷ twice a year to involve all the members: for the Great Week in the spring and the Ingathering campaign in the fall. The goal was to raise funds for the Adventist mission stations and to make the Adventist Church and its message known through printed materials. The Publishing Department coordinated the work of full-time and part-time colporteurs (57 colporteurs worked in 1937, and 20 students from the Saleve Adventist Seminary participated in the canvassing program in the summer to finance their studies).¹⁸ They earned their living while spreading the Adventist message through the magazines *Signes des Temps* and *Vie et Santé*, as well as the books printed by the publishing house Les Signes des Temps.

Bible study for the members and their children was provided by the Sabbath School with lessons published in the *Revue Adventiste*, which appeared every 15 days. Young people were invited to join the Missionary Volunteer (MV) movement: At least two congresses were organized for this purpose by the Southern European Division in July 1935, with 425 participants,¹⁹ and in July 1938 on the campus of the Adventist Seminary in Collonges-sous-Salève. In 1937, the association of Missionary Volunteers was officially organized, and its statutes submitted to the prefecture for recognition.²⁰

The first church school recorded was located in Strasbourg in the East France Conference.²¹ The union also had a medical department that trained the church members to live according to the health principles adopted by Seventh-day Adventists. The food factory Pur-Aliment continued to operate in Paris. Its financial results were deemed “splendid” in the pre-war years.²²

During World War II

This period was a difficult one. It was impossible to have an administrative assembly of the union between 1936 and 1946. Still, it was necessary to elect new leaders and support the work of the conferences and their different local churches.

The FBUC offices remained open until June 10, 1940. Several Seventh-day Adventists were called for military service. Others, including pastors, colporteurs, and employees, moved from their homes in the area occupied by the Nazis to take refuge in safer places in the free zone. There was a drop in the sales of the magazine *Vie et Santé* and books on health but an increase in the sales of religious books and the number of baptisms due to the work of the colporteurs.²³

As war broke out, the FBUC team withdrew to Anduze, Gard, on Paul Badaut’s property. Jean Weidner recounts that he drove A. J. Giroud’s car, a black Renault, with Oscar Meyer, then-president of the FBUC, Gabrielle Weidner, his secretary, Elise Pache and Marthe Abgraal, two other secretaries of the FBUC office, on board,²⁴ after the bombing and occupation of Paris²⁵ in 1940. But no deaths were reported among military and Adventist civilians during this first phase of the war.

In October 1941, seven graduate students from Collonges were employed in the union.²⁶ The administration of the FBUC and the North France Conference seems to have moved back to Paris because their president, Oscar Meyer, asked to be relieved of his functions. The committees of the Union and the Conference decide to call Frederick Charpiot, director of Saleve Adventist Seminary, to become their president and to ask Georges Haberey, then director of the publishing house Les Signes des Temps, to hold that position until the arrival of Charpiot. In July 1942, an assembly of the North France Conference was organized in Paris. It was an opportunity to appoint new individuals to responsibilities that others had left.²⁷

On February 26, 1944, Gabrielle Weidner, the secretary of the union president, was arrested during the worship service at the Adventist Church of Paris, and he later died in a concentration camp.²⁸ Paul Meyer, pastor of the Adventist Church in Lyon, was also arrested and deported to Dachau, Germany, where he died.²⁹

It was in August 1946 that a general assembly could bring together in Paris the delegates of the FBUC and its four conferences, and the Adventist Church could regain a normal functioning within the Union territory.³⁰ By the end of 1946, there were 2,876 Seventh-day Adventists in 57 local churches of the FBUC. A total of 83 pastors and 80 colporteurs were working in the union territory.³¹

After the War: Orientation Phase in Administration and Progress (1945–1969)

Administration

In 1949, it was decided, in order to be more in conformity with the French language, to use the French word “fédération” for the church entities previously designated by the English word “conference.”³² In 1950 (with a membership of 200 in 1949),³³ a new conference was created, the Southwest France Conference, whose headquarters was in Bordeaux. There were then four conferences in France: the new Southwest France Conference, the North France Conference with its headquarters in Paris and its leaders often being those of the union, the East France Conference (formerly Alsace and Lorraine Conference) with headquarters in Strasbourg, and the Southeast France Conference with headquarters in Marseille.

This reorganization lasted only six years, without giving full satisfaction. In 1955, for economic reasons, it was decided to merge the four conferences of France into one, the French Conference, from 1956, thus regrouping the entire administration of the Adventist Church in France in the Paris offices.³⁴ This reorganization lasted until 1969. Throughout this period, the leaders of the FBUC were for the most part also those of the French Conference.

Administration

As early as May 1947, radio broadcasting was used as a means for evangelism in the FBUC. The first broadcasts of *La Voix de l'Espérance* started on Radio Luxembourg and Radio Monte Carlo. Bible correspondence courses were also created to offer teachings to the listeners interested in those programs. Pastor Charles Gerber was entrusted with writing these courses.³⁵ The young Pastor André Dufau undertook the marking of the correspondence that arrived in the context of these courses. The success was immediate: Launched on July 15, there were more than 500 subscribers on October 31, 1947, most of whom came from Belgium, where Radio Luxembourg had high audience ratings.³⁶ A building adjacent to the Adventist Church located at the Boulevard de l'Hôpital was built to house the radio production studio and ancillary rooms for the local church.

In 1948, Roger Fasnacht, who was the administrator of the seminary in Collonges, was called to Paris and he created the studio La Voix de l'Espérance. In 1959, he created the company DEVA (Disques Evangéliques, in English, Evangelical Records) which had a high production of records for introduction to music destined for use in schools.³⁷

The Home Missionary department regularly organized training of church members as volunteer evangelists. For several years, these training sessions were organized during the summer at the Salève Adventist Seminary. Since the pastors were also considered evangelists, some of them, like Charles Winandy or Joseph Decaris, became popular speakers during these sessions. The topics they addressed were mostly related to biblical prophecies.³⁸

Youth

In 1947, the periodical *Jeunesse* was launched by the publishing house Les Signes des Temps. Pastor Jules Boureau was the editor. In 1958, this periodical was taken over by the MV (Missionary Volunteers) department of the FBUC under the control of Pastor Jean Surel.³⁹ At the cost of hard work, *Jeunesse* developed during 10 years: while remaining almost a monthly periodical (10 issues per year) the magazine grew, changing its cover from black and white to four color, adding more pages (from 12 to 32), and receiving more subscribers (from 800 to 1,200). This progress was made possible by the voluntary collaboration of Lucette Surel, Jean Surel's wife, and the work of the secretary Christiane Bénézech. The publishing of *Jeunesse* ceased in 1969 when Jean Surel was replaced by Jean Lavanchy in the leadership of the MV department.

An MV World Congress under the direction of pastors J. J. Aitken and Paul Tièche, MV departmental directors of the Southern European Division and the FBUC respectively, was organized in Paris at the Parc des Expositions de la Porte de Versailles from July 24 to 29, 1951. More than 5,000 young people participated.⁴⁰

In 1963, Jean Surel created the program Tisons for children.⁴¹ This Scout-type program completed the Junior program, which brought together children of different ages (7 to 17 years old). This program was then adopted and adapted by many French-speaking territories.

A European MV Jamboree was organized in 1961 by Paul Steiner, departmental director of the MV for the Southern European Division, and was held in the pine forest of Les Aresquiers, in Vic-la-Gardiole (Hérault, France). Rented by the FBUC, this pine forest, then a piece of land at the seaside, would then host the MV camps of the union for nearly 20 years, until 1979.

The chalet of Alpe du Grand Serre, located in Le Villard (Isère, France), was bought, organized and equipped by Paul Tièche, then pastor of the Adventist Church in Grenoble,⁴² in 1963.⁴³ It was then owned by the French Federation of Missionary Volunteers to host ski camps during the winter, mountain initiation camps during the summer like the one organized by Paul Tièche in the summer of 1964,⁴⁴ as well as training courses for youth leaders and meetings for camp directors. Officially it could accommodate thirty people. Renovated between

1988 and 1993,⁴⁵ it was sold off by the North France Conference in 2005.⁴⁶

Health

In 1948, the Vie et Santé Polyclinic, located at Georges Mandel Street in Bordeaux (Gironde, France), was inaugurated. Dr. Eugène Sussmann, a pastor and physician of Hungarian origin, who founded the Church of Thonon-les-Bains in the Haute-Savoie through his missionary activities between 1940 and 1943,⁴⁷ was called to lead the medical institution. For two years, he ran the polyclinic with its departments of Radiology, General Medicine, and Gastroenterology, which kept it financially self-supporting. Concurrently, Dr. Sussmann served as a pastor of the church that met in one of the rooms in the polyclinic building. After becoming the victim of an accident that required him to remain bedridden for a year,⁴⁸ he was replaced by Dr. Pierre Ganty until at least 1954. However, the polyclinic was not able to remain self-supporting. It was then resold.

A retirement home was opened in Pignan (Hérault, France) in 1949 at Pastor Pierre Lanarès' prompting.⁴⁹ It was then placed under the leadership of Simone Becker (1954).⁵⁰ Moreover, the Health Department adapted The Five-Day Plan to quit smoking, developed by American Seventh-day Adventists. The first program around this plan was organized in Saint-Etienne (Loire, France) by Dr. Georges Hummel and Pastor Claude Delargillière in early 1965.⁵¹

Publishing

The number of colporteurs reached 120 in 1966. About half of them worked full-time while the others served on a part-time basis or in the summer to finance their studies. About 50 people were baptized through the colporteur ministry in one year.⁵² Small groups of colporteurs worked together for a few weeks in the cities where public evangelistic conferences would take place.⁵³

Stability and Transformation (1969–1987)

Administration

On December 31, 1969, the FBUC had 107 churches and 6,290 members.⁵⁴ During this period, the FBUC experienced some administrative stability. In 1971, there was an attempt of the Southern European Division, as recommended by the General Conference, to create a larger Union with Belgium, Luxembourg, France, Austria, and Switzerland, but this attempt failed.⁵⁵ Yet the FBUC was marked by slow, profound crises linked to secularization and the growing rejection of authority, but also to immigration and cultural shock within the Church. The French Conference was divided in two during the administrative assembly held in Vichy (Allier, France) in May 1969: the North France Conference, whose headquarters were in Paris, and the South France Conference, with headquarters in Montpellier (Hérault).

The South France Conference, after having rented offices in Montpellier (rue Maury) for nine years, built its own main office in Clapiers, in the eastern suburbs of Montpellier, and moved there in 1978. The North France

Conference occupied more and more space in the building located in the Boulevard de l'Hôpital in Paris. In 1975,⁵⁶ the FBUC left this Parisian building and moved its offices to Le Mée-sur-Seine in Seine et Marne, about 45 km south of Paris, first in an apartment building (334 avenue de la Libération), then in two semi-detached houses (689-684 avenue de la Libération) that were joined together. From then on, the leaders in the FBUC were different from those of the North France Conference.

Education

Fewer and fewer students came to the Collonges Adventist seminary, especially after a serious crisis between the management and some staff members in 1981. However, the pastors obtained higher levels of diplomas in the same period. In 1981, the department responsible for the pastoral training was named the School of Theology (Faculté Adventiste de Théologie, FAT) which, in 1983, signed its first agreement with the Faculty of Protestant Theology of the University Marc Bloch in Strasbourg, thus allowing students who wished to obtain diplomas from the French State. This agreement has repeatedly been renewed and updated and is still valid today.

A church school was created in each of the two conferences in France. In September 1977, a school in Valence (Drôme, south of France) opened its doors with its first two teachers, Simone Charrière and Evelyne Gauthier, and its first 18 students.⁵⁷ In September 1978, another school was opened in Dammarie-les-Lys (Seine et Marne, northern France). It had 19 students and two teachers, Robert Hof and Christiane Lavanchy.⁵⁸ Unfortunately, another church school (in Strasbourg) was closed in June 1984 because of the small number of students (nine for the school year that ended, and only four registration pledges for the coming year).⁵⁹ The church school in Valence was closed in July 1992 due to financial difficulties and strained relations between the school and the local pastor.⁶⁰ The one at Dammarie-les-Lys was taken over by an association, the FEDECA that was constituted of church members with financial support from the North France Conference on a degressive basis. It is the only one still functioning at the present time, but with a status independent of the Adventist Church.

Publishing

The publishing house Les Signes des Temps reached a peak of operations and then experienced a recession. In 1982, it was renamed Vie et Santé publishing house in order to be better perceived in society, but it gradually lost its selling power: in 1985, there were 42 full-time and five part-time colporteurs, and eight correspondents,⁶¹ and in 1997, there were 19 full-time and 18 part-time colporteurs – the last time that such reports became available.⁶²

Evangelism

In 1977, the leadership of the company DEVA changed: Roger Fasnacht was replaced by Robert Schwald. It was then sold to Robert Capaldi in 1979.⁶³ The studios of *La Voix de l'Espérance* remained and Bernard Pichot was chosen to manage them in 1980. In 1981, the French government, followed by the Belgian one, liberalized the

radio waves. Several local community radio stations were created by church members, with the support of the communication department of the FBUC and the studios of *La Voix de l'Espérance*, in the following places: Paris, Lyon, Bruxelles, Marseille, Collonges, Saint-Malo, Annecy, Epinal, Le Havre, Rouen, and Alès. Only the last five subsisted.

La Voix de l'Espérance prepared broadcasts for the local stations as well as music records and cassettes. This entity was linked to the publishing house Vie et Santé and the bookshop Le Soc (created by the church to facilitate colporteurs' work) for commercial and fiscal reasons. In 1985 the association Media Production was created with statutes that met the commercial and fiscal requirements related to the sales of its products.⁶⁴

In 1985, under the leadership of Pastor Jean-Claude Verrecchia, the correspondence courses of *La Voix de l'Espérance* were revived thanks to a new name, Institut d'Etude de la Bible par Correspondance (IEBC) (in English, Correspondence Bible Study Institute), and the computerization of its management began. New courses and publicity leaflets were created and there was greater collaboration with pastors and local churches. Between 1984 and 1987, the IEBC in France and the one in Belgium registered 5,738 subscribers in one of their courses, delivered 1,006 certificates and contributed to the baptism of 94 people.⁶⁵

After encouraging successes earlier, public evangelism at this time yielded only meager results. Several attempts were made to slow down the secularization process within the Union territory, but without convincing results. Renowned speakers were invited: Arturo Schmidt, Roland Lehnhoff in Lyon in 1980, Brad Thorp in Marseille in 1988.⁶⁶

Mainly in the Paris region, the churches were filled with members, especially from the French West Indies. It was necessary to create new churches to welcome them. But this situation was a culture shock for the native members. Around 1973, Pastor Jean-Raymond Lenoir was commissioned to create a church for the native French. This project, perceived as racist by most church members, never succeeded. On the other hand, the missionary zeal of the new members was remarkable. However, pastors and native members lost the courage to invite their friends and acquaintances to churches that were not representative of the country's population.

In a 1981⁶⁷ and 1987,⁶⁸ Gottfried Oosterwal, then director of the Mission Institute at Andrews University, gave training sessions on church growth and secularization, which strongly impressed the pastors of the FBUC, encouraging them and making them more attentive to the needs of the different groups of population.

Door-to-door evangelism became increasingly difficult and regulated. Not only did canvassing decline in France and Belgium during this period, but evangelism was also affected in its two major traditional projects: The Great Week or Mission Extension, and the Ingathering campaign. Public evangelism continued in the local churches with pastors presenting the lectures "Bible en main" (Bible in hand) and the audio-visual programs of "Bible et archéologie" (Bible and Archeology).

In order to reach the public more easily, the FBUC worked on the production of a new series of about 40 brochures that explained Adventist beliefs and practice: the series "Convictions." The writing of these brochures was entrusted to a small group of Adventist pastors and teachers: Yvan Bourquin, Jacques Doukhan, and Jean Flori. Published in the early 1980s, these eight-page illustrated booklets were distributed by church members to people who asked them questions about their faith. They were also used as basic documents for two IEBC courses.

Youth

Young French Adventists who, as conscientious objectors, refused to do military service, were authorized by the French government to do two years of alternative service. The association Ligue Vie et Santé became the Adventist association which was authorized to receive the services of those young people. They were divided between the Adventist institutions and associations that needed their services. For instance, between 1984 and 1987, the general secretary of Ligue Vie et Santé, Jean Ribot, indicated that the institution placed 57 conscientious objectors in more than 20 Adventist institutions or organizations related to the Seventh-day Adventist Church, including on the islands of Reunion and Martinique.⁶⁹

From the partition of the French Conference into two onwards, the youth department had a director in each Conference and also one in the Union. Although collaboration between the Union and its conferences in general was not always easy, there was excellent cooperation between the leaders of the Youth departments.

From 1984, a youth congress was organized each year for the young people of over sixteen years of age (Compagnons-Ainés). There were sometimes as many as 1,800 young people.⁷⁰ Summer camps were offered to the Tisons (7–11 years old) and the Explorers (12–15 years old). Training sessions were offered to the leaders of youth activities in local churches and youth camps. Legal requirements were reinforced and certificates of competency for youth leaders (BAFA, Brevet d'Aptitude à la Fonction d'Animateur) and directors (BAFD, Brevet d'Aptitude à la Fonction de Directeur) strengthened the relations with the Protestant organizations authorized to offer training and deliver these certificates. Manuals and notebooks were prepared for each age group, and a new edition of a song booklet was completed.

In 1981, the South France Conference bought the property of the Moulin de l'Ayrolle in Saint Félix-de-Pallières (Gard, France) for summer camps. This place would welcome international camporees of Explorers (12 to 16 years old). The same venue has also been used for many other gatherings organized by the church, including ministerial meeting and continuous education.

Health

The retirement home Foyer de Pignan, managed by Jean Sambian since 1968, became too small and no longer met the expectations of the retired people and the legally required standards. A project to build a new place was born and, thanks to the determination of the local Pastor Adi Zurcher and the president of the South France

Conference, Elie Davy, Le Foyer du Romarin, with a capacity for 80 residents, was inaugurated on February 25, 1974, in Clapiers, Hérault.⁷¹

At the same time, with the enthusiastic support of the FBUC president Georges Vandenvelde, a medical institution, Institut médico-thermal Vie et Santé, was opened in Labastide-Villefranche, (Pyrénées-atlantiques, France). Dr. Colette Chartres was the physician, and her husband Gérard Chartres served as director.⁷² However, the institution had a difficult start; it was temporarily closed in December 1975.⁷³ In January 1976, it offered courses of treatment to quit smoking in the *Revue Adventiste*.⁷⁴ The committee of the FBUC decided to sell the institution in December 1976.⁷⁵

The Five-day Plan programs were initially a huge success, but to avoid accusations of proselytism, it was necessary to organize them through an independent association, the institution Ligue Vie et Santé, which was officially created for France on March 19, 1970.⁷⁶ For example, in the three main cities of Lorraine (Nancy, Metz, and Sarreguemines), between April 1973 and November 1975, 11 Five-day Plans brought together 1,435 smokers for five consecutive evenings and, among them, 1,344 were able to quit smoking.⁷⁷

Consequently, the Ligue Vie et Santé was affiliated with the International Commission for the Prevention of Alcoholism and Drug Dependency (ICPA), an association created by the General Conference and recognized by the World Health Organization (WHO). It soon had nearly 70 local or regional branches in metropolitan France. It provided the regional branches with all the material needed to organize the Five-day Plan in several French speaking-countries. Between 1984 and 1987, it organized 117 Five-day plans (in addition to those organized by its branches) with 14,709 attendees, 12,502 of whom quit smoking. With the support of a team of four volunteers (a physician, a psychologist, a health lecturer specialized in the fight against alcoholism, and a pastor), it also created a program, Atout 4, for the prevention of alcoholism. This program was tested three times between 1986 and 1987 and made available to local branches in 1988.⁷⁸

Under the leadership of Dr. Patrick Guenin, a pediatrician who was responsible for the medical department of the FBUC, an association of Adventist health professionals was created in 1983. It is called AMALF (Association des Médecins et Professionnels Adventistes de Santé de Langue Française [Association of French speaking Adventist Physicians and Health Professionals]). This association accomplished outstanding work in three areas: continuing education of the professionals with annual scientific meetings, health education for the church members; training for running the Five-day Plan program; and support to the Adventist medical institutions operating in poor countries, providing medicines, medical material, and qualified staff for selective missions.⁷⁹

Children and Youth Sabbath School

The Sabbath School leaders expressed more and more dissatisfaction with the materials provided by the General Conference. Under the leadership of pastors José Figols and Rudy Van Moere, a huge project, which lasted for many years, began in order to create appropriate educational material for the different age groups. In

1984, the creation of a four-year cycle of notebooks for the pupils and manuals for the teachers called "Amis de Dieu" (Friends of God) and then "Tisons," for children aged 7 to 11. In 1986, two new cycles were added: one for one year for the age group 0 to 3 ("*Bourgeois 1*"), and another of three years for 4 to 6-year olds ("*Bourgeois 2*").

⁸⁰ For this cycle, the South France Conference actively worked with the FBUC. A four-year cycle of study was created for the Compagnons (groups aged 16 to 19) under the leadership of the Belgian-Luxembourg Conference in collaboration with the Netherlands Union Conference.

Complexification (1988 to Today)

By the end of 1987, the FBUC had three conferences, 138 churches, and 10,253 members.⁸¹ Two events marked the beginning of the period that began afterwards: the collective suicide of the members of the sect Temple du Soleil and the beginning of wearing the Islamic veil by high school girls in France. The French authorities then hardened their relations with the different religions.

Administration

The French legal requirements forced the FBUC in 1999 to create for France a double organization of the church: the Union of Adventist Conferences (Union des fédérations Adventistes, *UFA*) for religious activities governed by the 1905 French law on the separation of church and state; and the Union of Conferences of Adventist Cultural and Social Activities (Union des fédérations des activités culturelles and sociales adventistes, *UFACSA*) governed by the Law on Nonprofit Associations of 1901 for other activities. This double organization was also necessary at the level of conferences and local churches in France. Since the French law gave tax benefits to religious organizations, it was necessary to call on the services of auditors to ensure compliance with the legislation in the financial management of the UFA and its different conferences.

This reorganization made it difficult to finance the UFACSA and FACSA because no sum paid to the UFA or its conferences could be reversed to UFACSA or FACSA. Finally, the decision was made in 2015 to ask Seventh-day Adventists in France to send one month (March) of their tithes to the FACSA and therefore only the tithes returned on the other eleven months can be deduced from their income taxes.

The years of 1988 until the present have also been marked by an oscillation between a reduced Union and a strong Union: The Belgian-Luxembourg Conference, confronted with its national and linguistic particularities, felt left out compared with France; the North France Conference, confronted with the massive arrival of immigrants, felt strong because of its membership and the generosity of the members, and the South France Conference remained attached to its cultural particularity. From 1998 to 2001, Pastor Richard Lehmann was both president of the North France Conference and the FBUC in order to reduce the expenses as well as the administrative staff. This return to a situation which was common when there was only one conference in France was not repeated afterwards.⁸²

The Euro-Africa Division, which in 2010 became the Inter-European Division, hoped that the FBUC would take over the Maurice-Tièche school complex renamed in 2018 L'Ensemble Scolaire Maurice-Tièche (nursery, primary, junior, and senior high schools of Collonges-sous-Salève) and the publishing house Vie et Santé. The offices of the FBUC, UFA, UFACSA were installed in January 2001⁸³ in Dammarie-les-Lys (Seine-et-Marne, France) in part of the premises which became too big for the publishing house Vie et Santé (60 Avenue Emile Zola).

Religious Liberty and Public Relations

Interventions of the FBUC were multiplying in this era to show that the Seventh-day Adventist Church is not a sect which takes its members hostage. Difficulties for Adventists to get the Sabbath day free from educational institutions and from their employers were more frequent, and the results were less satisfactory than in previous periods while at the same time the working week was reduced to five days.⁸⁴

Evangelism

Stimulated by the Adventist world Church, the FBUC used new methods and participated in the evangelistic campaigns transmitted by satellite: Net '96 showed the need for good technical equipment and quality translations,⁸⁵ so Net '98 with Dwight Nelson of Pioneer Memorial Church on the campus of Andrews University (Berrien Springs, Michigan) was translated into French by Pastor Frédéric Durbant. *Regard 2000*, organized with the support of *Stimme der Hoffnung* (Voice of Hope) at the campus church of Collonges-sous-Salève, enlarged for this purpose, with the main speaker, Pastor Thierry Lenoir of the French-Italian Swiss Conference; then *Regard 2003* with Michel Luthringer, pastor and president of the Belgian-Luxembourg Conference, from the same church.

Collaboration was set up between Hope Channel, Agence Image (a private video production company created by Jacques Ritlewski, lay member of the Collonges church), *Die Stimme der Hoffnung* (*The Voice of Hope*), the division's radio and television studios located near Darmstadt (Germany), and *Il est écrit Québec* (*It Is Written*, Quebec) to create Adventist television programs in French. A last evangelistic campaign by satellite was organized from the center *Il est écrit* (*It Is Written*) in Montreal, Québec (Canada), Net '2010, with pastors José Elysée and Bernard Sauvagnat. Later, Hope Channel in French was launched on the Internet. It broadcasted French programs created by the FBUC, and other places such as Canada, Australia, Switzerland. From 2016 onwards, Pastor Jethro Camille has been responsible for this service on a full-time basis.

After the strong impulses given by Gottfried Oosterwal in the early 1980s, evangelism was no longer considered the prerogative of professional evangelists but increasingly the task of the local churches. Pastor Bernard Sauvagnat, director of the Personal Ministries and the Sabbath School Department of the FBUC, translated into French the series of manuals prepared by James Zackrison, departmental director of Personal Ministries and Sabbath School at the General Conference. Training was then offered by the FBUC to pastors and churches on the basis of these manuals.⁸⁶

Between 2004 and 2013, the focus was put on relational evangelism, which allows the establishment of house groups and new churches through collaboration with Pastor Peter Roennfeldt, director of the Ministerial Association at the Trans-European Division. Training was offered in each conference; Manuals were made available for pastors and church members.

Work in favor of immigrants and other cultures further developed in the same period. Already in 1993, the FBUC had employed Pastor Hen San to carry out missionary work for Cambodian refugees living in France.⁸⁷ Soon training was offered to church members who wanted to reach Jews or Muslims. In 2011, the project to create an Adventist synagogue in Paris, France, was born to allow Jews to discover the Adventist message. Pastor François du Mesnil d'Engente, working in the area of Limoges, was authorized by the South France Conference to dedicate one weekend per month to this project. In 2018, the North France Conference assigned one of its lay members to this task, Luc Desplanches.

For years, the organization Mission and Service to Muslims (Mission et Service aux Musulmans, MISSERM) of the Euro-African Division, based in Paris in offices located at 63 rue du Faubourg Poissonnière (Paris 9th), was involved in mission outreach towards the Muslim populations of the Maghreb countries mostly through correspondence courses and radio broadcasts. This work also had some repercussions on the French territory via the creation of an international meeting point in Lyon, France, under the leadership of Pastor Jean Kempf. The work for the Muslims in Lyon was then entrusted to Pastor Ahmed Bendjeriou. Finally, since 2013, assigned by the FBUC, Pastor Pierre Kempf has been working for the Muslim populations living throughout his territory.⁸⁸

Publishing

Due to the fading of the colporteur work and the virtual impossibility of selling the magazine *Vie et Santé* by the newsagents, this review ceased to be published in January 2000 after 105 years of monthly publication. The publishing house *Vie et Santé*, an institution of the Inter-European Division, which was no longer functioning autonomously, despite the gradual reduction of its staff and the efforts of its successive managers, was placed under the responsibility of the FBUC from 2019 onwards.

Sabbath School

The creative work that started in the early 1980s continued and was developed further for all age groups until 2008. For the adults, steps were taken with the support of the Euro-Africa Division to make the world church material more oriented towards a systematic study of the biblical text. An introductory manual to the Adult Sabbath School lesson quarterly and the teacher's edition was prepared each quarter from the 2nd quarter of 1988 until the 3rd quarter 1995. It was generally a pastor who wrote this document, and it was published in the form of a handout of several dozen pages. It was the so-called inductive method which was most often used to emphasize the teaching of the biblical text.

From the 4th quarter of 1995, a text analysis section was prepared by the FBUC team and published in the teacher's study guide.⁸⁹ In 2006, the General Conference completely reviewed the design of the teacher's study guide. The FBUC decided to adopt this new world-wide tool. But it did not give satisfaction.⁹⁰ The Belgian-Luxembourg Conference published an online help sheet every week. The former departmental director of the Sabbath School of the South France Conference, Evelyne Zuber, published her own supplement to the Adult Study Guide every week on her blog. Finally, the FBUC, in collaboration with the Netherlands Union Conference, decided to publish on its website the index cards *A l'écoute d'un Texte (AET)* that presented an analysis of a paragraph chosen from the biblical texts used in the weekly lesson.

For the children and young people, a great deal of collaboration developed between the FBUC, the Netherlands Union Conference, and the French-Swiss Conference: 1988: Creation of a quarterly manual with a four-year cycle for the Companions. 1992: Creation of a cycle of studies and manuals for the Explorers. Revision of the study guides and manuals *Bourgeois 1* and *Bourgeois 2*, and *Amis de Dieu* which changes its name to *Tisons*. Willingness to harmonize group names in Sabbath School and Youth activities. Between 2003 and 2008, an attempt to translate and publish *Collegiate Quarterly* (a Bible study guide for young adults pursuing higher education) was made under the direction of Christiane Louis, an English teacher, volunteer assistant in the Sabbath School department of the FBUC, for a year, but because of the amount of work needed the attempt was discontinued.⁹¹

All these educational documents were distributed in a number of French-speaking territories around the world (Europe, Central America, Africa, Indian Ocean, and Pacific Ocean). However, in 2008, it was finally decided to adopt all the educational material prepared by the General Conference for all age groups. This decision entailed a reorganization of Sabbath School classes with different age divisions.⁹²

Humanitarian Involvement

After ADRA International opened an ADRA European Community office in Brussels in November 1992, ADRA France was founded in July 1993. Pastor Jacky Chevrier spent some of his time there.⁹³ As an organization located in a donor country, its main task was to seek funding for development projects and emergency interventions. The beginning was difficult; but when it was decided to merge the Adventist Relief in North and South France, ADRA France also included the management of local projects under the direction of Brina Leroux (2008–2013), then Mario De Oliveira (2013–2018), and André Isidio de Melo (from 2018 onwards).

Worship

In 1991,⁹⁴ a commission to prepare a new hymnbook was created by the FBUC. Finally, after 15 years of work, the collection named *Donnez-Lui Gloire! (Give Him Glory!)* was published in 2006. However, this collection is still struggling to be accepted by French-speaking church members outside Europe.

Education

The FBUC is gradually taking over, but not yet in a finalized manner, the management of the Ensemble Scolaire Maurice-Tièche of Collonges. In 2013, it entered into a contract of association with the state. This contract allows the school to receive the salary of several teachers. In 2018, it covered the payment of 5 full-time and 12 part-time teachers.⁹⁵

Relations with Other Christians

The fight against the classification of minority Christian churches designating them as dangerous sects stimulated interfaith relations. Collaboration with the French Bible Society (Alliance Biblique Française, ABF) and the Belgian Bible Society (Société Biblique Belge) intensified. Adventist pastors were appointed to the boards of these interdenominational institutions, some becoming vice-presidents and even presidents.⁹⁶

Membership of the Protestant Federation of France (Fédération Protestante de France, FPF) and the partnership with the United Protestant Church of Belgium (Eglise protestante unie de Belgique, EPUB) were increasingly perceived as necessary. The Protestant Federation of France had been created in 1905 at the time of the proclamation of the French law on the separation of Church and State. This federation brings together the churches which came out of the Reformation and gives them a visibility and a possibility to have easier dialogue with the authorities and the administrations of the French State. Courteous relations existed between the Adventist leaders and the FPF even in earlier decades. The idea to welcome the Adventist Church as member was brought to the denomination in 1961 by Pastor Marc Boegner, then-president of the FPF, but rejected by Dr. Jean Nussbaum, then departmental director of Religious Liberty and Public Relations of the FBUC.

For 30 years, there had been regular collaborations with several Protestant organizations such as the Alliance Biblique Française for the spread of the Bible, the Protestant Committee for Summer Camps (Comité Protestant des Colonies de Vacances, CPCV) for the training of Adventist Youth leaders, the French Evangelical Department of Apostolic Action (Département Evangelique Français d'Action Apostolique, DEFAP) for the sending of aid workers to Adventist institutions in Africa, the Christian Action for the Abolition of Torture (Action Chrétienne pour l'Abolition de la Torture, ACAT) for the defense of human rights, and the Protestant chaplaincies for the work in favor of hospitalized, enlisted or engaged persons in the army, and prisoners.

In 1991, a move for the Adventist church to become a member of the FPF was initiated by pastor Maurice Zehnacker, then president of the FBUC. For five years, discussions were held among pastors, administrators, and leaders of Adventist institutions in France. This discussion led the FBUC plenary committee, held in November 1995, to vote that the Adventist Church in France may file an application to become a member of the FPF.

A joint commission SDA/FPF was appointed in March 1996. It worked for four years to answer questions from each of the parties. In June 2000, this work resulted in a final report of the FPF, which gave a favorable opinion on the Adventist membership application. This position was confirmed by more than 80 percent of the 114

delegates at a special assembly of the FBUC in February 2003.⁹⁷ A probationary period then started before this membership could be recognized by a vote of the FPF's general assembly in 2006.⁹⁸ During this period, exchanges also took place between the Adventist Church in Belgium and the EPUB. On January 22, 2003, a partnership agreement was signed between the two churches.⁹⁹ On December 31, 2018, the FBUC had 16,350 church members (including 249 newly baptized in 2018) who met in 164 local churches and 46 groups.¹⁰⁰

List of the Administrators of the FBUC

Presidents

Oscar Meyer (1928–1932); Walter Raymond Beach (1932–1936); Oscar Meyer (1936–1946); Jules-César Guenin (1946–1950); Francis Lavanchy (1950–1966); André Henriot (1966–1968); Eugène Vervoort (1968–1970); Georges Van den Velde (1971–1976); Paul Tièche (1976–1981); Elie Davy (1981–1984); Jean Lavanchy (1984–1987); Maurice Zehnacker (1988–1998); Richard Lehmann (1998–2003); Jacques Trujillo (2003–2008); Jean-Claude Nocandy (2008–2013); Ruben De Abreu (2013–).

Secretaries

Jules Robert (1928–1932); Charles Wehrli (1932–1941); Gérard Desmet (1941–1946); Henry Roeland (1946–1954); Camille Dudragne (1954–1958); André Henriot (1958–1962); Robert Erdmann (1962–1968); Roger Merckx (1968–1971); Claude Galdéano (1971–1972); Marcel Bornert (1972–1980); Jean-Pierre Aeschlimann (1980–1988); Maurice Verfaillie (1988–1995); Jean-Paul Vuilleumier (1995–1998); Jacques Trujillo (1998–2003); Jean-Paul Barquon (2003–2018); Gabriel Golea (2018–).

Treasurers

Jules Robert (1929–1932); Charles Wehrli (1932–1941); Gérard Desmet (1941–1946); Henry Roeland (1946–1950); Camille Dudragne (1950–1958); André Henriot (1958–1962); Robert Erdmann (1962–1968); Roger Merckx (1968–1970); Claude Galdéano (1971–1972); Marcel Bornert (1972–1980); Jean-Pierre Aeschlimann (1980–1988); Jean-Paul Vuilleumier (1988–2003); Michel Aimonetti, (2003–2008); Patrick Lagarde (2008–2013); Pierre-Jean Tizio (2013–2018); Philippe Aurouze (2018–).

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NOTES

1. "Franco-Belgian Union Conference," *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* (2021), <https://www.adventistyearbook.org/entity?EntityID=13779>.
2. Oscar Meyer, "L'Union Franco-Belge," *Revue Adventiste*, March 15, 1930, 11.
3. Ch. Wehrli, "Union Franco-Belge des Adventistes du Septième Jour. Deuxième session, 1-10 juillet 1932," *Revue Adventiste*, August 1, 1932, 11.
4. A. V. Olson, "Division de l'ancienne Union latine," *Revue adventiste*, October 1, 1928, 4.
5. No Author mentioned, "Les rédacteurs s'expriment," *Revue Adventiste*, June 1972 (special issue), 12.
6. See "Franco-Belgian Union Conference," *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald, 1929), 146.
7. A.-V. Olson, L.-L. Caviness, "Assemblée d'hiver du Comité de la Division Sud-Européenne, Gland, Suisse, 22 au 30 janvier 1929," *Revue Adventiste*, March 15, 1929, 12, 13. In this context, Olson wrote: "My firm conviction is that this new arrangement will strengthen and greatly facilitate the development of the work in the different fields." See Olson, 4.
8. See General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, *Statistical Report 1929*, 14; O. Meyer, "L'Union Franco-Belge," *Revue Adventiste*, March 15, 1930, 11. These members gave 34,598.60 USD for tithes, 26,634.48 USD for mission donations, and raised 16,000.00 USD for the Fall collection (Ingathering) in 1929.
9. This institution was located in Paris, 128 rue du Mont Cenis. It was purchased in 1928 from a church member, Arnold Roth (who announced in *Revue Adventiste* (September 15, 1923, 16) he was looking for a buyer or an associate), by the institution *Société Philanthropique La Lignière* then led by Pierre(?) Ganty. See A. V. Olson and R. Gerber, "Comité de l'Union latine réuni à Gland du 24 au 31 janvier 1928," *Revue Adventiste*, April 1, 1928, 7, and *Revue Adventiste*, June 15, 1928, 16.

10. Meyer, 12.
11. J. V. (probably Jean Vuilleumier), "Le Temple de Paris," *Revue Adventiste*, May 15, 1930, 11.
12. Maurice Mathy, "Paris," *Revue Adventiste*, April 15, 1931, 14 ; Maurice Tièche, "La journée de dedicace du Temple adventiste de Paris," *Revue Adventiste*, July 15, 1931, 1, 6, 11 12.
13. J. C. Raft, "Assemblées annuelles de l'Union Franco-Belge," *Revue Adventiste*, November 1, 1930, 11-12.
14. See the report of this assembly in Ch. Vehrli, "Union Franco-Belge des Adventistes du Septième Jour. Deuxième session, 1 10 juillet 1932," *Revue Adventiste*, August 1, 1932, 11 12.
15. See the report in Charles Gerber, "La grande assemblée de Paris," *Revue Adventiste*, October 1, 1936, 14 16.
16. W. R. Beach, "Rapport statistique de la Division sud-européenne pour l'année 1939," *Revue Adventiste*, May 15, 1940, 12 13. During the year, it had collected \$41,810.90 USD of tithes and \$19,304.95 USD of offerings for the missions.
17. Francis Lavanchy, "A travers l'Union franco-belge," *Revue Adventiste*, May 1, 1930, 11 12.
18. "Le colportage dans l'Union franco-belge," *Revue Adventiste*, April 1, 1938, 12.
19. See the special issue "Semaine de prière du 7 au 13 décembre 1935," *Revue Adventiste*, November 1, 1935.
20. Fédération française des Missionnaires Volontaires, *Coutumier*. Département de la jeunesse des Eglises adventistes de France, Paris, 1964, 2.
21. P. Bernard, "Notre école d'église," *Revue Adventiste*, October 1, 1931, 13. The author reports that 19 students attended this school, located on the first floor of a 4-story building located at 4 rue Schumann just behind the chapel and the conference offices, and illustrates the information with a class picture with Paul Bernard as the teacher and 15 students. Clear information concerning the opening of the Strasbourg church school could no longer be found. The Statistical Report of the General Conference for the year 1939 (p. 17) indicates a church school in the East France Conference and another one in the South France Conference. They each have a teacher and a total of 11 students.
22. W. R. Beach, "Tour d'horizon," *Revue Adventiste*, May 1, 1940, 12.
23. No author mentioned, "Tour d'horizon," *Revue Adventiste*, January 15–February 1, 1940, 11 12.
24. Guido Delameillieure, "L'exode, mai-juin 1940," *Revue Adventiste*, April 2018, 6.
25. Meyer, "Après la tempête," *Revue Adventiste*, July 1940, 16.

26. No author mentioned, "De nouveaux ouvriers," *Revue Adventiste*, October 1941, 16.
27. W. R. Beach, "Déplacements d'ouvriers," *Revue Adventiste*, July 1942, 16.
28. She was probably mentioned by Suzy Kraay, a member of the Dutch-Paris resistance network, arrested by the Gestapo. See Herbert Ford, *Flee the Captor* (Nashville, TN: Southern Publishing Association, 1966), 268–270. Mrs. Weidner was transported by train to the Ravensbrück camp, then transferred to the Königsberg camp where she died just after the liberation of the camp by the Russian army. *Ibid.*, 352–355.
29. Ford, 356.
30. R. Jublin, "Union franco-belge, congrès général," *Revue Adventiste*, November 1946, 4, 13.
31. *Statistical report of Seventh-day Adventist Conferences, Missions, and Institutions. The Eighty-fourth Annual Report. Year ending December 31, 1946*, 14. The year's tithes amounted to \$126,442.40 USD.
32. André Henriot, "Bulletin de l'Union franco-belge," *Revue Adventiste*, April 1950, 10. The difference is only relevant in the French language.
33. Henriot, "L'Union franco-belge a quarante ans," *Revue Adventiste*, December 1968, 8–9.
34. *Ibid.*
35. *Feuilles Gerber: Les sentiers de la foi*.
36. André Dufau, "Cours d'études 'la voix de l'espérance'," *Revue Adventiste*, November 1947, 16.
37. J.-P. F. (probably Jean-Pierre Fasnacht), "In memoriam Roger Fasnacht (1919–2009)," *Le Lien* 47 (Printemps 2009), 14.
38. See, for instance, the series of 19 summaries of the Winandy presentations on Revelation, printed by FIDES in Collonges-sous-Salève, without date (probably in the late 1950s) representing a total volume of 232 pages.
39. See the memorabilia letter sent to José Figols by Jean Surel retired on February 12, 1993.
40. Jules Boureau, "Congrès de jeunesse," *Revue Adventiste*, October 1951, 9–10.
41. Fédération française des Missionnaires volontaires, *Coutumier*. Département de la jeunesse des Eglises adventistes de France, Paris, 1964, 2.
42. Phone interview conducted by the author with Geneviève Aurouze, youth leader of Grenoble, on February 25, 2019.
43. It was inaugurated during the first ski camp it hosts in December 1963. See *Jeunesse*, November 1963, 5.
44. No author mentioned, "Activités de la Fédération française des MV pour l'été 1964," *Revue Adventiste*, April 1964, 16.

45. José Figols, "Jeunesse," *Assemblée administrative de l'Union franco-belge des Eglises adventistes*, 1993, 51. Document submitted to the delegates of the administrative assembly of the FBUC.
46. Email of Jean-Jacck Chafograck, president of the North France Conference, sent to the author on February 22, 2019.
47. E. Sussmann, *Le Glaneur* 18, March 20, 2002.
48. Testimony collected by the author from Dr. Sussmann's daughter, Ruth Gal.
49. Jean Sambian, "Pignan et ses perspectives d'avenir," *Revue Adventiste*, March 1972, 6.
50. H. Evard, "Union Franco-Belge. Session quadriennale (du 24 au 28 août)," *Revue Adventiste*, October 15, 1954, 9 -11.
51. Robert Erdmann, "Plan de 5 jours," *Revue Adventiste*, April 1965, 8 -9.
52. See the numbers presented for France in "Assemblée des églises adventistes de France," *Revue Adventiste*, September 1967, 10. The sales amount to more than 263,000 USD for the year.
53. For instance, Pierre Petit, "Campagne d'évangélisation par le colportage à Lille," *Revue Adventiste*, May 1967, 16.
54. *Annual Statistical Report of Seventh-Day Adventists, 1969*, 18. They gave \$811,908.80 USD in tithes that year.
55. See the document *Informations aux délégués aux assemblées spéciales d'Unions*. This nine-page document and the letter (dated on September 11, 1971) signed by the FBUC secretary announcing the cancellation of the planned assembly are available in *Archives Adventistes*, Collonges-sous-Salève, *Fond Union Franco-Belge* (32 VA 27).
56. According to *Agenda planning des éditions Les Signes des Temps*, 1976.
57. Gérard Poublan, "L'école de Valence après un an," *Revue Adventiste*, October 1978, 1-5.
58. Poublan, "Ecole d'église de Dammarie," *Revue Adventiste*, November 1978, 13.
59. Testimony of Myriam Rase, the last teacher of that school, in an email sent to Bernard Sauvagnat on February 13, 2019.
60. Maurice Verfaillie, "Education," *Assemblée administrative de l'Union franco-belge des Eglises adventistes*, 1993, 63. Document submitted to the delegates of the administrative assembly of the FBUC.
61. R. Roeland, "Publications," *Assemblée administrative 1987*, 7. Document submitted to the delegates of the administrative assembly of the FBUC.

62. S. Jérôme, "Les publications," *Assemblée administrative de l'Union franco-belge des églises adventistes 1998*, 96. Document submitted to the delegates of the administrative assembly of the FBUC.
63. Poublan, *1947–2000*, 27.
64. B. Pichot, "Studio Voix de L'Esperance – Média Production," *Assemblée administrative 1987*, 32. Document submitted to the delegates of the administrative assembly of the FBUC.
65. Hans Jongkind, Jean-Claude Verrechia, "Institut d'étude de la Bible par correspondance," *Assemblée administrative 1987*, 12-15. Document submitted to the delegates of the administrative assembly of the FBUC.
66. Bruno Vertaillier, *La campagne d'évangélisation de Marseille 1988 : Bilan analytique et critique* (MA Thesis, Faculté adventiste de Théologie Collonges-sous-Salève, 1990).
67. See the training guide presented in the periodical *Servir* of the 2nd semester of 1981 and the 1st quarter of 1982.
68. See the presentations of G. Oosterwal in *Servir*, 2nd and 3rd quarter of 1987.
69. Jean Ribot, "Rapport de la Ligue Vie et Santé," *Administrative vergadering, Assemblée administrative 1987*, 40, 43. Document submitted to the delegates of the administrative assembly of the FBUC.
70. José Figols, "Jeunesse," *Administrative vergadering, Assemblée administrative 1987*, 23. Document submitted to the delegates of the administrative assembly of the FBUC.
71. Marcel Bornert, "Rapport du secrétaire," in *Assemblée quadriennale de l'Union franco-belge des adventistes du septième jour*, March 9 to 11, 1976, Le Rocheton, La Rochette. Typed document, 12. Archives adventistes, Collonges-sous-Salève, *Fond Union Franco-belge* (32 VA 27).
72. Gérard Chartres, "L'Institut Vie et Santé ouvre ses portes," *Revue Adventiste*, March 1974, 18 ; Georges Vandenvelde, "Ouverture de l'Institut médical Vie et Santé," *Revue Adventiste*, July August 1974, 16.
73. Ibid.
74. Jean Cazeaux, "Nouvelles. Union Franco-belge. Institut thermal Vie et Santé," *Revue Adventiste*, January 1976, 18.
75. The sale takes place at the end of 1980 or the beginning of 1981. See Paul Tièche, "Lettre ouverte aux membres des églises de l'Union franco-belge," *Revue Adventiste*, February 1981, 6.
76. Published date in the official journal. See the document presenting the institution *Ligue Vie et Santé* of France (document held by Bernard Sauvagnat). This document also reports the existence of a branch *Ligue Vie et Santé* in Belgium.

77. E. Sauvagnat, *Rapport comparatif des « Plans de 5 jours » antitabac organisés par la LVS de Meurthe et Moselle*, November 15, 1975, manuscript (held by Bernard Sauvagnat). The social security office of Metz donated 2,500 FF to *Ligue Vie et Santé* to help finance these programs.
78. Jean Ribot, "Rapport de la Ligue Vie et Santé," *Administratieve vergadering, Assemblée administrative 1987*, 40-43. Typed document sent to the delegates of the administrative assembly of the FBUC.
79. Dr. Patrick Guenin, "Medical," *Administratieve vergadering, Assemblée administrative 1987*, 8-11; idem, "Medical," *Administratieve vergadering, Assemblée administrative 1993*, 77-79. Typed documents sent to the delegates of the administrative assembly of the FBUC.
80. José Figols, "Ecole du sabbat," *Administratieve vergadering, Assemblée administrative 1987*, 30. Typed document sent to the delegates of the administrative assembly of the FBUC.
81. *125th Annual Statistical Report 1987*, 10. This is an error for the membership in the document. Instead of 10,253 church members, the number 18,253 is given. Such number is not compatible with the other ones given for the beginning of the year, baptism and apostasy on the same line.
82. Richard Lehmann, "Le rapport du président," *2003 – Assemblée administrative de l'Union franco-belge des églises adventistes*, 11-14. Typed document sent to the delegates of the administrative assembly of the FBUC.
83. According to an email sent to the author on March 6, 2019, by Jean-Paul Barguon, then-secretary of the FBUC.
84. See the reports presented by two different departmental directors of Religious Liberty in the documents given to the delegates in two administrative assemblies of the FBUC: Maurice Verfaillie, "Rapport du département des Affaires publiques et de la Liberté religieuse," *Assemblée administrative de l'Union franco-belge des Eglises adventistes 1993*, 63-68; Jimmy Trujillo, "Les affaires publiques et la liberté religieuse," *Assemblée administrative de l'Union franco-belge des Eglises adventistes 1998*, 85-80.
85. Maurice Zehnacker, "Le rapport du président," *Assemblée administrative de l'Union franco-belge des églises adventistes, 1998*, 7.
86. Bernard Sauvagnat, "L'évangélisation," *Assemblée administrative de l'Union franco-belge des églises adventistes, 1998*, 54-55.
87. Maurice Zehnacker, "Rapport moral du président," *Assemblée administrative de l'Union franco-belge 1993*, 6. Typed document sent to the delegates of the administrative assembly of the FBUC.
88. The offices of MISSERM were transferred to Collonges around 2000. This organization changed its name: It became the UTMA (Adventist Trans-Mediterranean Union) under the leadership of the EUD. But, because it also worked on the French territory and because it was not possible to have two Unions working on the same territory, it was called ATMA (Adventist Trans-Mediterranean Association). The General Conference decided to create around 2010 MENA (Middle-East North-Africa Union) directly linked to the General Conference. Each Union, including the FBUC, is in charge of working for the Muslim population living in its territory.

89. Bernard Sauvagnat, "L'Ecole du Sabbat," *Assemblée administrative de l'Union franco-belge 1993*, 67. Typed document sent to the delegates of the administrative assembly of the FBUC.
90. Bernard Sauvagnat, "Pôle évangélisation. Association pastorale. Catéchèse des adultes," *Signes d'espérance. Assemblée générale plénière du 6 au 9 mai 2008*, 45. Typed document sent to the delegates of the administrative assembly of the FBUC.
91. Paul-Louis Fernandez, "Pôle éducation," *Signes d'espérance. Assemblée générale plénière du 6 au 9 mai 2008*, 95. Typed document sent to the delegates of the administrative assembly of the FBUC.
92. Pascal Rodet, "Pôle éducation, IV Catéchèse des enfants," *Assemblée générale UFA/UFACSA du 26 avril au 1^{er} mai 2013*, 81–83. Typed document sent to the delegates of the administrative assembly of the FBUC.
93. Maurice Zehnacker and Jean-Paul Vuilleumier, "ADRA – Bienfaisance," *Assemblée administrative de l'Union franco-belge 1993*, 89. Typed document sent to the delegates of the administrative assembly of the FBUC.
94. See Maurice Zehnacker, "Rapport moral du président," *Assemblée administrative de l'Union franco-belge 1993*, 5; *Donnez-lui gloire!* (Dammarie-les-Lys : Vie et Santé, 2006), 5.
95. See Pascal Rodet, "Pôle éducation, 1 Education," *Assemblée générale UFA/UFACSA du 26 avril au 1^{er} mai 2013*, 76, 77; Pascal Rodet, "Pôle Education, 1 Education," *Ensemble porteurs d'espérance. Assemblée générale ordinaire du mardi 8 au samedi 12 mai 2018. Rapports. Union des Fédérations des Activités culturelles et sociales Adventistes*, 42, 43. Typed documents sent to the delegates of the administrative assembly of the FBUC.
96. Since 1988 until now, Maurice Verfaillie, Bernard Sauvagnat, Jean-Jack Chafograck, and Matthieu Fury have succeeded each other as members of the Board of Directors of the ABF. Sauvagnat holds the position of vice-president from 2010 to 2012, Chafograck served as president from 2015 to 2018.
97. Richard Lehmann, *Letter RL/tl17* to pastors and delegates, February 12, 2003.
98. Maurice Verfaillie, *L'identité religieuse au sein de l'adventisme (1850–2006)* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2011), 317–332.
99. See the email sent by the retired pastor Jacques Rase to the author on February 28, 2019.
100. Statistics provided by email to the author by Gabriel Golea, secretary of the FBUC, on April 23, 2019.

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