



Genoa

Dear friends,

This month we write with news of our next chapter of ministry in Italy! After months of reflection, conversation, and prayer, we believe the Lord is leading us to move to Genoa, the capital of the Liguria region, in early 2027. Our desire is to make ourselves available to him to plant a new gospel work from very few resources — much like the early days of Forte Torre. We believe this is best for:

1. The future of Forte Torre

Forte Torre began in 2010. After more than 15 years, we are deeply thankful for all the Lord has done. The church is financially stable, owns its premises, and has established the healthy practice of funding its pastor. When we arrived in Bologna in 2008, there was very little evangelical witness; today there are several faithful churches in the city. The Lord has workers here.

At the same time, we increasingly sense the next stage of growth requires Italian leadership to step forward more fully. Two of our former deacons have already planted churches. John Paul has invested greatly in the next generation, but we're aware that our continued long-term presence could unintentionally delay a necessary transition.

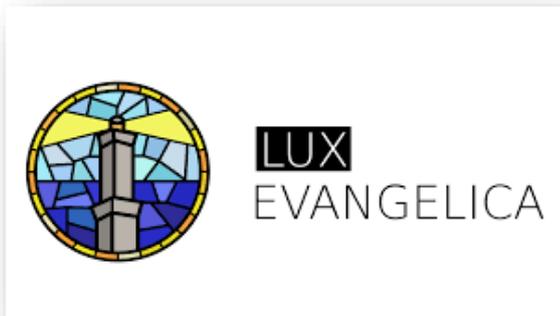
For this reason, we have carefully planned a gradual transition period from November '25 to January '27, through which we have developed a training course called *Leaders for God's Church*. We are encouraged ten men are receiving instruction, and we're already seeing signs of genuine willingness to step into greater responsibility. Our hope is that the course will help both individuals and the fellowship discern clearly whom the Lord is raising up for future leadership. We are praying a faithful pastor and elders emerge — while remaining open, if necessary, to considering an external candidate. We trust the chief shepherd to care for his flock.

2. A continued calling to Italy

Our move is not retreat, but a renewed commitment to Italy. For years, at our daily prayer meetings and on the annual day of prayer for Italy, we've prayed not only for Bologna but for every region of this country, especially the regional capitals. We have long desired that Forte Torre would be sending out workers into Italy's harvest field — a church that holds the nation in its heart.

We feel we have spent nearly two decades sowing, praying, and labouring in Bologna! Now we sense the Lord giving us the opportunity for a second season of service in another region. The timing also feels significant. In 2026 we'll be 54-55 yrs old. Considering the time needed to settle, build relationships, and patiently begin a new church work in Italy, we believe that if we are to do this, it needs to happen soon. The window of opportunity is limited.

Spiritually, we also recognise that it is healthy to begin again 'from scratch' — to lay down recognised roles and salary and trust the Lord afresh. We go not seeking security, but desiring to see the same gospel take root, in new and needy soil.



3. A door opening in Liguria

Liguria is a region with very limited evangelical witness, even by Italian standards. In particular, there are very few churches of strong evangelical conviction. Over the past year we've had encouraging conversations with Lux Evangelica Church in Genoa, including time with pastor Matt Johnston. Through these meetings, a genuine partnership has begun to emerge, with shared theological and ecclesiological vision. Having always wanted to work in close collaboration with an existing trusted church in the region, we are deeply grateful to God for his evident provision. This extended hand of gospel fellowship has brought us joy.

The aim would be to work closely: Lux Evangelica continuing its ministry in central east Genoa, while we would likely focus on the western side (Genoa's population is 570,000), praying that over time faithful churches might develop along both the eastern and western coasts of the region.

We have also been deeply encouraged by Rocco and Desy, a young Italian couple who know Genoa well and are willing to join us from the outset. Their readiness strengthens our faith that this step is of the Lord.

Please pray for:

- Wisdom as John Paul works closely with Forte Torre through 2026 to manage the transition well. For some, this news has understandably been destabilising.
- Clear and recognised leadership to emerge within the church.
- Practical matters still ahead, including plans to clear the remaining €100,000 building debt by 2030, and the establishment of a trust to safeguard the premises for the long-term proclamation of Christ in Bologna's historic centre.
- The Lord to provide the necessary means for the Genoa project, as we will be 'losing' the salary we currently receive from Forte Torre.
- Forte Torre to recognise the will of God in this step — and experience the joy of sending us, for the sake of the gospel.

With gratitude for your partnership, prayers, and love,
John Paul and Sue

An online opportunity to hear more, ask questions, and pray for the project:

Monday 30 March 20.00-21.00 UK time

<https://zoom.us/j/94361482064?pwd=ybtZHwbtwvXoUNGNLVEGwYE5YZojmB.1>

Meeting ID: 943 6148 2064

Password: 102225

OR

Sunday 3 May 20.00-21.00 UK time

<https://zoom.us/j/95449982767?pwd=R50AD214tci1eQOA9SDK3B5hk9aKy5.1>

Meeting ID: 954 4998 2767

Password: 231063

JP and Sue Aranzulla Bologna, Italy | aranzulla@crosslinks.org