

PRAYER ALERT...

‘If my people....will humble themselves and pray’ 2 Chr 7:14

Informing and equipping Christians - Online and to Inbox

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PRaise REPORTS

■ Victory for Christian sacked over gay weddings

Margaret Jones, a registrar who refused to marry same-sex couples, says she was sacked for her beliefs not for her actions. A marriage registrar has been vindicated by a council's reversal of its decision to sack her for refusing to marry same-sex couples because of her Christian beliefs. Margaret Jones, 54, who had been dismissed for 'bringing the council into disrepute', was offered her job back after an appeal hearing ruled that her employer had failed to take a 'balanced view' of her religious beliefs. While the decision does not create a legal precedent, it is likely to give people greater rights to express religious beliefs in the workplace because it was based on official guidance from the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC). Paul Diamond, barrister to the Christian Legal Centre, which advised Jones early in her battle, said: 'All good employers should follow this precedent, and practising Christians should no longer fear expressing their beliefs.'

Praise: [God for this answer to prayer and common sense. \(Ps.3:4\)](#)

More: http://www.thesundaytimes.co.uk/sto/news/uk_news/Society/article1453401.ece

■ Faith, refusing medicine and dependance on God = long life

A 105-year-old South Carolina, US woman refuses to take medication, choosing instead to rely on the Lord to keep her well. Dorothy Geiger is a former minister who just recently stepped down from the pulpit. She credits her faith in the Lord for strengthening and maintaining her well-being in her advanced age. 'Hallelujah. Glory to God,' she told WLTX. 'I'm still doing what he tells me to do.' Mrs Geiger founded God's Miracle House of Prayer for All People after the Lord told her to become a pastor. 'God told me to build a church and he told me where to build it at,' she said. 'And I built it.' The Orangeburg woman also believes she is being obedient by refusing to take any medications. 'I don't take medicine,' she said matter-of-factly. 'I depend on God.' Her goddaughter, Myra Elmore, said that her godmother's faith has been an inspiration and encouragement to her over the years.

Praise: [God and give Him the glory. \(Ps.20:6\)](#)

More: <http://www.christiantoday.com/article/105.year.old.woman.attributes.her.long.life.to.faith.i.dont.take.medicine.i.depend.on.god/>

BRITISH ISLES & IRELAND

■ Scotland's referendum

Jim Murphy, the former Scottish Secretary, was forced last week to suspend his '100 towns in 100 days tour' when groups of independence supporters started disrupting the events. They shouted down members of the public, intimidated his staff, threw eggs and called him names during events in Montrose, Dundee and Kirkcaldy. Mr Murphy alleged they had

coordinated their actions using Yes Scotland social media. We are asked to pray for no more ugly scenes that disrupt campaigning. We are asked to pray for the campaign leaders to display strong leadership by speaking out loud and clear against unacceptable behaviour. Also please pray that the police will take firm action against bad behaviour at all events leading up to the referendum. See also: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/scottish-independence/11070055/Jim-Murphy-Nationalists-have-called-off-their-mobs.html>

Pray: that we might see tolerance, respect and equality given to all speakers to enable those who want to stop and listen do so without fear. (Mat.6:10)

More: <http://www.prayforscotland.org.uk/>

■ Wales: NATO summit Thursday and Friday

Last Friday kitchens, toilets and washing facilities were installed at the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND) peace camp at Newport's Tredegar Park, where it is estimated thousands of protesters will camp ahead of the NATO summit for more than 150 heads of state and ministers at Newport's Celtic Manor Resort. Police have taken over Rodney Parade sports ground to manage extra policing. Security will be provided by 9,500 police drawn from 43 police forces with 12 miles of security fencing already in place at key sites in Cardiff and in Newport. It is not known how many campaigners will descend on Newport from CND and Stop the War peace campaigners arriving in coaches from London, Birmingham, Norwich and Newcastle and foreign campaigners from further afield. At the summit the UK will call for increased defence spending by NATO's 28 member states and has set an example by a decision to order almost 600 armoured vehicles. This will be the UK's largest single order for such vehicles for more than 30 years and underpin nearly 1,300 jobs across the UK. See <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-south-east-wales-29040182>.

Pray: that all demonstrations will be peaceful. Pray that the police will manage every challenge successfully and that the event will showcase Wales across the globe in a positive light. (Is.48:17)

More: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-south-east-wales-28972309>

■ British Christians intimidated into hiding their faith

Former Conservative Attorney General has suggested 'an aggressive form of secularism' in Britain is threatening to 'sanitise' the country of faith and exclude Christians from the public space. Dominic Grieve says he finds it extraordinary that Christians are being sacked or disciplined for expressing their beliefs in workplaces and public bodies and being forced to hide their beliefs. Describing Christianity as a 'powerful force for good' in modern Britain, Mr Grieve calls on public figures not to be afraid of 'doing God' and he believes politicians have a duty to explain how their beliefs inform their decisions. Describes himself as a 'practising Anglican' and says Britain is 'underpinned' by Christian ethics and principles. However, during Mr Grieve's tenure as Attorney General, government lawyers submitted to the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) that Christians should leave their religious beliefs at home or move to another job when faced with a clash between the requirements of their faith and their employment.

Pray: that as Christians we will be bold and open to the inspiration of the Holy Spirit in expressing our faith. (Ac.4:31)

More: <http://www.christianconcern.com/our-concerns/religious-freedom/british-christians-intimidated-into-hiding-their-faith>

■ Sex education for seven-year-olds' say Lib Dems

Sex education in schools should be compulsory from the age of seven, said the Liberal Democrat schools' minister David Laws. Primary schools do not currently have to teach sex education, however secondary schools run by local authorities do have to teach it as part of the personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum. Some parts of the PSHE curriculum are compulsory for all secondary schools (children aged 11 and upwards), but under current legislation, academies and free schools can choose whether or not to teach all of the sex education curriculum. David Laws said in a statement: 'It is vitally important that children learn all the life skills they need when they are at school, and Liberal Democrats believe that this should include learning financial literacy, citizenship and age-appropriate sex and relationship education. The proposal will be included in the Lib Dem manifesto for next year's General Election. Labour has already proposed a similar policy, but the Conservatives are against the plans.

Pray: that the government will make wise decisions and consider seriously the full balanced education for all our children. (Dt.4:9)

More: <http://www.christiantoday.com/article/sex.education.for.seven.year olds.say.lib.dems/39967.htm>

■ How should we respond to British jihadism?

The news that there are 'significant numbers' of Britons fighting for extremist Islamist groups abroad, one of whom is implicated in the murder of US journalist James Foley, has prompted calls for action against radical Islamism in the UK. Speaking on BBC Breakfast, Foreign Secretary Philip Hammond said that the government was aware of 'significant numbers' of Britons fighting for Islamist organisations abroad. 'That's one of the reasons why this organisation represents such a direct threat to the UK's national security. Many of these people may seek at some point to return to the UK and they would then pose a direct threat to our domestic security.' Christians from across the political spectrum are calling for action regarding jihadism in the UK, from better border controls to sharing the love of the gospel.

Pray: that the authorities will be able to control those involved in radical Islamic activities. (Ro.6:20)

More: <http://www.christiantoday.com/article/how.should.we.respond.to.british.jihadism/39781.htm>

■ 'Bullied' teen Joshua Davies told he will not walk again

A vulnerable teenage boy, told he will never walk again after a bridge fall. He was trying to escape from bullies, say his family. Joshua Davies, 18, of Pontypridd, Rhondda Cynon Taf, broke his spine in four places in the fall. South Wales Police said it has carried out 'a thorough investigation' into assault complaints. Joshua and his friend were walking by the river, when they realised some boys were following them. Joshua and his pal climbed on to the steel supports of the bridge to get away but the boys started throwing stones at them. The family claims the teenager has been bullied for the last five years,

targeted because of his disability, which is a form of autism. Mr Morgan said: 'Joshua has always had some kind of harassment or bullying in some shape or form, solely due to the fact that he is an easy target.'

Pray: against teenage bullying and pray that harassment of this kind can be dealt with sensitively.

More: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-south-east-wales-29030188>

EUROPE

■ Norwegian Muslims organise mass protest against Islamic State

Several thousand people - many of them from different walks of life and faiths, but all organised by a group of Norwegian Muslims - rallied on Monday evening in Oslo against the Islamic State militant group, which has recently spread terror and committed atrocities in Iraq and Syria. The rally was also aimed at groups in Norway that have voiced support for IS. Co-organiser Yousuf Gilani said the protest was 'an initiative of young, terrific Muslims' and described the initiative as 'historic'. 'We do not accept terrorism in the name of religion,' he said, adding that protesters rejected the Norwegian Islamist group Prophet's Ummah, which earlier this month expressed support for the Islamic State. Protesters gathered in the inner city area of Gronland - known for its diverse, multi-ethnic immigrant population - before marching to the parliament building. Faten Mahdi Al-Hussaini, 19, who had called for a rally against Islamic extremism, was the first speaker. 'It is important that the Norwegian society can see the difference between ordinary Muslims and people who call themselves Muslims, but lack Muslim views,' she said. Norwegian Prime Minister Erna Solberg, the last speaker at the rally, said, 'We are gathered against extremism, violence, and killings'.

Pray: that the protests by non-radical Muslims will lead to minds being changed.

More: <http://europeenews.dk/en/node/82310>

■ Ukraine's Poroshenko agrees 'ceasefire process' with Putin

Ukraine's President Petro Poroshenko says he has agreed with Russian President Putin by phone on a 'ceasefire process' for the east. His office initially reported that a 'permanent ceasefire' had been agreed but later revised its statement. The earlier version of the statement on the Ukrainian presidential website read: 'Their conversation resulted in agreement on a permanent ceasefire in the Donbass region [the regions of Donetsk and Luhansk].' However, this has now been changed to: 'Their conversation resulted in agreement on a process for ceasing fire in the Donbass region.' The statement adds that the two presidents 'reached a mutual understanding on steps leading to peace'. More than 2,600 civilians and combatants have been killed and more than a million people have fled their homes since fighting erupted in eastern Ukraine in April, when pro-Russian separatists there declared independence.

Pray: that discussions will resume, leading to a lasting ceasefire. (Ps.34:14)

More: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-29042561>

WORLDWIDE

■ Middle East/North Africa: The other face of Islam

The International Director of Barnabas Fund comments on an IS magazine, in English and other languages, was called Dabiq. Dabiq is prophesied by Muhammad to be an end times battle when Muslims conquer Christians then take over the world. Muslims believe Jesus (who they call Isa) will descend via a minaret in Damascus, and from there he will lead armies to destroy every cross, kill every Jew and pagan, and either convert every Christian to Islam or kill them. This apocalyptic dimension is now shaping IS as it sees itself fighting an end time battle. The first issue of Dabiq addressed the 'return of the Caliphate. The second issue links Noah and the flood to IS removing 'polluted ideologies affecting the world and condemns the idea of leaving people to choose for themselves what to believe. We are asked to pray against radical Islam with ideologies propagated by Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Turkey, funded by their vast oil resources, and now effectively reshaping Islam.

Pray: for God to rescue people from their suffering under IS. Pray that God's promises through His word will prevail over extremist movements like IS. (2 Pe.2:9)

More: <http://www.barnabasfund.org/UK/News/News-analysis/Editorial-The-Two-Faces-of-Islam.html?p=1>

■ Iraq: Latest report from Amnesty International

Most of the members of non-Muslim communities held by IS who have been able to communicate with their families have reported persistent pressures to convert to Islam. Pressures ranged from promises of freedom to death-threats. In Kocho, where scores of men were murdered, residents said they would be killed if they didn't convert. A social media video on 20 August showed Yezidi men converting to Islam. An IS commander said those who do not convert die of hunger and thirst on the mountain (Mount Sinjar, where Yezidi have been surrounded by IS fighters since 3 August). Some converted to save their lives and are now trapped in the area. A member of one such family said, 'We agreed to convert because we thought this would solve our problem but we are prisoners. We are under surveillance, we are scared of what could happen to us. Can someone come to get us out of here?'

Pray: that commanders of armed groups will boldly prevent and repress crimes of murder, mass abductions, rape, and pressure on entire captive populations to convert to Islam. (Pr.28:1)

More: <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/asset/MDE14/011/2014/en/63f30ccd-eeed-43f6-bb5b-1032f813307b/mde140112014en.pdf>

■ Pakistan: Demonstrations continue

On Monday hundreds of anti-government protesters invaded the state television channel, taking broadcasts off-air before army and paramilitary forces secured the building. The intruders were well trained and took instructions via cell phones. Meanwhile thousands of protesters swarmed around the Prime Minister's house, parliament and foreign embassies calling

for the premier's resignation. Three died and 400 were injured. There have been two weeks of demonstrations by opposition leader Imran Khan and politician Tahir-ul-Qadri demanding Sharif step down amid accusations of corruption and election fraud. Police restrained 25,000 demonstrators outside Sharif's residence on Saturday night. Demonstrations have brought the city to a halt. A Pakistani Christian writes, 'Many Christians are moving to Malaysia and Bangkok. They don't feel safe any longer. More than twenty families left Peshawar recently. Pray for strength, courage, comfort, grace, divine protection and clear guidance by the Holy Spirit for Christians in Pakistan. Pray for wisdom for pastors leading their people in these stressful times.'

Pray: for an electoral process revamp and a peaceful launch of proper democracy. Pray for an end to police brutality and God's protection for innocent bystanders. (Pr.21:15)

More: <https://news.vice.com/article/protesters-in-pakistan-storm-state-television-station-as-demonstrations-continue>

■ North Korea: American prisoners call for help

Three Americans held in North Korea spoke to the media on Monday, pleading for their release. Kenneth Bae, Jeffrey Fowle, and Matthew Miller imploring the White House to send an official to negotiate their release, and deliver messages to their families. Fowle has a wife and three children in Ohio and has been held captive since April 29, accused of leaving a Bible in a nightclub. 'Within a month I could be sharing a jail cell with Ken Bae, I'm desperate to go home'. American Kenneth Bae has been in prison for 20 months. He was a tour guide, but officials allege the tour company was a front for Christian evangelical missions. 'The only hope I have is for someone from the US to come' He felt abandoned by the US government. There are concerns about his health. A third American, Mathew Miller, has been detained since April 10.

Pray: for God's provision and that amnesty and release for the captives to be brought about through decisions made by North Korea's leadership (Pr.8:15)

More: <http://www.christiantoday.com/article/three.american.prisoners.held.in.north.korea.call.on.the.white.house.for.help/40182.htm>

■ Africa: Citizens petition for 'Action on Ebola' petition

The Ebola virus epidemic is an overwhelming human catastrophe and health workers risk their lives daily, intervening often without gloves and protective supplies. Travel bans to infected countries are hampering their work by restricting the arrival of essential expertise and equipment, as well as fuel for electricity, medications and food to famine-ravished areas. The citizens of infected countries have produced a call to action petition stating, 'In the name and interest of our common humanity, we are collectively launching this urgent Citizens' Call to Action. We call on our respective Heads of State and Government to avoid a full embargo against Ebola-affected states.' On Wednesday a hungry Ebola patient caused panic in Liberia when he fled from a clinic to find food. He was later found by medical staff. At least 1,378 people have been infected with Ebola in Liberia and 694 have died so far. See <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/ebola/11070263/Ebola-patient-escapes-quarantine-centre-in-search-of-food.html>

Pray: for essential assistance and supplies to reach those in need and for more public information campaigns on prevention and transmission of the Ebola virus. (Ps.140:12)

More: <http://www.gopetition.com/petitions/ebola-stop-quarantine-of-entire-countries.html>

■ USA: Second American journalist beheaded by IS Terrorists

Steven Sotloff was the grandson of two Holocaust survivors who was fully aware of the risks of reporting from Middle East - and made it his career anyway. Friends say he spoke fluent Arabic and had shown a deep love for the Islamic world before he was captured by IS militants in Syria in 2013. He was shown to be executed by them on Tuesday in a video lasting just under three minutes. The militant then threatens the life of David Haines, a British citizen kidnapped in March 2013. Haines has had years of experience in non-governmental organizations and military environments working with Nonviolent Peaceforce (an NGO in consultative status with the UN). An official said that Haines was 'very familiar with insecure locations.' See also: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/middleeast/iraq/11071553/A-Briton-will-be-next-warns-Jihadi-John-as-second-hostage-Steven-Sotloff-beheaded.html>

Pray: for the friends and families of all victims of terrorist activity to experience God's comfort and peace. Pray that governments will succeed in all their plans to overthrow IS (Ps.98:1b-2)

More: <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2741355/Friends-relatives-pay-tribute-murdered-Steven-Sotloff.html>

IN ASSOCIATION WITH THE WORLD PRAYER CENTRE, BIRMINGHAM, UK

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