

PRAYER ALERT...

'If my people....will humble themselves and pray' ^{2 Chr 7:14}

Informing and equipping Christians - Online and to Inbox

www.prayer-alert.net

editor@prayer-alert.net

Issue 41-2014

Website

Contact Us

Donations

Thursday 23 Oct 2014

■ Praise Reports

- ❖ [North Korea Jeffrey Fowle released](#)
- ❖ [USA: Students embrace evangelism challenge](#)

■ British Isles & Ireland

- ❖ [Back 'British values' or face closure, Christian school told](#)
- ❖ [British Ebola survivor Will Pooley returns to Sierra Leone](#)
- ❖ [UK Prison Service – a disgrace](#)
- ❖ [A million pensioners still living in poverty, says Age UK](#)
- ❖ [UK money laundering](#)
- ❖ [UK is lone parent capital of Western Europe](#)

■ Europe

- ❖ [Ukraine: Amnesty deplores abuses by both sides](#)
- ❖ [EU counts tens of thousands of human trafficking victims](#)

■ Worldwide

- ❖ [Israel: Hamas is rebuilding tunnel network](#)
- ❖ [Australia/Global: Aggressive secularism v religious education in schools](#)
- ❖ [South Africa: Cape Town Christians called to unite this Saturday](#)
- ❖ [Afghanistan: Opium poppy cultivation hits record-high](#)
- ❖ [Nigeria: Schoolgirls' release - deal no deal?](#)
- ❖ [Laos: Converts forced to leave their homes](#)
- ❖ [Ethiopia: Persecution in Africa's oldest Christian nation](#)

PRaise REPORTS

■ North Korea Jeffrey Fowle released

In September you were asked to pray for Jeffrey Fowle, the American who was detained by the North Korean authorities after leaving a Bible in his hotel room. CNN has reported his release this week. He was picked up by an American government plane on Tuesday and is now back in the US. It was not clear from the report how the release came about, but a senior State Department official confirmed to CNN that the North Korean authorities had indeed let him go. Last month Fowle told the network that he was due to go on trial soon and had pleaded with the US for help to secure his release along with two other Christians in prison with him.

Praise: [God for Jeffrey's release and continue to pray for the release of Kenneth Bae and Matthew Miller.](#)(Ps.9:1& 9)

More: <http://www.christiantoday.com/article/north.korea.releases.christian.american.jeffrey.fowle.who.was.held.for.leaving.bible.in.ho>

■ USA: Students embrace evangelism challenge

College students across the United States were joined by believers of all ages as they participated in Engage24, a one-on-one evangelism initiative that challenged Christians to share the Gospel with at least one person in a 24-hour time period. October 14 marked this observance on several college campuses this year and saw participation expand to churches.

When the development of Engage24 began they encouraged college students to share their faith with a creative approach. 'Instead of concentrating on how many people came to Christ on one particular day, we wanted to see how many college students would share their faith on that particular day. And if we did that first, then we could ultimately accomplish the goal of seeing people come to Christ.' They rely heavily on Twitter to track results and read reports from students who had the opportunity to share the Gospel during the day. See also <http://engage24.org/>

Praise: [God for the forward momentum of this movement across churches and universities.](#) (Ps.150)

More: <http://www.bpnews.net/43572/collegiates-embrace-evangelism-challenge>

BRITISH ISLES & IRELAND

■ Back 'British values' or face closure, Christian school told

A successful Christian school could face closure for failing to uphold 'British values'. The school was warned after an inspection by schools regulator Ofsted, in the wake of new regulations introduced by the Government. Ofsted criticised the school for not promoting other faiths, and it was told to invite a leader from another religion, such as an Imam, to lead assemblies. It was then told that unless it could demonstrate how it was going to meet these new rules, it could ultimately

be closed. The regulations state that academies, free schools and independent schools must 'actively promote' the rights defined in the Equality Act 2010. Details of the case are disclosed in a letter to the Education Secretary Nicky Morgan from The Christian Institute, which is providing legal backing for the school via its Legal Defence Fund. The Institute warns that the new rules are already having 'disturbing consequences'.

Pray: that ways will be found to meet the challenges of this new legislation and so to bring honour to God. (1Sam.8:9)

More: <http://www.christian.org.uk/news/back-british-values-or-face-closure-christian-school-told/>

▣ British Ebola survivor Will Pooley returns to Sierra Leone

British Ebola survivor Will Pooley is returning to Sierra Leone where he contracted the virus, despite being told he may not be immune to it. Being a nurse Mr Pooley said that returning to help the crisis in West Africa was the 'right thing to do'. No one has ever been recorded catching Ebola twice and it is thought Mr Pooley will have at least short term immunity against this strain of the disease but this has never been tested. He has said he will act as if he is not immune and take the same precautions as other British staff in Freetown, the capital. Mr Pooley is flying out to Sierra Leone on Sunday evening and will join a team from the King's Health Partners, a coalition of three NHS hospital trusts in London. 'I chose to go before and it was the right thing to do then and it's still the right thing to do now,' he said.

Pray: for Will and all those working to bring the outbreak of Ebola in West Africa to an end. (Ps.107:20)

More: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/ebola/11172432/British-Ebola-survivor-Will-Pooley-returns-to-Sierra-Leone.html>

▣ UK Prison Service – a disgrace

Nelson Mandela said, 'No one truly knows a nation until one has been inside its jails.' The UK prison and probation ombudsman said he is 'troubled' and 'appalled' by the rising rates of prison suicide (125 inmates killed themselves between January 2013 and August 2014. 26% of those were on remand awaiting trial. The chief inspector of prisons expressed concern about prisoners spending too long in their cells with nothing constructive to do and Frances Crook of the Howard League for Penal Reform called plans for a super-jail for children a 'recipe for child abuse'. When all else fails prison is an opportunity to intervene and attempt to put right what has gone wrong. Prisons are a tool for society and across the country churches are running Alpha for Prisons. Men and women prisoners are being given the opportunity to know Jesus through participating in this specially adapted course followed by caring for ex-offenders to keep them from re-offending. See <http://www.htb.org/prisons-and-caring-ex-offenders>

Pray: for reforms in this complex and dangerous environment, for improved mental health awareness training, for help for the vulnerable in the prison system and for more Alpha for Prisons courses. (Rom.9:25)

More: <http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2014/oct/21/prison-suicides-chris-grayling>

▣ A million pensioners still living in poverty, says Age UK

More than a million pensioners are still living in poverty, partly due to their failure to claim benefits, the charity Age UK has claimed. In a new report it said, 1.6m pensioners in the UK are living below the poverty line, and are 'floundering' on low incomes. It conceded that the numbers living in poverty had fallen since 2000, but said progress had now stalled. The government said it was trying to help pensioners claim their benefits. The report, called How We Can End Pensioner Poverty, said that many pensioners 'had been walking a tightrope in recent years,' as food and utility bills have risen. But the biggest cause of poverty is that people are missing out on £5.5bn worth of public support. Age UK said, 'It is nothing short of a scandal that there are still so many vulnerable older people in the UK living in poverty.'

Pray: for the elderly in our communities and especially those who are particularly vulnerable. (Isa.46:4)

More: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-29647781>

▣ UK money laundering

Schools, universities, solicitors, estate agents and financial advisers are elements of a growing industry of 'gatekeepers' to the UK for foreign money launderers. Currently hundreds of law firms across the country are undergoing checks from their regulator into how much care they take to keep out the criminals, because an international anti-money-laundering body, the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), will soon visit the UK. FATF has become increasingly concerned about the rising number of legal actions being taken in London by foreign nationals, who have become a huge source of earnings, particularly for big city law firms. Fraud experts say much of this action is funded by laundered money from Russia and former Soviet republics. Analysts expect the inspectors from the Solicitors Regulation Authority to run into stonewalling as lawyers claim professional client privilege to keep information about their clients secret. A similar exercise on UK banks found guidelines breached.

Pray: that as these investigations get underway detectives will be wise and thorough. Pray for the successful elimination of fraud and for transparent international movement of money. (Mt.6:24)

More: <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/business/news/uk-money-laundering-how-they-get-away-with-it-9799940.html>

▣ UK is lone parent capital of Western Europe

The UK has the highest rate of family breakdown in Western Europe, 'alarming' findings show. For the first time, the proportion of children living in single parent households has been found to be higher in the UK than all other Western European countries. According to the latest figures from Eurostat, the European Union's official statistics body, almost one in four UK children were found to be living in single parent households in 2012. This means that the UK has jumped to pole position, having been placed between second and fifth in Western Europe since 2005. The average number of children living in single parent households in Europe as a whole is around one in six. Commenting on the findings Harry Benson, Research Director for the Marriage Foundation, said: 'These figures are alarming.' He stressed 'that while most lone parents do an excellent job with fewer resources, not many will have chosen this lifestyle'.

Pray: for all those who are bringing up children in single parent families, that they will be blessed. Pray also for the underlying problem of family breakdown. (Pr.8:32)

More: <http://www.christian.org.uk/news/uk-is-lone-parent-capital-of-western-europe/>

EUROPE

▣ Ukraine: Amnesty deplores abuses by both sides

Human rights group Amnesty International says there is evidence of atrocities committed by both warring sides in eastern Ukraine, but not on the scale reported by Russia. It said 'strong evidence' implicated government forces in the killing of four men near rebel-held Donetsk. When the bodies were discovered Russian media spoke of 'mass graves' there. Meanwhile a huge blast has rocked part of Donetsk, as clashes continue despite a truce agreed on 5 September. 'There is no doubt that summary killings and atrocities are being committed by both pro-Russian separatists and pro-Kiev forces, but it is difficult to get an accurate sense of the scale of these abuses,' said Amnesty's Europe and Central Asia director John Dalhuisen. In a new report, Amnesty urged both sides to investigate such killings and other abuses thoroughly, because some had been 'deliberately misrecorded'.

Pray: that there will be a breakthrough bringing peace to Ukraine and a resolution to this conflict. (Pr.12:20)

More: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-29686752>

▣ EU counts tens of thousands of human trafficking victims

The EU registered 30,146 victims of human trafficking from 2010 to 2012, according to a European Commission report out on Friday 17 October. The vast majority were trafficked for sexual exploitation, with women and children suffering the most. The latest trends offer a sobering glimpse into a crime that is thought to be significantly wider spread. 'We do not claim to have measured the full extent of trafficking,' said EU commissioner for home affairs Cecilia Malmstrom, who presented the report to mark the eighth EU anti-trafficking day. The data, compiled by the EU's statistical office Eurostat, comes from national authorities and also notes it 'does not aspire to measure the full extent of the phenomenon'. However it estimates that over 1,000 children were trafficked for sexual exploitation. Around 80% of the victims were women of which 95% were also trafficked for sex. Others, mostly male, were enslaved for labour.

Pray: against the evil of trafficking and pray that the authorities across the EU will succeed in controlling those involved. (Ps.5:4)

More: <http://euobserver.com/justice/126137>

WORLDWIDE

▣ Israel: Hamas is rebuilding tunnel network

The leader of Al-Qassam Brigades (part of Hamas), said Hamas is rebuilding its terror tunnel network. The Gaza-based newspaper Al-Resalah was invited to send a reporter to a tunnel site where he was shown diggers hard at work repairing a tunnel that had been bombed during Operation Protective Edge. The commander of the digging team admitted that the tunnel's repairs were started 'during one of the humanitarian ceasefires reached during the war.' This statement reveals Hamas was using ceasefires intended for humanitarian ends as part of their war strategy. Recently Al-Qassam Brigades' spokesperson announced at a rally 'the tunnels of Al-Qassam are fine. Our men will begin the next battle with their feet on the ground in settlements around Gaza.' With missile test launches over the last two months, signs point to Hamas preparing for another conflict. Al-Qassam Brigades is recruiting as many volunteers as possible for basic military training with various types of weapons. See <http://unitedwithisrael.org/hamas-establishing-popular-army-ahead-of-upcoming-confrontation-with-israel/>

Pray: that God will orchestrate Israel's response to Hamas' aggressive drive to repair its attack capabilities and give ambassadors in the nations wisdom and discernment so that the welfare of both Palestinians and Israelis is stabilised. (Ecc.8:5)

More: <http://www.jewishpress.com/news/breaking-news/hamas-rebuilding-tunnel-network-admits-it-used-humanitarian-ceasefire-to-repair-terror-tunnels/2014/10/20/>

▣ Australia/Global: Aggressive secularism v religious education in schools

Humanist-inspired 'aggressive secularism' is becoming a concern for Christians in all democratic countries. Nations that once functioned on the Judeo-Christian worldview are now functioning on Secularism/Atheism. A National Education Coalition was formed as part of an aggressive secularism in public education and a successful Humanist activist assault on Chaplains in public schools via High Court judicial involvement. The most extreme form of atheism is imposed on public and private schools science classes as scientism - not science. In a recent High Court school Chaplains William's vs The Commonwealth decision, the dissenting conservative justice openly expressed concern about High Court judicial activism and spoke against Judges who, 'assume a law-making role resulting in the death of the rule of law in Australia. This whole scenario is not just a local or state issue, but international. Christians must jointly take a public and national stand on this whole affair.' See also <http://www.safeschoolscoalition.org.au/>

Pray: against changing the laws of the land that are based on God's laws. (Deut.8:6)

More: <http://ausprayernet.org.au/>

▣ South Africa: Cape Town Christians called to unite this Saturday

Christians in the Cape Town area are being invited to a 'Call to Unity' on Saturday, 25 October. Speakers will include Dr Desmond Rose, author of Write The Vision; Rev Barry Isaacs, Director of Transformation Africa and a member of the Doves Peak campaign to rename Devil's Peak; and Dr Graham Power, business leader and founder of Global Day of Prayer and Unashamedly Ethical. The meeting will be the fourth Call to Unity gathering and is based on Acts 1:14. The objectives of the campaign are to send a message of unity to encourage the Body of Christ to get together, and to pray and worship and seek the Holy Spirit's guidance.

Pray: that the Holy Spirit will prompt many to come to this gathering, ask God to pour out his blessings on South Africa as His people come together in unity. (Ps.133)

More: <http://gatewaynews.co.za/31671/>

▣ **Afghanistan: Opium poppy cultivation hits record-high**

According to the latest data from the United Nations' Office on Drugs and Crime, Afghan farmers grew a record 209,000 hectares of opium poppy in 2013. Even worse, these figures are projected to climb as security deteriorates in rural Afghanistan and eradication efforts lose steam. This information calls into question the efficacy of the US\$ 7.6 billion counter-narcotics effort aimed at curbing the illicit trade. Afghanistan's opium poppy production was valued at US \$3 billion in 2013 - a 50 per cent increase from the previous year - and Afghanistan continues to produce nearly 90 per cent of the world's supply. In past years opium poppy cultivation was met by a coordinated response from the US government and coalition partners. This led to a temporary decline in levels of opium production. Afghan farmers are being encouraged and helped by Christians to grow pomegranate crops instead for the western market.

Pray: for God to prompt the new government of national unity in Afghanistan to adopt a more aggressive approach to eradicate poppy farming and corruption at the local level. (Ps.10:12)

More: <http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Opium-poppy-cultivation-hits-record-high-in-Afghanistan-32494.html>

▣ **Nigeria: Schoolgirls' release - deal no deal?**

During a visit to Berlin, Nigeria's Foreign Minister, Aminu Wali, said that the 200+ schoolgirls abducted by Boko Haram will be released 'in the very near future' although he did not mention a specific date. The US administration confirmed on Monday that a ceasefire agreement had been reached between the Nigerian Army and Boko Haram but negotiations on the girls' release were still going on. Meanwhile four of the girls aged between 16 and 18 escaped from a camp in Cameroon and travelled west for weeks until they arrived at a Nigerian village. To date they are the only captives to have escaped from a Boko Haram camp. See: <http://barnabasfund.org/US/News/News-analysis/Four-kidnapped-Nigerian-schoolgirls-escape-Boko-Haram-in-Cameroon.html>

Pray: that the new agreement to bring the girls to safety will not be broken and that this time they would be released without harm. (Ps.71:24)

More: http://zeenews.india.com/news/world/abducted-girls-to-be-freed-soon-nigerian-minister_1488390.html

▣ **Laos: Converts forced to leave their homes**

Laos is one of the world's few remaining communist states and one of East Asia's poorest countries. Two Hmong Christian men, Tou Ly and Fai Cho, were recently forced by relatives to leave their homes after refusing to renounce Christ and return to the community's tradition of ancestor worship. The two believers were then arrested and detained for two weeks. After their release the men rented a place to live outside of the village community. Their struggles were compounded when Fai Cho's father died and authorities issued a large fine, claiming they didn't have the proper burial permit. Thankfully, they are receiving help from their church towards the fine but have little or no food or clothing and remain in desperate need.

Pray: that God will continue to give the two men steadfast faith and strength during this trial. May they not give in to the pressures coming against them to renounce Christ. (Ps.118:5-7)

More: <http://persecution.net/la-2014-10-16.htm>

▣ **Ethiopia: Persecution in Africa's oldest Christian nation**

Ethiopia is home to one of the oldest Christian communities in Africa, yet there is an increase in Christian persecution. Recently the Wahhabist Muslims planned to turn Ethiopia into an Islamic State and enforce Sharia law. The government squashed the plan, but a less intense persecution persists. Even the Orthodox Church persecutes the growing non-traditional Protestant and reformed churches. Thousands of Somalians fleeing violence now reside in eastern Ethiopia. Christianity is spreading among the displaced Somalians. Nonetheless, according to Operation World, the Ethiopian Church's 'potential is unfulfilled' due to a lack of Bible training

Pray: for God to provide Ethiopian Church leaders with the education and support they so desperately need (Pr.2:10). Pray also for an end to all forms of persecution of Christians. (1Pe.3:14).

More: <http://reporter.win1040.com/?p=2346>

IN ASSOCIATION WITH THE WORLD PRAYER CENTRE, BIRMINGHAM, UK

**Prayer Alert is distributed free of charge – Donations towards running costs are gratefully received.
To donate, please visit www.prayer-alert.net**

Please feel free to distribute Prayer Alert to anyone you feel will benefit from its ministry. All we ask is that you do not edit or change it in any way or charge for its use without contacting us for written permission.

The views expressed in Prayer Alert and on our website are those of the authors, organisations and websites named, and are not necessarily those of the Prayer Alert Editorial Team, the Prayer Alert Steering Group or the World Prayer Centre or any of its employees or trustees. While we try to ensure that the information we provide is correct, mistakes do occur and we cannot guarantee the accuracy of our material. If you do notice any mistakes then please let us know.

Prayer Alert is produced in association with The World Prayer Centre: Cornerstone House, 5 Ethel Street, Birmingham, B2 4BG