

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

■ Romania: Presidential election victory for Christian candidate Klaus Johannis

Romania has a new President, Mr Klaus Johannis. The new president has a personal relationship with the Lord. (See last week's Prayer Alert) Thank you for your prayer support. The Lord is setting free the Romanian people after 70 years of the demonic influence of communism. Mr Johannis started the election day worshipping the Lord in his local church in Sibiu. There are many things to be shared about the election, but one is clear for all: around 3:00 pm the people started to vote in huge numbers on behalf of Mr Johannis until the end of the legal time. The difference is almost incredible for the politicians: Mr Johannis won by a margin of over 8%. This was considered as an answer to the prayers of His people and God's intervention in the nation.

Praise: God and continue to pray for Mr Johannis that God will bless him and protect him and his work for the Romanian people. (Ps.150)

More: <http://www.euronews.com/2014/11/17/romania-s-new-leader-wants-less-show-more-real-solutions/>

■ Egypt: Forgiveness by Christians opens doors and a hunger for truth

Three years after Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak stepped down in the wake of nationwide protests, Christian workers in Egypt are finding an openness rarely experienced before. Forgiveness, and the non-retaliation of Christians, were both unexpected and unprecedented, but have had a huge impact on many non-Christians. Egyptians are now openly questioning their traditional faith, and expressing doubts aloud, said Patrick Stein, a Christian worker in Egypt and leader of a church-planting team there. To doubt isn't rare, but to openly challenge beliefs is. 'They are hungry for truth in a way that was not present before,' said Stein. 'If I am talking to people at a teashop, people around who are not a part of the conversation will often stop me afterwards and want to know more,' he said. 'They will ask me their deep questions that have been troubling their hearts for years.'

Praise: God for the openness of the people to what the Spirit is saying. (Ac.26:18)

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

BRITISH ISLES & IRELAND

■ C of E: New school standards are dangerous and divisive

The Church of England (C of E) is the latest institution to brand new standards requiring schools to actively promote 'British values' as dangerous and divisive. The Department for Education has been accused of rushing through a consultation on the school standards, which was published in July. The standards came into force in late September. The C of E's submission to the consultation speaks of the 'danger' of regulating under such loose terms, describing the standards as a 'negative and divisive approach'. Nigel Genders, Chief Education Officer for the C of E, cautioned that: 'British values' cannot be allowed to become a test or an assessment of whether somebody is 'safe' or 'loyal'. Genders went on to argue that 'extremism thrives when religion is banished to dark corners'. He added, 'more importantly, if we reject all forms of religion from our schools, we are failing to prepare young people for the realities of life'.

Pray: for the Government to recognise that the regulations require review in the light of the criticisms and problems it has raised. (2Tim.3:16)

More: <http://www.christian.org.uk/news/c-of-e-new-school-standards-are-dangerous-and-divisive/>

▣ Church plans savings clubs in primary schools

Children as young as four could have the chance to join savings clubs in an attempt to prevent them getting into debt later in life. The Church of England is proposing a network of clubs in primary schools, run by credit unions, to help raise children's financial awareness. Under the plans, they would be able to save small, regular amounts of money. They would also take part in running the groups, such as working as junior cashiers or bank managers. Parents and school staff could also sign up to the clubs, with mothers and fathers able to set up accounts to save for particular expenses, such as trips and school uniform. The Church says practical learning would be reinforced by classroom teaching materials. The proposed teaching resources would cover areas such as understanding the role money plays in our lives, how to manage money and managing risks and emotions associated with money.

Pray: for this exciting initiative to encourage children to develop positive attitudes towards money and the habit of saving. (Pr.13:11)

More: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-30024172>

▣ Police fail to record one in five of all crimes reported to them

More than 800,000 - or one in five - of all crimes reported to the police each year are not being recorded by officers, a report suggests. The problem is greatest for victims of violent crime, with a third going unrecorded. Of sexual offences, 26% are not recorded. An HM Inspectorate of Constabulary report looked at more than 8,000 reports of crime in England and Wales. The watchdog said the failure to record crime properly was 'indefensible'. Home Secretary Theresa May described the findings as 'utterly unacceptable', but police representatives said the situation had improved since the study. An unrecorded crime is classed as one that is reported to the police but not recorded as an offence. It means an investigation into the alleged crime is unlikely to happen.

Pray: for a truthful and accurate record of all crimes to be maintained by the police. (Pr.16:29)

More: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-30081682>

▣ Celebrate the second half of life, say Methodists and Anglicans

In today's society, growing older is often seen as a reason for sadness or regret. But the Methodist Church and the Church of England have published a new resource which urges Christians to celebrate and affirm the 'second half of life'. Through creative discussion material, 'Seasons of My Soul' offers people a chance to explore and share with one another key aspects of their lives and experiences. It focuses on eight themes for discussion; identity, memories, transition times, wisdom, roles and relationships, forgiveness and reconciliation, death and dying, and the celebration of life. 'Often when talk about the demographic of church attendance, we concern ourselves more with those who are not within our church communities than with celebrating and resourcing those who are', said Doug Swanney, Connexional Secretary for the Methodist Church. 'Seasons of My Soul is a creative way of redressing this balance.'

Pray: for this new resource to be widely adopted through the Church so that those in the last half of their lives may benefit. (Is.46:4)

More: <http://www.ekklesia.co.uk/node/21049>

▣ MP says schools are failing on cyberbullying

The chairman of the Commons education select committee says schools in England are failing in their efforts to teach children about the dangers of online abuse and trolling. Earlier this year, the Department for Education issued new statutory guidance for all schools and colleges in England on how to keep children safe online. Graham Stuart's committee is looking into whether the guidance is adequate. The government says it has taken measures to tackle online abuse, but it continues to be a widespread problem. Only last week, athlete Jessica Ennis-Hill was reportedly sent a tweet about rape after she said she would want her name removed from a stand at Sheffield United if convicted rapist Ched Evans was allowed to play football for the club again.

Pray: that the authorities will have more success against cyberbullying. (Ps.118:25)

More: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-30043084>

▣ Persecution of British Muslims who change their faith

A growing number of Christians in Britain who come from a Muslim background are facing persecution, warns Release International. They include Yasmin whose ex-husband planned to kill her. She was attacked in the street and taken under police protection because she became a Christian. Yasmin even relocated to another part of the country but her ex-husband tracked her down and demanded custody of their children. Her case is not isolated - Christian Concern For Our Nation have launched a safe haven initiative for Christian converts from Islam and offer confidential advice and support to those considering leaving Islam. They may even help individuals to relocate through a specialist team who will be the public link between those in danger and those offering refuge. They believe there are 1,100+ Muslim-background believers throughout the UK who are at risk. The real figure may be considerably higher. See also <http://www.inspiremagazine.org.uk/news?newsaction=view&newsid=2615>

Pray: for police, agencies and churches as they work towards remove the fear and persecution Muslim-background believers experience from their families and communities. (Ps.9:13-14)

More: http://www.safe-haven.org.uk/?utm_source=Christian+Concern+List&utm_campaign=73424b2479-BN-2014-11-18&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_9e164371ca-73424b2479-127125677

Final approval given for women bishops at General Synod

On Monday The Church of England today gave the final seal of approval to the appointment of women bishops, following the passing of legislation by the General Synod in July. At the Synod's meeting at Church House, an amendment which states that 'A man or woman may be consecrated into the office of bishop' was written into Canon Law following a final show of hands. Six officers signed the instrument of enactment before members of the Synod. The House of Bishops was scheduled to meet immediately after the close of Synod. Archbishop of York John Sentamu, prayed for unity within the Church following the motion being carried. The legislation was approved by both the House of Commons and the House of Lords last month and has also already received royal assent.

Pray: that following this final move the Church will settle down and live in unity. (Jn.17:20-23)

More: http://www.christiantoday.com/article/final_approval.given.to.women.bishops.at.general.synod/43139.htm

EUROPE

Austria: Radical Islam is active and growing

Has Austria become a growing regional centre for Islamic religious extremism? In this analysis, Benjamin Weinthal, who reports on European affairs for The Jerusalem Post, sees three different jihadist movements working actively in Austria. This small Central European country has recently made headlines because of its jihadi teenagers who have gone to fight in Syria. But it's radical Islam problem stretches beyond the Islamic State's recruitment of young Austrian men and women. The Alpine state has become a hub of extremism that includes not only Islamic State (IS) terrorism but also Iranian nuclear proliferation activities as well as active support for Hamas. 'IS: Austria is terror hotspot,' ran the headline of an interview published in September by the Österreich newspaper's online news outlet. In April, Samra Kesinovic, 17, and Sabina Selimovic, 15, two Austrian girls who had been radicalised by a local mosque, departed to join the Islamic State in Syria.

Pray: against the growth of radical movements and pray that the Holy Spirit will give clear understanding. (Job.17:4)

More: <http://www.thelocal.at/20141111/radical-islam-in-austria>

Hungary: Hold 'public outrage day' protests

Hungarians held rallies across the country on Monday in a protest dubbed 'public outrage day'. In Budapest more than 10,000 marched accusing Prime Minister Viktor Orban of employing corrupt officials, curbing freedom of speech, failing to manage the economy and changing direction by moving away from the EU and towards Russia. It was the fifth major demonstration in a month. One protester said: 'Corruption has become widespread in Hungary, and it is impossible to have a normal standard of living.' Meanwhile Euronews' reporter asked whether it was only the fault of the current government? A protester responded saying: 'Over the last decades – as we have heard in the speeches – many bad things happened and the country started to go the wrong way.' Another protester's concerns were more about unemployment.

Pray: that the government will listen to the protests and be open to the need for change. (Is.1:4)

More: <http://www.euronews.com/2014/11/18/hungarians-hold-public-outrage-day-protests/>

WORLDWIDE

Israel: Clashes after Jerusalem synagogue attack

Last week Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas talked of a risk of a global religious war. This week the images of a blood trail in a Jerusalem synagogue emerged after two Palestinians armed with meat cleavers and a gun killed five people before being shot dead themselves. It's the deadliest incident in six years in the Holy City amid a surge in religious conflict. The two assassins belonged to the PFLP group (Popular Front for Liberation of Palestine). Benjamin Netanyahu gave warning of a 'harsh response' to the attack. Confrontations now in both Jerusalem and the West Bank underscore the tensions that have been ongoing for months. Politically sharp statements are coming from both sides.

Pray: against further terror and senseless brutality - particularly the Palestinian call for a 'day of rage. Pray for prudent political approaches to the tensions by both sides and for the peace of Jerusalem. (Ps.122:6-9)

More: <http://www.jpost.com/Arab-Israeli-Conflict/Police-officer-wounded-in-Jerusalem-terror-attack-dies-bringing-death-toll-to-5-382196>

Israel: Back story

Jerusalem has seen many street battles in Arab areas between the locals and Israeli security forces in recent weeks, as well as a series of street terror attacks. The main source of conflict is the Temple Mount. Israel is trying to keep the status quo, with Jews and Christians not being allowed to pray or bring a Bible there. Meanwhile the Palestinian leadership is saying that Israel wants to tear the building down. A serious battle over Jerusalem is being waged, 'I call on all leaders of countries in the Western world. I want to see outrage over this massacre,' said Netanyahu while ordering the demolition of the assailants' residences. Meanwhile a budget has passed its first reading in Israel's parliament. It has to pass two more readings before being approved. If it's not approved by the end of 2014 Israel will have elections (a difficult process to deal with at this time).

Pray: for God to keep the weary security forces sharp and alert and for Him to watch over this coalition until it is His perfect timing to raise up a new government. (Ps.121:4)

More: <http://www.ibtimes.co.uk/jerusalem-synagogue-attack-street-battles-rage-idf-begins-targeting-terrorist-homes-1475492>

▣ **Pakistan: Prayer request from a believer**

A Pakistani Christian asks for our prayers: 'The Pakistan military is continuing their raids against the Taliban along the Afghanistan border. Pray that they will continue these efforts. There has been confusion and division among many of the Taliban and Al Qaida. Pray that this may continue to an even greater extent. Some leaders from IS have been seen in Pakistan. These are disgruntled Al Qaida followers who have been upset that Al Qaida was not doing more to take over Pakistan and carry out raids against the infidels (the Christian west). Pray that they may be stopped before they gain any momentum. Earlier this month the government reported that IS has joined Al Qaida Sunnis in Pakistan to carry out attacks against Shi'ites and Christians. Pray that these planned attacks might be foiled.' Also please pray for a Christian professor who was arrested for blasphemy this week.

Pray: for Muslims to see their religion brings them no hope, and for them to look to the One who brings true peace. (This is happening more and more.) Pray for the protection of Christians in Pakistan. (Ps.59:1,2)

More: <http://www.christianpost.com/news/christian-professor-arrested-for-blasphemy-in-pakistan-charged-with-same-offense-as-mother-of-five-asia-bibi-129854/>

▣ **Indonesia: Jakarta has a Christian governor despite Muslim protests**

Members of the Islamic Defenders Front protested against Basuki Tjahaja Purnama (nicknamed Ahok) being sworn in as Jakarta's first Christian governor in nearly 50 years. He is ethnically Chinese and a Christian and will take over one of Indonesia's most powerful political jobs. Hundreds of religious hardliners have staged protests against Ahok, underlining the difficulties facing the president's battle against religious intolerance in a nation with the world's biggest Muslim population. Thousands of police have been deployed around the capital in case of violence. Secular Indonesia has seen a rise in attacks against Christians and minority groups. 'Some do not have high hopes for the administration because parliament is not controlled by his coalition,' said Indonesia's director for Human Rights Watch.

Pray: that the administration will be able to keep their pledge to protect all religious minorities. (Ps.72:2)

More: <http://www.christiantoday.com/article/christian.takes.the.helm.in.jakarta.despite.muslim.hardliner.protests/43230.htm>

▣ **Global: New Ebola studies of experimental treatments**

On Tuesday an alliance of companies and aid groups announced plans to test experimental drugs and collect blood plasma from Ebola survivors to treat new victims of the disease in West Africa. Plasma from survivors contains antibodies that the immune system makes to fight the virus. Several Ebola patients have received survivor plasma and recovered, but doctors say there is no way to know whether it really helps without a study like the one they are about to start within a month. To date there are no drugs or vaccines approved for Ebola. Doctors Without Borders said last week it would host studies of experimental treatments and plasma at three of its West Africa treatment centres.

Pray: for a vaccine and a cure for Ebola (Ps.18:4 & 16)

More: <http://www.nbcnews.com/storyline/ebola-virus-outbreak/study-will-test-ebola-survivors-blood-treat-virus-n251381>

▣ **Nigeria: Army re-captures Chibok from Boko Haram**

Last Thursday night rebels entered the town of Chibok shooting from pickup trucks and motorcycles to take control of the area. Chibok is an enclave of mostly Christian families; some are involved in translating the Bible into local languages in the mainly Muslim northern part of Nigeria and it was from Chibok that the 200+ mainly Christian schoolgirls were kidnapped. The Nigerian army says it has regained control of the town from Boko Haram and Chibok is free and secure, so residents can return to their homes.

Pray: for Nigeria's government and army to win the battle for the land and hearts and minds of the people. (Pr.8:15)

More: <http://www.cbn.com/cbnnews/world/2014/November/Nigeria-Army-Re-Captures-Town-Seized-by-Boko-Haram/>

▣ **SE Asia: Urgent need for supplies for refugees**

Help is urgently needed for refugees in a closed country in SE Asia. Next week a Christian team will be travelling to some refugee camps and distributing supplies. They hope to hand out items in time for a Christmas outreach, but they are in need of more supplies, especially hygiene packs. They also need notepads, washcloths, combs, and bandanas. They need them before they leave on 24 November.

Although there's not much time, the team has hope. They realise time is running out but are hoping to get these items to their contact and would be blessed by any items they receive! This is a tremendous opportunity for us to bless those in the refugee camps this Christmas!

Pray: for enough supplies to be donated, and for opportunities to share Christ with the refugees. (Ps.37:4,5)

More: <https://www.mnnonline.org/news/urgent-need-supplies-refugees/>

IN ASSOCIATION WITH THE WORLD PRAYER CENTRE, BIRMINGHAM, UK

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