

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 39-2017

Website

Contact Us

Donations

Friday 29 September 2017

■ Praise Reports

- [Extending archbishop's youth charity](#)
- [500,000 to take Bibles to school](#)

■ British Isles & Ireland

- [Friday Focus: praying for our communities](#)
- [Intercessor Focus: Brexit issues](#)
- [Childcare plan widens school readiness gap](#)
- [The British army](#)
- [‘Diplomatic mission’ by Russian Orthodox Church](#)
- [Sharing Jesus: ‘pray, say, give, invite’](#)
- [Church hosts a ‘Satanic’ fashion show - why?](#)

■ Europe

- [Germany: influence of AfD](#)
- [German election, Brexit and Ireland](#)
- [Crimea: human rights crimes](#)

■ Worldwide

- [Antigua and Barbuda: a huge crisis](#)
- [Iraq: Kurds vote for independence](#)
- [North Korea: pray for Christian mission](#)
- [South Sudan: severe malaria outbreak](#)
- [USA: praying for politicians](#)
- [Indonesia and Vanuatu: volcano eruption fears](#)
- [Brazil decades behind on inequality](#)

PRAISE REPORTS

■ Extending archbishop's youth charity

Dr John Sentamu said it has never been so important to support young people as he launched a major fundraising drive to extend the reach of his youth trust almost a decade after it launched. The Youth Trust seeks to ‘change our world for the better’, and has supported more than 50,000 pupils in 450 schools since 2008. It has now embarked on a drive to raise £375,000 to extend leadership courses for those living in the top 20% of the most deprived areas across the north of England. That means reaching an additional 15,000 youth from disadvantaged communities, in 300 primary and secondary schools, in the next eighteen months.

Praise: God for the proposal to give positive life skills to even more youth. May they all grow in patience, self-control and leadership as they change their communities for the better. (Isaiah 52:7a)

More: <http://www.yorkshirepost.co.uk/news/drive-to-extend-archbishop-s-youth-charity-1-8770147>

■ 500,000 to take Bibles to school

About 500,000 public school students, from all fifty US states, will join the Focus on the Family's Bring Your Bible to School day on 5 October. This is the fourth such annual student-led religious freedom event. Many Christian students feel there is unspoken pressure on them to stay silent about their faith. Others report overt efforts to silence them from presenting their Bible-based viewpoints in class discussions or assignments, even though the First Amendment recognises the rights of students to talk about their faith and read their Bibles outside classroom time. This day gives Christians the chance to show how their faith is an important part of who they are. 356,000 students participated last year, with Alliance Defending Freedom offering students free legal representation if their rights were violated at school.

Praise: God for this opportunity for children to engage meaningfully in conversations with peers and share their Christian perspective on important issues. (Titus 2:1,2)

More: <http://www.bringyourbible.org/>

BRITISH ISLES & IRELAND

■ Friday Focus: praying for our communities

Jesus encourages us to love the people around us: our neighbour, a stranger on the bus, a shop assistant. This weekend - the National Prayer Weekend - provides an opportunity to show God's love to people in our communities by asking if they have anything they want us to pray for. (Emily Owen, National Prayer Weekend)

Pray: Father, thank You for the communities where You have placed us. We praise you for the beautiful gift of prayer. We pray for courage, opportunities, and ultimately revival, as our local areas are filled with prayer and Your

presence this weekend and beyond. (Matthew 22:39)

More: http://www.hopetogether.org.uk/Groups/283989/Friday_Focus.aspx

▣ **Intercessor Focus: Brexit issues**

On 22 September Theresa May gave the EU the UK's strategy for Brexit, but by the end of the fourth round of Brexit talks a week later there was little sign of compromise on either side. Pray for agreement on broad-minded non-disruptive changeover arrangements which will benefit both the EU and the UK. The Prime Minister said a transition period could be around two years, during which time access to the single market would continue on current terms. Pray for negotiators to move forward positively and speedily to construct workable EU-UK relationships during and after Brexit. She also proposed a 'bold new security agreement' between the UK and the EU. Pray for a withdrawal that continues to honour the peace process in Ireland and avoids a hard border. On trade, the PM said there was no need to impose tariffs where there are none now. Pray for a transition that doesn't adopt existing models, but rather provides better stability for businesses and workers.

Pray: for God to bring to conclusion a Brexit that is fair and workable. (Hebrews 10:36)

More: 1

▣ **Childcare plan widens school readiness gap**

A Sutton Trust report urges the Government to reverse its 'ill-advised' decision not to extend the childcare offer for 3- and 4-year-olds to non-working parents, which risks increasing the gap in school readiness between disadvantaged children and their peers. Working parents are currently entitled to double the standard fifteen hours of free weekly childcare that is available universally. In a survey, 80% of head teachers said that many children arrived at primary school not ready for classroom activities, and 86% said the situation is worse now than five years ago. The trust said that early years childcare increased the benefits for children whose parents have lower incomes or lower levels of education, or whose first language is not English. Although it is understandable that the Government wants to improve access to childcare for working parents, this must not be at the expense of good early education for disadvantaged children.

Pray: for needy families to receive support to improve their children's chances later in life. (Leviticus 19:15)

More: <https://schoolsweek.co.uk/30-hour-free-childcare-plan-would-widen-school-readiness-gap/>

▣ **The British army**

There are particular demands and challenges that come out of the special nature of life in the Army. The Army recognises this, and many layers of welfare support are available. Pray for the Army Welfare Service, delivering a comprehensive and confidential service for the needs of regular soldiers and their families living abroad, or families separated by overseas postings. Pray for the unique family set-ups in army base communities, and for the wellbeing of Army reservists, and, in certain circumstances, veterans. Pray also for God to bless the confidential chaplaincy support that is available (regardless of faith) for all family members of service personnel and those dealing with casualties of war. Community development workers also need our prayers as they provide projects focusing on the learning and personal development activities of children, young people, and their families, both in the UK and overseas.

Pray: for our military communities to experience and deliver continuous security and wellbeing. (Proverbs 1:3)

More: <http://www.army.mod.uk/welfare-support/welfare-support.aspx>

▣ **'Diplomatic mission' by Russian Orthodox Church**

The so-called 'foreign minister' of the Russian Orthodox Church recently gave a bold speech in London. Addressing diplomats, politicians, religious figures and entrepreneurs, Hilarion Alfeev said Christianity is dying in Europe and being replaced with secular ideas. He said that other peoples with different faiths, cultures and values will live in Europe in the future and establish liberalism, which will affect human rights and fundamental Christian freedoms in civil, economic, political, social and cultural life. Hilarion appealed for this to be countered by unity among the churches. 'Christians must strive to defend their values on which the continent has been built for centuries, and listen to the lamentations and sufferings of Christians from across the globe.' The Orthodox Church is known to view the social liberalism of Western churches as part of the problem rather than part of the solution.

Pray: for traditional Christian beliefs to stand firm in the face of secularism and military conflicts. (Ephesians 6:10)

More: <https://www.christiantoday.com/article/whats.eating.the.foreign.minister.of.the.russian.orthodox.church/114814.htm>

▣ **Sharing Jesus: 'pray, say, give, invite'**

Leaders from 18 denominations attending the Windermere leaders' summit heard about the results of the new Talking Jesus research, and the best strategy for sharing Jesus. Andy Hawthorne from the Message Trust said, 'People's hearts are open to the gospel. The Church is on the front foot in mission, the like of which I've not known in my lifetime.' The summit drew on a newly updated survey of adults and teenagers, which shows that people of all ages want to know more about Jesus Christ and Christianity. The strategy for seeing church growth is to pray for five people; talk about Jesus (the research shows that conversations play a key part in people becoming Christians); give away Bible-based resources; and invite people to church. The research found that 13% of young people now describe themselves as practising Christians, with 67% of adults saying they know a Christian and consider them 'caring', 'generous' and 'good-humoured'.

Pray: for the vision of 'a growing Church' to gain momentum, and for more church growth. (Psalm 92:12)

More: <http://www.eauk.org/church/stories/what-can-i-do-to-share-jesus-pray-say-give-and-invite.cfm>

▣ **Church hosts a 'Satanic' fashion show - why?**

London Fashion Week held a 'Satanic Black Mass Fashion Show' at St Andrew's Catholic Church, Holborn. The aisle was transformed into a graphically satanic runway with a checkerboard catwalk, a towering backdrop of tarot card imagery, and an eerily pale model in a cream outfit inspired by a corpse bride. The church was desecrated with all manner of demonic

symbolism as it became the backdrop for this widely-publicised event, devised by Turkish fashion designer Dilara Findikoglu. People are wondering how shrouding the church's sacred space with pentagrams, inverted crosses, and other occult paraphernalia is consistent with the church's mission. See <http://www.nowtheendbegins.com/turkish-designer-dilara-findikoglu-launches-satanic-fashion-show-catholic-church-london/>

Pray: for churches to resist temptation to condone, let alone host, activities that are not Christian. (Revelation 18:14)

More: <http://archbishopcranmer.com/church-england-hosting-satanic-fashion-show/>

EUROPE

Germany: influence of AfD

Alternative for Germany (AfD), founded in 2013, is a right-wing populist and Eurosceptic political party. In 2016 it made an alliance with the Freedom Party of Austria, with both party leaders saying border control officers should use armed force if necessary to protect the border. By May 2017, the AfD had gained representation in 13 of the 16 German state parliaments. Now it has become the third largest party in the German parliament, partly because immigration was the main election issue. Postwar Germany is multicultural, tolerant and liberal: abhorring war, and defending the environment, human rights and international teamwork. BUT the influx of over one million Muslim migrants, Russia's dramatic resurgence, and Europe's rolling financial problems are arousing other feelings and aspirations. These emotions don't square with the desire to be tolerant and multicultural. Many are saying that a more powerful, more assertive, more terrifying Germany is coming.

Pray: for leading politicians to sense and follow God's ways and purposes for Germany and Europe, even when they themselves do not yet know Him. (Isaiah 45:5)

More: <https://www.thetrumpet.com/16287-a-more-powerful-more-assertive-more-terrifying-germany-is-coming>

German election, Brexit and Ireland

The German elections have weakened Chancellor Merkel's leadership authority. Weeks of Brexit talks will be lost while Germany forms a government that can command a majority in its parliament. In the UK there are disagreements between Westminster and the leaders of the devolved parliaments/assemblies over which powers should eventually be 'taken back' from Brussels and the continuing failure to reach a Northern Ireland border agreement. Much more could be written, but the key thing for us all is to keep praying for those involved in the Brexit negotiations. May they make agreements that will speedily remove the fear and uncertainty faced by UK citizens in Europe and EU citizens in the UK, and bring clarity to businesses employing thousands who need to plan ahead for the next twelve months and beyond.

Pray: for unity within governments, and for individuals to lay aside personal ambition for a season and genuinely work together for the good of the nations. (Isaiah 52:7)

More: <http://mailchi.mp/23b6a44238ef/pray-without-ceasing-pfs-newsletter?e=509d356d4f>

Crimea: human rights crimes

The UN has accused Russia of committing grave human rights violations in Crimea. There is a need for accountability. Russia annexed the peninsula from Ukraine in 2014, after that country's leader was overthrown. The UN report has documented random arrests, detentions, disappearances, torture, and at least one execution. There have been 'intrusive law enforcement raids of private properties', and the human rights situation has 'significantly deteriorated', with hundreds of prisoners illegally transferred from Crimea to Russian jails. Civil servants have been forced to renounce their Ukrainian citizenship or face losing their jobs, and Moscow has replaced Ukrainian laws with Russian ones. Education in Ukrainian has all but disappeared from Crimean schools. There was no immediate response from Russia to the report.

Pray: for further investigations into human rights violations and for prosecutions where applicable, with help provided for the victims. (Job 29:17)

More: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-41386490>

WORLDWIDE

Antigua and Barbuda: a huge crisis

A humanitarian crisis is developing on Antigua as a result of the devastation wreaked on Barbuda by Hurricane Irma, according to Prime Minister Gaston Browne. He told the UN General Assembly, 'Overnight Antigua's population increased by almost 3%. I know of no country that could easily cope with such an unplanned and unexpected increase in its population.' In addition to providing shelter, accommodation, and basic necessities to the evacuated Barbudans, Antigua's social services need to provide school places for an additional 600 children; medical services for many elderly; and a means of income for the able-bodied. Preliminary estimates place the cost of rebuilding Barbuda at £185 million - over 15% of the country's GDP. The PM said it was a stretch beyond their reach: 'Barbuda is not only a natural disaster, it is a humanitarian crisis that now consumes Antigua.'

Pray: for new life out of death and beauty out of ashes. Pray for funds to repair and restore electricity, deliver drinkable water, and provide building materials, so that the island is fit again for human habitation. (Isaiah 61:3)

More: <https://antiguaobserver.com/humanitarian-crisis-developing-on-antigua-pm-browne/>

Iraq: Kurds vote for independence

An email from a Kurdish Christian says, 'On 25 September, in a landmark referendum, Kurds in three northern provinces of Iraq voted for independence for the Kurdistan region. Kurds are the fourth-largest ethnic group in the Middle East, but they have never obtained a permanent nation state. Kurds faced decades of repression before acquiring autonomy in 1991. 5.2 million Kurds and non-Kurds who were registered as resident in Kurdish-controlled northern Iraq voted, even though Iraq's prime minister denounced the referendum as unconstitutional. Neighbouring Turkey and Iran also vehemently objected to it, fearing it will stoke separatist feeling among their own Kurdish minorities. Even the US government voiced serious

concerns. Dear friends, we ask for your urgent and ongoing prayer, for wisdom for the Kurdish government leaders and peace in the region.' For a media report on the situation, click the 'More' button.

Pray: for Christian organisations as they make plans to locate a couple in Kurdistan that will lead to outreach work, and for the strengthening of the work of other like-minded organisations. (Psalm 112:1,2)

More: <https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2017/09/26/world/politics-diplomacy-world/whats-next-iraqi-kurd-independence-vote/#.WcoVF8iGOM8>

■ North Korea: pray for Christian mission

In the 1940s, Christianity enjoyed tremendous growth in North Korea. By 1950 there were 2,850 churches, 700 pastors, and 300,000 Christians; Pyongyang was nicknamed 'the new Jerusalem'. But the rise of Kim Il Sung to power changed everything, and religion was outlawed. There are stark similarities between Christianity and the Juche philosophy indoctrinated into every North Korean from birth. Replacing Father, Son, and Holy Spirit is a trinity of Kim Il Sung, his mother Kim Jong Suk, and his son Kim Jong Il. National laws are written in a style that resembles Mosaic law. Children are taught to give thanks to Kim Il Sung and Kim Jong Il for their food. Photos of the two adorn every house, as reminders of who supposedly cares for their needs. The World Centre for North Korea Missions connects people with North Korea, and facilitates mission training and projects.

Pray: for success of the plans to implement church planting teams in every North Korean village, a Bible for every household, and teams ready to distribute the Bibles once the doors are open. (Psalm 112:4)

More: <http://www.christianheadlines.com/news/a-look-at-christianity-in-north-korea-1135128.html>

■ South Sudan: severe malaria outbreak

The ministry of health in South Sudan has said that this year's malaria is the worst the country has ever seen. Over 900,000 cases had been reported by 21 August. This life-threatening blood disease is transmitted through the bite of the Anopheles mosquito. Once an infected mosquito bites a human, the parasites multiply in the host's liver before infecting and destroying red blood cells. More than 76% of disease-related deaths in South Sudan are from malaria. Authorities have stepped up efforts to fight the disease, but there is a lack of funds. Pray for the malaria victims in northern villages unreachable by road. Pray for the provision of mosquito nets for poor people who cannot afford to purchase their own. Pray for the majority of the population, who do not currently have access to health care or immunisation programmes. See also: <https://www.maf-uk.org/story/medair%E2%80%99s-fight-to-stop-malaria>

Pray: for God to give scientists the wisdom to create a vaccine that kills malaria bacteria. (Proverbs 11:30)

More: <http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article63300>

■ USA: praying for politicians

America's intercessors are praying for the presence of God to invade the government and lifting Christians in government to His throne room. Examples are Vice President Mike Pence ('Giving my life to Christ changed everything') and CIA director Mike Pompeo ('Pray and stand and fight and make sure that we know that Jesus Christ, our Saviour, is the only solution for our world'). Others are Ben Carson, the secretary of housing and urban development; Kellyanne Conway (counsellor to the President), whose faith plays a minute by minute part of her life; Reince Priebus, White House chief of staff; and Ken Blackwell, the domestic policy chair, who says his faith influences his decisions. The US ambassador to the UN, Nikki Haley, says her faith has a profound impact on her daily life, and that she looks to God for guidance in every decision.

Pray: for all these leaders to bring their faith in God and Christian ethos to their jobs. (1 Timothy 2:1-2)

More: https://www.ifapray.org/images/PDFs/Special_Reports/2017/ChristiansintheTrumpAdministrationSpecialReport.pdf

■ Indonesia and Vanuatu: volcano eruption fears

Since 23 September, 122,500 people have been evacuated to locations outside a 7.5-mile exclusion area around Bali's Mount Agung volcano. The magma has been rising closer to its surface, as indicated by hundreds of daily tremors. The volcano, two miles above sea level, usually attracts hikers, tourists and pilgrims. Hundreds of volunteers have been deployed, according to the International Red Cross; they, and officials, are combing the area, urging villagers to evacuate, and raising warning banners around the exclusion zone. Additionally, on 27 September Mount Sinabung exploded, spewing ash 2.5km into the air over the island of Sumatra, and Vanuatu has ordered an island to be evacuated because of another volcano threat. See <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/picturegalleries/worldnews/10551746/Volcano-Mount-Sinabung-in-Sumatra-Indonesia-erupts-spewing-lava-and-ash.html> and <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2017/09/28/vanuatu-orders-full-evacuation-ambae-island-volcano-threatens/>

Pray: for the public to remain calm, and for official agencies as they monitor the situations and evacuate people and livestock. (Psalm 121:1,2)

More: <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/world/more-120-000-flee-fears-grow-bali-volcano-eruption-n805411>

■ Brazil decades behind on inequality

Oxfam research shows that Brazilians earning the minimum wage would have to work for nineteen years to make as much as a rich person in Brazil's top 0.1% makes in one month. At the current pace it would take Brazil 75 years to reach the UK's current level of income equality. Oxfam had already reported that just six Brazilians own as much money as the poorest half of the country. 'This is an unjust, unacceptable, and unsustainable situation,' said Oxfam Brazil's executive director. 'We cannot dance around this any more; tackling inequality head-on is everyone's responsibility. This report is our way of kick-starting this conversation.' Experts say Brazil's current situation is due to a backsliding tax system; racial and gender discrimination that erodes the rights of women and black Brazilians; a political system that concentrates power; and politicians highly prone to corruption.

Pray: for investment in education, raising the minimum wage, black Brazilians to be paid the same as white Brazilians, and ending tax breaks for the super-rich. (Nahum 1:3)

More: <https://www.oxfam.org/en/pressroom/pressreleases/2017-09-25/brazil-decades-behind-other-countries-fighting-inequality>

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