



PRAYER ALERT...



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Donations

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■ British Isles & Ireland

- [**FRIDAY FOCUS: 2nd November - Isolation and loneliness - 2 Thessalonians 2:16-17; Psalm 23**](#)
- [Christian magistrate to go to Court of Appeal over 'privatisation of faith'](#)
- [Abortion now seen as an easy option, warns Archbishop](#)
- [Churchgoers want to help in tackling gun and knife crime](#)
- [Anti-arms protestors line Saudi King's route to Buckingham Palace](#)
- [Councils seek more migrant funds](#)

■ Europe

- [Eastern Germany – the most atheistic region in Europe](#)
- [Berlin: Children of immigrants – problematic potential](#)

■ Worldwide

- [**SPECIAL FEATURE - Iraq City Profile - Baquba**](#)
- [Iraqi Premier pledges to protect country's Christian minority](#)
- [Jerusalem Peace Conference in America](#)
- [28 days of prayer leading to Australian election](#)
- [Quebec's loss of faith triggering social problems](#)
- [Fresh protest by monks in Burma](#)
- [Arson attack on Jerusalem Church](#)

■ Praise Reports

- [Christians look with hope to Global Day of Prayer 2008](#)
- ['Spiritual Bomb' hits Fiji](#)

BRITISH ISLES & IRELAND

■ **FRIDAY FOCUS: 2nd November - Isolation and loneliness - 2 Thessalonians 2:16-17; Psalm 23**

Our 21st century lifestyle with its pressures, busyness and demands means many people are isolated and in every community there are lonely people. **Confess:** the times when I have not noticed others who might be isolated. **Pray:** a BLESSing for anyone you know who is lonely/isolated for whatever reason; for Christian agencies taking the love of God to both young and old who feel forgotten. **Consider:** writing or visiting someone you know who may be feeling isolated, letting them know their Heavenly Father does love and care for them; inviting someone at Christmas.

More: <http://www.worldprayer.org.uk/pagesys.cfm?PID=123>

■ **Christian magistrate to go to Court of Appeal over 'privatisation of faith'**

A Christian magistrate is to ask the Court of Appeal to rule on how far people can rely on UK law to uphold their rights and deeply held religious convictions against a growing secularist agenda. Andrew McClintock, 63, and a magistrate for 18 years in South Yorkshire became the first judge to take the Lord Chancellor to court. He claimed he was forced to resign from the Court's Family Panel after court managers failed to make reasonable accommodation of his religious and philosophical beliefs on same sex adoption cases in which he might be asked to officiate. Mr McClintock had asked them to screen his cases so that other magistrates could preside over such cases. In January, a Sheffield Employment Tribunal refused to accept that the court had acted unreasonably and his appeal to the Employment Appeal Tribunal was quashed. Now Mr McClintock has instructed his barrister to file papers for a hearing in the Court of Appeal as he believes the increasing secularist framework of the law is 'privatising faith' in the UK. Mr McClintock's appeal is likely to be heard in the New Year. (See Prayer Alert: 0407)

Pray: for the new appeal to be upheld. Pray also for resolution of current conflicting statutory obligations which both 'prioritise children's' welfare' but also rule on 'ignoring the sexuality of the receiving household'. (Mt.22:21)

More: <http://www.christiantoday.com/article/christian.magistrate.to.go.to.court.of.appeal.over.privatisation.of.faith/14291.htm>

■ **Abortion now seen as an easy option, warns Archbishop**

The Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Rowan Williams, suggested that in the increasingly volatile debate on time limits for terminations Britons were losing sight of the sanctity of life. MPs, doctors and pro-life campaigners agreed that the harrowing procedure risked being viewed as a mere alternative to contraception. New figures reveal the scale of abortions carried out for minor, treatable birth defects. In one area of England, more than 50 babies with club feet and 37 with cleft lips or palates were aborted in three years, raising fears that the procedure is being used to satisfy parents' desire for the perfect baby. Dr Williams said: 'People might now describe supporters of the 1967 Abortion Act as taking the 'default position' - that abortion should only be carried out in cases of extreme danger or distress. Nearly 200,000 abortions a year in

England and Wales tell their own story of how much things have changed.' An influential committee of MPs is currently discussing whether the 24-week cut-off point for abortions for so-called 'social reasons' should be lowered.

Pray: for MP's to examine their consciences and heed these warnings concerning the sanctity of life. (Ps.139:13-16)

More: http://www.dailymail.co.uk/pages/live/articles/health/healthmain.html?in_article_id=488931&in_page_id=1774

■ Churchgoers want to help in tackling gun and knife crime

The Church Consultation on Violent Crime, launched by Premier Christian Radio and the Metropolitan Black Police Association, reveals that 65% of churchgoers thought their churches should be involved in reducing violent crime by working in partnership with the police. Their research follows the fatal shooting of 16-year-old Jonathan Matondo, whose dreams of becoming a preacher ended when he was killed last week. More than 3,240 church members and leaders from across the UK participated in the research - 89% saying gun and knife crime was an issue for the church to address. The Rev Ermal Kirby, one of the report's authors whose organisation, Hope For London, aims to combat violent crime in the capital, said a combination of factors pull young people towards gangs, drugs and guns. Keith Jarrett, president of the National Black Police Association said that members of ethnic minorities needed to be stopped and searched if Britain were to win the war against violent crime.

Pray: that Churches and police forces would exercise wisdom and commitment in tackling this evil. (Is.60:18)

More: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/crime/article/0,,2196537,00.html>

■ Anti-arms protestors line Saudi King's route to Buckingham Palace

The Saudi head of state King Abdullah could clearly see anti-arms and human rights protesters as he travelled in ceremony to Buckingham Palace this week. The peaceful demonstration was organised by Campaign Against Arms Trade (CAAT) which believes that the influence of BAE Systems has led the UK Government to ignore human rights abuses in Saudi Arabia. Demonstrators called on the Government to reopen a Serious Fraud Office investigation into the Saudi regime's arms deals with BAE. CAAT spokesperson Symon Hill said: 'Demonstrations are forbidden in Saudi Arabia, so King Abdullah may not be used to them. People in the UK don't want their government allowing BAE to arm Abdullah's vicious regime, nor inviting the King to a banquet at Buckingham Palace. Protestors have insisted that Gordon Brown put human rights and the public interest ahead of BAE's profits from Saudi Arabia.' CAAT supporters later demonstrated with the same message near Parliament. (See Prayer Alert: 1907 & 2307)

Pray: with perseverance for this iniquitous arms trade to cease and for discernment concerning UK relations with Saudi Arabia. (Pr.12:19-20)

More: <http://www.ekklesia.co.uk/node/6048>

■ Councils seek more migrant funds

The Local Government Association is calling for a £250m-a-year fund to help regions struggling with unexpected influxes of migrants. It wants National Insurance numbers, GP registrations and schools census data used to help track population changes. The report comes after ministers admitted estimates of migrant workers since 1997 were wrong by 300,000. The LGA, which represents 400 councils across England and Wales, commissioned the report to survey more than 100 councils and public bodies. Most reported pressure on services - with extra costs being met 'at the expense of mainstream budgets.' The report highlights seven key issues for public services, including: impact on schools, child protection services, language barriers, housing, community relations, crime and health. LGA chairman Sir Simon Milton said immigration had been good for the economy and some industries would collapse without it, but said that money being generated wasn't resourcing at local level.

Pray: for the Lord to bring clear vision and purpose as well as coherent organization to government policies for migrants. (Jas.3:18)

More: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/7071612.stm>

EUROPE

■ Eastern Germany – the most atheistic region in Europe

Martin Luther's homeland has turned into a pre-Christian mission field, according to the Lutheran theologian and journalist Uwe Siemon-Netto. Less than a quarter of the population in Luther's homeland is still Christian. Luther's town, Wittenberg, counts about 15 percent church members. The same is true for Eisleben, where Luther was born in 1483 and where he died in 1546. Siemon-Netto holds the former communist regime in East Germany responsible for the demise of Christianity. Following in the footsteps of the Nazis, the regime had systematically tried to wipe out Christianity in its realm. As Siemon-Netto pointed out, this turned out to be the only enterprise in which the East German communists succeeded remarkably and lastingly. The former East Germany is the only European territory with an overwhelming majority of atheists – 65 percent of the population. In 1950, the Protestant churches in the Soviet occupied German Democratic Republic had 16 million members. Today, there are 3.4 million left.

Pray: for a resurgence of evangelism and faith that would bring a transformation once again. (Ac.2:38-39)

More: <http://www.assistnews.net/Stories/2007/s07100238.htm>

■ Berlin: Children of immigrants – problematic potential

40% of all children under five years of age come from immigrant families. Those who work in pre-schools or in schools have been aware of this continual growth for quite some time. However, because special aid for these children has not been a

priority in education for decades, many of the youth are now unemployed. They attempt to achieve respect by organizing themselves into gangs – their ‘career’ is crime. Up until now, there has been no real emphasis put on helping these children and youth through education. Such education needs to begin very early—in preschools and primary schools. Fortunately private projects are continually being initiated to help give immigrant children a better education—for example, the ‘Street University’ in Kreuzberg. Christians are also helping in Kreuzberg. The Baptist church in the Bergmannstrasse offers help with homework, among other things. Such committed initiatives are important, but we need a Berlin educational plan that sees the potential of these immigrant children.

Pray: that many will have a heart for aiding immigrant children and that more finances will be invested in the early years of education. (Pr.22:6)

More: <http://www.gebet-fuer-berlin.de/html/english.html>

WORLDWIDE

■ SPECIAL FEATURE - Iraq City Profile - Baquba

Baquba, to the north of Baghdad, has been the site of settlements for thousands of years, yet in February 2007 CNN described this city of 280,000 - 300,000 people as a ‘ghost town’. The shops are shut and people do not leave their homes for fear of the violence or kidnapping. Some of the Sunni leaders are now taking a stand against the insurgents, but this has been met with further violence. People talk of past days when different ethnic groups lived together in Baquba. Is reconciliation possible once more? www.iraqprayer.org/city%20profiles.htm

Pray: for an end to the violence in Baquba and that the people of this city would be able to rebuild their lives. (2Ch.14:7)

More: <http://www.iraqprayer.org/Baqubacityprofile10.07.pdf>

■ Iraqi Premier pledges to protect country's Christian minority

Iraq's prime minister pledged to protect and support the Christian minority that has been fleeing the chaos and sectarian violence in the country. According to a report by the Associated Press while receiving the head of the Chaldean Church in Iraq and the world, Nouri al-Maliki affirmed his government's determination to defend the small community and to stop the outflow of Iraqi Christians who are seeking a better life. It is estimated 50 percent of Iraq's Christians may already have left the country. The Christian community in Iraq makes up about 3 percent of the country's 26 million people and is particularly vulnerable. It has little political or military clout to defend itself. Churches, priests and business owned by Christians have been attacked by Islamic militants.

Pray: that God will use Nouri al-Maliki to rescue the Christians in the face of spiritual opposition. (Ps.55:18)

More: <http://www.assistnews.net/Stories/2007/s07100229.htm>

■ Jerusalem Peace Conference in America

It is not known yet whether the Annapolis meeting taking place at the moment is going to deal with final status issues. Until now the main area that is being worked out between the parties is what level of substance this meeting should deal with and whether it is going to present a document that marks political progress on final status issues or just repeat the already existing commitment of the parties negotiating. There can be no agreement on the city of Jerusalem unless the two sides start by agreeing on the proper political and legal terms of reference and accept to stick to these as the only framework under which resolution can be found. If they are not obliged to mutually agree upon terms of reference each side will act according to the logic of its own narrow perspective and from its own position in the balance of power. There will be nothing to talk about and everything to fight about.

Pray: that all sides will find agreement on the future of Jerusalem for the benefit of all its inhabitants. Pray this will lead to peace in the city. (Ps.122:6)

More: http://www.dailystar.com.lb/article.asp?edition_id=10&categ_id=5&article_id=86391

■ 28 days of prayer leading to Australian election

From 28th October to 24th November the Australian Prayer Network and all the major National Prayer Networks in Australia are calling all Christians to a 28 day season of prayer leading into the forthcoming Federal Election. The Australian Christian Lobby (ACL) has launched a website that will inform hundreds of thousands of Christians throughout Australia – including many in marginal seats – about the different political party standpoints on issues that Christians surveyed have declared are important to them. The website www.australiavotes.org contains the responses of the six major political parties to the specific questions on pro-life, pro-family, refugee, climate change, poverty, substance abuse and many other issues, in bite-size pieces. It showcases their attitudes to Christian concerns as well as their responses. All responses are in the parties' own words without any comments or amendments by ACL.

Pray: for God to meet and speak with the Christians of Australia as they intercede for the future of their country and its leaders. (Ex.29:42)

More: <http://www.ausprayernet.org.au/electionprayer07.php>

■ Quebec's loss of faith triggering social problems

The people of Quebec ‘really need to rediscover their religious identity,’ Cardinal Marc Ouellet of Quebec City told a public commission on October 30. Speaking at hearings on the challenges that immigration has posed to Quebec French-speaking culture. The cardinal said that the secularizing trends of the past generation have deprived Quebec of its cultural heritage leading to a general breakdown in traditional society. He pointed to the rise in divorce, the drop in births, and the

frequency of abortion and suicide as indications of social breakdown. 'Quebec is ripe for a profound new evangelization,' the cardinal concluded.

Pray: for a profound new evangelization of Quebec and Canada as a whole. (1Thes.5:17)

More: <http://www.cwnews.com/news/viewstory.cfm?recnum=54506>

■ Fresh protest by monks in Burma

More than 100 Buddhist monks have marched and chanted in Pakokku northern Myanmar for nearly an hour in the first public demonstration since the government's deadly crackdown last month. The monks shouted no slogans but one monk told a Norway-based short-wave radio station and website that it was a continuation of the protests last month. A monk who was not identified by name told the radio station, 'We walked around the town and chanted, we are continuing our protest from last month as we have not yet achieved any of the demands we asked for.'

Pray: for God to bring about a total and radical overhaul of Burmese leader's attitude to human rights. (Ps.123:2)

More: <http://english.aljazeera.net/NR/exeres/7C48C511-4633-4693-841B-49857887DB74.htm>

■ Arson attack on Jerusalem Church

This is the second attack against a Christian building on this site. In 1982 arsonists razed a church that had stood on the same property. This recent attack on October 23 destroyed 60 chairs and caused smoke and water damage. Throughout the week four congregations meet in the building; local Christians, visiting tourists from around the world, a Russian Messianic Jewish congregation, a Hebrew-speaking Messianic congregation and an English-speaking American Baptist congregation. The previous church built on this property was destroyed by fire 25 years ago during the Feast of Tabernacles.

Pray: for God to protect the Christians and all His people in Jerusalem at such a time as this. (Ps.29:11)

More: <http://www.compassdirect.org/en/display.php?page=breaking&lang=en&length=long&idelement=5095>

PRAISE REPORTS

■ Christians look with hope to Global Day of Prayer 2008

Christian leaders from across London and parts of England gathered at Millwall Football Stadium on Tuesday night to pray and plan for the 2008 Global Day of Prayer London event. The event will unite Christians from all denominations and traditions to pray for the transformation and revival of the capital on Pentecost Sunday 2008. The Bishop of Barking, the Rt Rev David Hawkins, who chairs GDOP London, said, 'We want to gather more of the Christian community across London into this activity of united prayer and reclaim the significance of Pentecost while at the same time celebrating all the different styles of Christian expression and worship and ways of praying, to uplift our community mission and local transformation'. Dr Jonathan Oloyede, Senior Associate Pastor at Glory House and one of the key visionaries behind the London Global Day of Prayer event, encouraged Christians to step up their commitment to prayer for spiritual change in London. 'The Lord wants us to begin to pray more,' he said.

Praise: God for the tremendous growth of the Global Day of Prayer movement across the world. (Hab.2:14)

More: <http://www.christiantoday.com/article/christians.look.with.hope.to.global.day.of.prayer.2008/14290.htm>

■ 'Spiritual Bomb' hits Fiji

Over 165,000 people heard a clear presentation of the Gospel with 17,474 recorded decisions for Christ, when Impact World Tour (IWT), a ministry of YWAM Campaigns, swept through 16 main cities and communities across Fiji Islands recently. For six weeks, from September 3 to October 13, the team ministered in 24 schools, into three prisons and at gatherings across the nation. The response was so overwhelming in some communities, that the total number of decisions made, other than decisions for Christ, was not recorded, because of the size of some of the crowds, said IWT regional director David Cole. Amongst those responding were many Indo-Fijians from other religious backgrounds, the largest unreached people group in the South Pacific. It was like a spiritual bomb going off in some of the high Indian population communities, local pastors told IWT leaders. There has never been anything like this in our history.

Praise: God for this fantastic news and pray that it will produce much fruit. (Jn.15:8)

More: http://www.openheaven.com/forums/forum_posts.asp?TID=18707&PN=1&TPN=1

PRAYER ASSOCIATION OF BRITISH ISLES & IRELAND

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