



PRAYER ALERT...

An initiative of the Prayer Forum of the British Isles & Ireland
www.prayer-alert.net editor@prayer-alert.net

Issue 4210

Website

Contact Us

Donations

Friday 15 October 2010

■ British Isles & Ireland

- [Churches mark 10.10.10](#)
- [Teens one click away from internet porn](#)
- [Shine A Light' witness to Christian faith](#)
- [Community projects funded to tune of £1½m](#)
- [Methodists gear up for Christmas giveaway](#)
- [Christian students condemn Government's plan for tuition fees](#)
- [Christians in Parliament bulletin](#)

■ Europe

- [The Dutch and legalisation of drugs](#)
- [New Serbian Patriarch crosses border](#)

■ Worldwide

- [INSIGHT ARTICLE: Freemasonry's profile is raised](#)
- [Maldives: Convert has disappeared](#)
- [Iran: Pastor on trial for 'thoughts'](#)
- [China: Denies Christians entry to Christian event](#)
- [Saudi Arabia: Filipinos charged with proselytising](#)
- [Lebanon: Heroes and villains](#)

■ Praise Reports

- [Chile: Two Chilean miners accept Christ](#)
- [Welcomed back to Church](#)

BRITISH ISLES & IRELAND

■ Churches mark 10.10.10

From Carlisle to Penzance thousands of Christians in the UK joined an estimated 60 million people across the world to stand up for the poor on 10.10.10. The iconic date saw events and gatherings across 70 nations, focusing on ending extreme poverty through the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Micah Challenge inspired Christians across the world to pray and promise to play their part in seeing an end to poverty. There were also special church services in Australia, India, the UK and Zambia. In the aftermath of 10.10.10, the Micah Challenge Head Office in London is expecting a deluge of promises to be posted through its doors. One recent promise came from former Prime Minister Tony Blair. Blair pledged to encourage his Tony Blair Faith Foundation's volunteers and supporters across the world to give at least 2015 hours of community service to help further the United Nation's targets.

Pray: that God would answer these prayers according to His will. (2Ch. 6:19)

More: <http://www.ekklesia.co.uk/node/13299>

■ Teens one click away from internet porn

'Internet search engines make pornography available to teenagers at the click of a mouse', said Miranda Sawyer, the presenter behind Radio 4 documentary; Sex, Porn and Teenagers. Miss Sawyer interviewed Lucy Emmerson, Principal Officer of the Sex Education Forum, which claims that sex education is the solution to the problem. But academics and family campaigners say current 'anything goes' sex education is part of the problem, not part of the solution. Norman Wells of the Family Education Trust hit out at the Government's Teenage Pregnancy Strategy saying: 'With all its emphasis on sex education and handing out contraceptives to school children under the age of consent, it is giving them the green light to experiment sexually. We need to return to a combination of realistic education and empower youngsters to know how dangerous and foolish underage sex is.' The Daily Mail's Jan Moir says children should be told that any early sex is 'just plain wrong'.

Pray: for a review of sex education that addresses the current failures, building instead on Christian values.(Jas.1:21)

More: <http://www.christian.org.uk/news/teens-just-one-click-away-from-internet-sex-and-porn/>

■ 'Shine A Light' witness to Christian faith

Christians across the UK are invited to place a light in their window on 31 October as a sign to passers-by that they are followers of Jesus Christ. The initiative is called Night of Light and is the inspiration of Damian Stayne. He explained: 'It is an international initiative to reclaim Halloween as a joyful Christian celebration.' Halloween is now the biggest commercial festival after Christmas and Easter, and it is time we reminded Christians of what it really is. On the evening of 31 October why not do something to make your faith respectfully seen and heard? Light a candle or display publicly another kind of light, for example, perhaps alongside an image of Christ. This could be a powerful way in which we can show people that

we have hope in someone other than ourselves. The light will provoke questions and is a way that people can be signposted to goodness. I encourage everyone to participate.'

Pray: for groups and churches running alternative events for children and that a Christian light will shine out on Halloween. (2Co.4:6)

More: http://www.catholicchurch.org.uk/Catholic-Church/media_centre/press_releases/press_releases_2010/Shine-A-Light-To-Witness-To-Christian-Faith

■ Community projects funded to tune of £½m

This week the Church and Community Fund (CCF) launches a new website, www.ccfund.org.uk, to promote its work and share the many good news stories of parish-linked community projects around the country, securing the £½million in grants each year. From adventure playgrounds and Street Pastors to Superkidz in Southwark, which works with youngsters drawn into local gang culture, the CCF is committed to supporting local projects as well as the central body of the Church. Some projects gain national interest like ASCEND in South Oxhey (linked to All Saints' Church in St Albans diocese) that gives local people the opportunity to find a route to employment. The chair of CCF, the Archdeacon of Westmorland and Furness, the Ven George Howe said: 'I'm delighted to commend our attractive new web-site which clearly demonstrates how the Fund is helping the Church to engage more effectively with local communities, in imaginative and creative ways'.

Pray: that in a climate of Government cuts, the CCF will continue its excellent work in the community. (1Ti.6:18)

More: <http://www.cofe.anglican.org/news/pr8910.html>

■ Methodists gear up for Christmas giveaway

Shops are already stacking their shelves with Christmas cards and presents, hoping to make a profit from early-bird shoppers. But the Methodist Church is encouraging people to give a free gift to their friends and neighbours this Christmas. 'A Gift of Christmas' is a brand new booklet from the Methodist Church that celebrates and reflects on the story of Christmas. It includes Bible passages, stunning images from the Methodist Collection of Modern Art, prayers and reflections from a variety of authors, including John Byron, Valerie Collinson and Graham Kendrick. It's the latest in a highly successful series that includes 'A Gift of Peace', which has already sold nearly 15,000 copies. 'The birth of Christ is the greatest gift ever given to humankind and we want to celebrate Christmas by sharing that gift with others,' said Deacon Eunice Attwood, Vice-President of the Methodist Conference and a contributor to the booklet.

Pray: for such initiatives to reach the many who do not fully know the Christmas story. (Ro.10:17)

More: <http://www.methodist.org.uk/index.cfm?fuseaction=opentogod.newsDetail&newsid=468>

■ Christian students condemn Government's plan for tuition fees

The Student Christian Movement (SCM) have reacted with anger to plans to lift the cap on university tuition fees in England. SCM, which is Britain's oldest national student organisation, described its opposition to tuition fees as 'an issue of justice'. SCM said a fee increase would deter students from lower-income backgrounds. They also contrasted ministers' reluctance to fund higher education with government plans to spend billions renewing the Trident nuclear weapons system. The Movement's comments follow the Browne Review into higher education funding, which recommended on 12 October that universities should be able to charge unlimited fees. Business Secretary Vince Cable said the government accepts the 'main thrust' of the proposals. The Coalition agreement allows Liberal Democrats to abstain in votes on university funding, but some have already said that they will vote against, raising the prospect of a defeat for the Government. The party's Deputy Leader, Simon Hughes, declined to confirm that he will abstain.

Pray: that the conflict of finance versus educational opportunity is resolved amicably. (Mt. 18:1-14)

More: <http://www.ekkleisia.co.uk/node/13315>

■ Christians in Parliament bulletin

This office received notice from Christians in Parliament asking the Church us to join with them in interceding for the Comprehensive Spending Review to be announced by the Government on 20th October. As the central Coalition measure to reduce the national budget deficit, this will have huge implications for the social, economical and cultural future of the UK. Christians in Parliament and Christians in Government invite us to fast and/or pray for politics and Government at this critical time. Please pray for God's wisdom in decisions relating to the priorities for cuts in the Government departments. As Westminster deals with the impact and nature of the cuts, please pray for wisdom for God's people and for justice and mercy to prevail. As Whitehall is affected, please pray for all those Christians who serve in Government.

Pray: that, as the state is reduced, Government support for the vulnerable in society might be protected and that the work of the Church will be extended to meet this need. (Isa.25:4)

More: <http://www.christiansinparliament.org.uk/home/tabid/91/Default.aspx>

EUROPE

■ The Dutch and legalisation of drugs

The Netherlands is learning that establishing red light districts and cannabis-selling coffee shops may not have been a great idea after all. For Paul Schnabel, director of the Social and Cultural Planning Office, a government advisory board, the move reflects a growing view that the tolerance policies have not controlled the ills associated with drugs and prostitution, rather a recasting of Dutch liberalism. The circumstances that led to the tolerance policies have changed in the past decade, as large-scale crime around coffee shops and the legal sex trade became more visible. In particular, the absence of legal means for coffee shops to obtain cannabis has highlighted their association with organized crime. The open-minded instincts that helped foster the policies are also being questioned. And it is not just the far-right opposing these coffee

shops. The traditional parties of power on the centre-right, the Christian Democrats and the Liberal VVD, have also moved against the policies they once promoted.

Pray: that Netherlands' politicians arrive at sensible decisions regarding drugs. (Jer. 44:8)

More: <http://www.anglican-mainstream.net/>

■ **New Serbian Patriarch crosses border**

On 10.10.10 the new leader of the Serbian Orthodox Church, Patriarch Irenjy, was enthroned at the Patriarchate in Pec. The two-and-a-half-hour service was a unique blend of a highly formal and informal Orthodox liturgy. Three hundred people gathered in the church, which holds only 100 comfortably. Patriarchates from all over the Orthodox world were represented, from Moscow, Athens, Jerusalem, and elsewhere, alongside invited Roman Catholic and Protestant leaders, three Serbian Islamic muftis, and two Anglicans: Canon Jonathan Goodall, the Archbishop of Canterbury's Ecumenical Secretary, and Canon Donald Reeves. The Pec Patriarchate, seat of the Patriarchs of the Serbian Orthodox Church since 1217, is regarded as its spiritual centre. However Pec is in the independent Republic of Kosovo, not Serbia. No Kosovo Albanians had been invited to the service. To have done so would have been to acknowledge Kosovo as an independent state, no longer part of Serbia.

Pray: for reconciliation between the Serbs and Kosovans through the Church in the Balkans. (Ac.7:26)

More: <http://www.churchtimes.co.uk/content.asp?id=102003>

WORLDWIDE

■ **INSIGHT ARTICLE: Freemasonry's profile is raised**

Worldwide, there are probably five million Freemason members. The Deputy Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Ireland says 'We have nothing to hide whatsoever. The only secretive aspects of Freemasonry are the forms of recognition-passwords and handshakes - and that dates from the earliest days.' <http://www.independent.ie/lifestyle/inside-the-strange-and-secret-world-of-the-freemasons-2361887.html> Freemasonry's profile in Ireland will be raised with the sponsorship of the country's premier classical music competitions, Young Musician of the Year 2010. The semi-finals and final were held in the Freemason's Hall, Dublin on October 14 and 16. This weeks INSIGHT article highlights the incompatibility of Freemasonry and Christianity.

Pray: for God to remove spiritual blindness over His people and call them out of Freemasonry (2Jn.8-9 & Jer.51:45)

Info: <http://www.prayer-alert.net/info/freemasoninsight.pdf>

■ **Maldives: Convert has disappeared**

Reports of Brother Simon's conversion are little more than hearsay yet recent news from Open Doors co-workers is disturbing - Simon has disappeared. Like many students from the Maldives Simon travelled to Sri Lanka to study. Simon had not lived in a country where religions other than Islam were practiced. Under the strict rule of Islamic Sharia law the Maldives' Government demands all the nation's citizens to be Muslims. Conversion is illegal. Churches and Bibles are banned. While studying in Sri Lanka Simon heard the Good News of the Gospel, was converted and began to follow Jesus. When Simon's family back in the Maldives learned of his newfound faith in Christ they took him away and he has not been heard of since. Simon's disappearance is not uncommon in the Maldives where indigenous Christians have to live in isolation as secret believers.

Pray: that Simon and the handful of Maldivian believers in Christ would stay faithful to the Lord in the face of such oppression and threat. (Gen.28:15)

More: <http://www.opendoorsusa.org/persecuted-christians/frontline-faith/articles/2010/October/in-the-trenches-Maldives>

■ **Iran: Pastor on trial for 'thoughts'**

Voice of the Martyrs (VOM) reported a Christian pastor in Iran faces a potential death penalty for a 'thought crime' President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad says they don't have a 'thought crime' law yet that's what Pastor Nadarkhani is charged with.' VOM confirms the Pastor's trial was wrapped up within the last 60 days but the formal verdict has not been announced nor a sentence imposed. Nadarkhani was arrested in 2009 after complaining about the Islamic instruction of his Christian sons in the school system. Religious education is a part of the curriculum but the Christian Nadarkhani family wanted their sons to receive Christian religious instruction instead of Islamic. Nadarkhani's wife Fatima was arrested several months earlier and remains behind bars. Their arrests can be linked to a crackdown by authorities concerned about the spread of Christianity among Muslims in the country.

Pray: for God to thwart Iran's attempts to control every facet of society and religious expression and for justice to prevail in the courts. (Eze.34:16)

More: <http://www.mnnonline.org/article/14836>

■ **China: Denies Christians entry to Christian event**

Two-hundred Chinese Christians scheduled to participate from 16th to 25th October in a major evangelical gathering in South Africa are not going because the Chinese government has denied them permission to travel to the event. More than 4,000 Christians from around the world will gather for the Third Lausanne Congress on World Evangelization known as Cape Town 2010. The Chinese would have had much to contribute had they been able to share what God has been doing in China in the past 20 years. Lausanne's Executive Chair Doug Birdsall told CBN News in an exclusive interview hours before the launch of the Congress that he was deeply saddened about the decision not to permit the Chinese delegation to participate.

Pray: that in spite of their absence God will build his worldwide Church and speak through the spiritual growth of China. (Mt.16:18)

More: <http://www.cbn.com/cbnnews/world/2010/October/China-Denies-Christians-Entry-to-South-Africa-Event/>

■ Saudi Arabia: Filipinos charged with proselytising

Authorities in Saudi Arabia have charged twelve expatriates from the Philippines and one from France with proselytising, according to an official at the Philippine Embassy in Riyadh. Although twelve of the expatriates were temporarily released through petitions filed by their employers and the thirteenth was released on bail, the release does not mean their case has been settled. If they are proven guilty as charged they would go back to jail. Proselytising in Saudi Arabia is punishable by death. According to reports, the thirteen were arrested during a raid of a public mass that was attended last Friday by around 150 expatriates. Public practice of non-Muslim religions is strictly prohibited and Christians are only allowed to gather in homes for private religious services. Saudi's Commission for the Promotion of Virtue and Prevention of Vice conduct raids on private non-Muslim religious gatherings.

Pray: for God to use the Philippine Embassy and the international outcry to bring protection of religious freedom for non residents in Saudi Arabia. (La.3:24-25)

More: <http://www.christiantoday.com/article/saudi.authorities.charge.13.filipinos.with.proselytising/26859.htm>

■ Lebanon: Heroes and villains

Shouts of 'welcome' in Persian and showers of rice, sweets and petals greeted President Mahmud Ahmadinejad as he waved to crowds from an open-topped car in Beirut this week. It's his first visit to Lebanon where he addressed Hezbollah-organized rallies of up to 60,000 people. His visit took weeks of preparation and his reception contrasted with Israel's, the United States and Sunni politicians foreboding. Over 200 prominent Lebanese citizens signed an open letter in advance of the trip asking Ahmadinejad to avoid using Lebanon as a 'spearhead' for confronting Israel. There have been suggestions that Ahmadinejad will travel to the Lebanese-Israeli frontier and court yet more controversy by throwing highly symbolic stones into Israel demonstrating to the world that Iran is a regional power in a confrontation state with Israel. Israel's security is challenged as Lebanon, Syria, and Hamas-ruled Gaza are seen to be serving Iranian interests and all of them have threatening capabilities for Israel's civilian population.

Pray: that all strongholds of violence will be disarmed and that Jesus, the Prince of Peace, will rule in these lands. (Ps.29:6)

More: http://www.atimes.com/atimes/Middle_East/LJ15Ak02.html

PRAISE REPORTS

■ Chile: Two Chilean miners accept Christ

As I'm sure most of the world knows, 33 Chilean miners have been rescued having been trapped underground for more than two months, waiting to be rescued. God has heard our prayers. Lots of prayers from lots of people! Baptist Press News reports that when the mine collapsed, three of the miners - including José Henríquez who has been leading a Bible study underground - were Christians. Since then, two more have made professions of faith. The report notes that when Pastor Marcelo Leiva arrived at Camp Hope he didn't know anyone, but Henríquez's family quickly connected him with other families. 'That connection allowed a lot of other people to hear the Word,' Leiva says, 'and to know that in the midst of this catastrophe, God is in control, and it is the Lord who has kept their family members alive.' The wife of one of the miners who became a Christian met with Leiva over the past two weeks has also accepted Christ.

Praise: God for the success of this rescue mission and for the new believers and pray that the experience will bring many more to accept the Lord as saviour. (Ps.22:5)

More: http://www.openheaven.com/forums/forum_posts.asp?TID=34420&PN=1&TPN=1

■ Welcomed back to Church

There were around 6,500 more people in Baptist churches on September 27, according to figures collated from reports on the day. The Big Welcome, or Back to Church Sunday, saw at least 475 Baptist churches taking part, with an average of 13.7 extra attendees. A quarter of those taking part had not done so before. If, as in previous years, around 12 per cent of those attending decide to become regular worshippers, this translates to another 780 people becoming part of Baptist churches. The Revd Ian Bunce, head of the Baptist Union of Great Britain's mission department, said that the event had gone very well. 'A number of churches have been surprised at how successful it has been,' he said. 'People are now saying that they need to put these principles into the everyday lives of their congregations, rather than leaving it to a particular Sunday.' (See also Prayer Alert 3710)

Praise: God for all those who have returned to Church and may the principles of Welcome Back become part of everyday Church. (Heb.10:25)

More: <http://www.baptisttimes.co.uk/news1.htm>

PRAYER FORUM OF BRITISH ISLES & IRELAND

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.

Prayer Alert is a partnership project of the Prayer Forum of the British Isles and Ireland
C/O World Prayer Centre, Cornerstone House, 5 Ethel Street, Birmingham, B2 4BG, England