



PRAYER ALERT...



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BRITISH ISLES & IRELAND

■ Facing the axe? Bradford Diocese

A historic Church of England diocese where Muslim worshippers outnumber Anglican churchgoers by two to one is set to be scrapped. Apparently the Dioceses Commission is drawing up proposals to axe the impoverished Diocese of Bradford in Yorkshire and merge it with neighbouring Ripon and Leeds. Some are pressing for both dioceses to be subsumed into the adjoining Diocese of York, to create a 'super-diocese'. Religious statistician Peter Brierley said that as the Muslim population in Bradford is about 80,000, on a conservative estimate 20,000 are regular worshippers, i.e. more than double the number of their Anglican counterparts. Canon Rod Anderson, of St Barnabas Church in Heaton, Bradford, said that during his 16 years at the church the congregation had diminished from more than 100 on Sundays to between 40 and 60. He added: 'I have seen a demographic shift with a large ethnic Asian influx'. Relations between the Church of England and Muslims are highly sensitive.

Pray: [that the Church of England in West Yorkshire earns an increased following through its outreach activities.](#) (1Pe.1:13)

More: <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1323237/Facing-axe-Diocese-twice-Muslim-worshippers-Anglicans.html#ixzz13VDGv6Ki>

■ Young people feel 'isolated' in their community

More than a third of young people in the UK aged 16 to 24 do not feel part of their local community, research by the Prince's Trust suggests. The study of more than 2,000 youngsters found one in 10 felt like an outcast. It said more than half 'rarely' or 'never' spoke to people over the age of 40 in their local community. And those who were not in education, employment or training were significantly more likely to feel isolated, the Trust said. Almost a third (30%) did not think there was a future for them in their local area. Almost a quarter (23%) felt ignored by older people. Martina Milburn, chief executive of the Prince's Trust, said: 'It is a tragedy that so many young people feel separated from the people around them. 'Being part of a community and interacting with a mix of people is a crucial part of a young person's development.'

Pray: [for our young people and the opportunity for the church communities to engage with them.](#) (Ps.148:12-13)

More: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-11629544>

■ Teaching of Christianity in schools

The former Bishop of Rochester is urging Education Secretary Michael Gove to restore the teaching of Christianity in Britain's schools. Writing in Standpoint magazine, the Rt Rev Nazir-Ali welcomed the move to end what he calls Britain's 'collective amnesia' about its Christian heritage. He said Christianity was the most significant link in the story of Britain and that education should look at the vital role played by reformers in the struggle for the freedoms he says shaped the British nation and are now under threat. He wants to see schools teach children about the link between Britain today and its foundations in the Judeo-Christian traditions of the Bible. He particularly mentions the role of Christians in abolishing the slave trade, introducing universal education, improving working conditions, and caring for the sick. 'I am glad that the Minister is setting out to remove our collective amnesia. This will also have to mean the rediscovery of our spiritual and moral identity'.

Pray: for the renewal of Christian faith and values in all aspects of public life including our schools. (Isa.41:1)

More: <http://www.christiantoday.co.uk/article/nazirali.calls.on.education.secretary.to.restore.teaching.of.christianity.to.schools/26959.htm>

■ Condom advertisements and young people

Condom use and their promotion in TV ads only helps to promote risk-taking behaviour in young people - behaviour that contributes to the spread of sexually transmitted disease and teenage pregnancies, the Society for the Protection of Unborn Children (SPUC) has said in a new campaign. The condom ads on UK television, which were approved by the UK's Advertising Standards Authority in March this year to be shown during children's peak viewing hours, are 'priming' children to have sex in their teens, SPUC says. Also increased condom use has resulted in 'shamefully high rates' of sexually transmitted disease among young people, and creates a 'false sense of security' for teens. A briefing by another organization, the Southern Cross Bioethics Institute, says that advertisers should not be allowed to promote condoms to children. The authors quote the BBC's own editorial guidelines that state, 'Programmes broadcast between 5:30am and 9pm must be suitable for a family audience including children'.

Pray: for the protection of young children from unnecessary and premature sexualisation. (Lev.18:21)

More: <http://www.lifesitenews.com/ldn/2010/oct/10102203.html>

■ Christian students and 'Prayers of Freedom'

Over 200 people from all over the world gathered in Manchester Cathedral over the weekend for a candlelit Taizé service, as the Student Christian Movement (SCM) celebrates a growth in interest among students. The service on Saturday 23 October 2010 was the highlight of the 'Prayers of Freedom' weekend organised by SCM and the Taizé Community, which brought together students and young adults from more than twelve different countries, many of them studying in Britain. The success of the 'Prayers of Freedom' event is the latest indication of a growing interest amongst students in a Christian faith that links spirituality, prayer and action for social justice, says SCM. The SCM conference in February 2010 saw the highest turnout for 20 years, and organisers of the 2011 conference, which will take place from 4-6 February, are hoping for the highest turnout since the 1970s.

Pray: for the student community and the SCM that many more will respond to the Gospel message. (Ps.119:9)

More: <http://www.ekklesia.co.uk/node/13405>

■ Imam preaches at Oxford college chapel

Two religious leaders are claiming an historic first after an Islamic Imam preached at a Christian chapel. For the first time a Muslim, Dr Taj Hargey, from the Summertown Islamic Congregation in Oxford, was welcomed to deliver a sermon at Pembroke College's chapel. The Rev Dr Andrew Teal, of Pembroke College, said he had been trying to get a Muslim Imam to deliver a service for many years and he believed it was a first. 'We wanted to do something which brought together Christianity and Islam, but not to create a third thing. I think what we are doing today is very unusual. The two faiths are actually very close Abraham being a key figure in both Islam and Christianity.' Dr Hargey added: 'It is up to Muslims and Christians in this great city of ours to show the way for the rest of the country'.

Pray: for increased respect for Christianity by the Muslim community with 'no-go' Muslim areas a thing of the past. (Pr.9:10)

More: http://www.oxfordmail.co.uk/news/8474153.Muslim_preaches_at_Oxford_college_chapel/

■ Military Christian Organisations (MCOs)

November 6th will be a National Day of Prayer for our Armed Forces. A number of Christian organisations support the Armed Forces of the United Kingdom and work closely with the Service chaplaincies. These organisations include the Armed Forces' Christian Union; others can be seen at www.afcu.org.uk. All these organisations work together to encourage Christians serving within the Armed Forces, to pray for them, evangelise, provide Bible teaching and studies and Christian resources, to support marriages and family life and to encourage discipleship and spiritual growth. There are also links to Christians of other Armed Forces, through Military Missions International. There are 120 Military Christian Fellowships (MCFs) worldwide so far and they desire to encourage the formation of more MCFs to support and equip Christians in Armed Forces around the world.

Pray: for the work of all these MCOs in the service of our Armed Forces (Heb.12:11)

More: www.militarychristians.org.uk

EUROPE

■ Vatican meeting of Middle East Bishops

Middle East Bishops have demanded that Israel end occupation of Palestinian lands. In a final joint communiqué, they also told Israel not to use the Bible to justify 'injustices' against the Palestinians. While they condemned terrorism and anti-Semitism, they laid much of the blame for the conflict squarely on Israel. They listed the 'occupation' of Palestinian lands, Israel's separation barrier with the West Bank, military checkpoints, political prisoners, demolition of homes and disturbance of socio-economic lives as factors that have made life increasingly difficult for Palestinians. All forms of racism, anti-Semitism, anti-Christianism and Islamophobia are to be condemned. Religious leaders' responsibilities are to promote dialogue between cultures and civilizations. That the bishops are making these 'bold' statements is a testament to Israel's essential decency and humanity. The bishops know that there will be no serious consequences or massive reprisals against Christians in Israel for 'speaking out', whereas similar Christian criticism or questioning of an Arab government in the region, or Islamic extremism, would produce such.

Pray: for even-handedness to prevail in judging Middle East issues by opinion-formers. (Pr.16:10)

More: <http://www.firstthings.com/onthesquare/2010/10/singling-out-israel-isnrsquot-christian>

■ Hungary: EU response to toxic flooding

EU crisis response commissioner Kristalina Georgieva says massive toxic flooding in Hungary that killed nine people and injured more than 120 others has underscored the need for a stronger European disaster response. Since October 4 about 800,000 cubic-meters of toxic sludge has leaked from a reservoir of a metals plant flooding towns and villages in an area as large as 40 square kilometres. Experts from Austria, Belgium, France, Germany and Sweden are investigating the sludge and hope to provide European assistance similar to that given to the US oil disaster in the Gulf of Mexico. But Hungary would not receive additional money from the EU solidarity fund because the chemical spill was allegedly caused by human error. They may transfer funds from rural development protection projects. Commissioner Georgieva, who has visited the devastated villages and towns will present a European strategy for disaster response by the end of this month.

Pray: that Commissioner Georgieva is able to produce guidelines for stronger and better responses when livelihoods are destroyed and people killed. (Ps.67:1-2)

More: <http://www.bosnewslife.com/14128-news-watch-european-aid-in-hungarys-toxic-flooding>

WORLDWIDE

■ INSIGHT ARTICLE: Bedouins' needs

Be'er Sheva District Court cut off 4,000 Bedouins water supply for 24 hours because they don't want to shoulder a Bedouin water bill. Bedouin children collected water from petrol stations and siphoned water from a water pipe in the area in desperation. 'They're not under the jurisdiction of Lakiya, but their water bills are sent to us. said the council head referring to the Bedouin residents. Spokespersons for the Bedouins reported, 'Apparently the children of Be'er Sheva are more important than the children of the Bedouin' diasporas.' and another said the Bedouin do actually pay for their water, but explained that water use is estimated as those living in villages that are not officially recognized by the state lack water meters and other infrastructure. See: <http://www.haaretz.com/print-edition/news/negev-councilor-cuts-off-4-000-bedouin-s-water-supply-1.321333> For Bedouin INSIGHTS for Israel, Iraq, Syria, Lebanon and Jordan click the 'Info' button and pray for a forgotten people in need of the knowledge of Christ.

Pray: for the nations in spiritual and physical drought to experience God's refreshing power. (Hab.2:14)

Info: <http://www.prayer-alert.net/info/BedouinInsights1.pdf>

■ Israel: Prayers for rain

Israel is facing a water shortage. Although abundant rainfall in February brought the Lake Kinneret back over its 'red line' (the point at which water levels are dangerously low) the country is still recovering from five consecutive dry years. Thursday night was the seventh day of the Hebrew month of Cheshvan. Jews living in Israel began praying for rain and from that date they will change the phrase, 'And give blessing' to 'And give dew and rain for a blessing,' in their weekday prayers. Sephardi Jews request 'dew and showers'. Jews living abroad will begin saying the blessing for rain in several weeks' time. The custom of adding the prayer for dew and rain on 7 Cheshvan dates back to the times of the First Temple and Second Temple. Prayers for rain will be recited until the Passover holiday in the spring.

Pray: and join the cry for God to answer his people's prayers for rain in Israel. (1Ki.8:36)

More: http://www.breakingchristiannews.com/articles/display_art.html?ID=8312

■ Thailand: Worst flooding in decades

A Christian from Thailand writes: 'At a conference 2 weeks ago the Lord said we will experience great shaking, natural disasters, political upheavals. Is the church ready to act? We are experiencing natural disasters now as I type this. Please pray now! Northern Thailand is experiencing the worst flooding in decades. Last night's Singapore News showed the reporter in water up to her hips. Churches in Bangkok are putting together survivor kits for the flood victims in northeast and central Thailand: torches, boots, dry food, medicine, powdered milk for children. The situation is getting worse in some areas and spreading to wider areas. Please pray, this is too big and we are doing whatever we can.' Flooding is affecting over 3 million people. Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva said it was the worst flooding in 50 years due to larger than normal rainfall affecting dams and reservoirs, plus aggressive housing and business development affecting natural drainage channels.

Pray: for God's enabling for the Church in Thailand as they do whatever he calls them to do. (Ps.60:4-5)

More: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/10/27/AR2010102700580.html>

■ World: Most corrupt countries

The Corruption Perception Index (CPI) is published annually by Transparency International. Surveys and assessments are used to compile an index of the most corrupt countries, asking questions relating to bribery of public officials, kickbacks in public procurement, embezzlement of public funds and questions that probe the strength and effectiveness of public sector anti-corruption efforts. The results released this week found the worst of the 178 countries was Somalia followed by Afghanistan, Myanmar (Burma) and Iraq. Brazil was 69th on the list and India 87th. Overall, Transparency International says of the survey: 'These results indicate a serious corruption problem globally'.

Pray: for hidden corruption to be revealed enabling more finances to be released appropriately. (Is.59:1)

More: <http://www.modernghana.com/news/302074/1/which-is-worlds-most-corrupt-nation.html>

■ Myanmar: Ethnic Christians and election

Myanmar's (Burma's) first election in 20 years is on November 7th and Christians in ethnic minority states fear that afterwards the military regime will try to 'cleanse' the areas of Christianity. The Myanmar junta is showing restraint to woo voters but are expected to launch a military offensive on insurgents after the election that will not discriminate between insurgents and unarmed Christians. Two million Christians live along the border that falls under the military's target zone bordering Thailand, China and India. Catholic parishes and Protestant Myanmar Council of Churches had a prayer vigil recently and ask us to pray now for - voters to make the correct decision; the election to be free, fair and valid; for leaders who will work and make sacrifices for their people and country; elected people to be skilful leaders and able to work with their heart and soul for the development of the country and steer the country onto the road to democracy. See:

<http://www.ucanews.com/2010/09/22/myanmar-prayer-marathon-for-national-polls/>

Pray: that there will be no conflicts between people groups after the election and for God to hear and answer the prayers of His people for the government. (2Ch.7:14)

More: <http://www.compassdirect.org/english/country/burma/27544/>

■ URGENT PRAYERS: Iran: Authorities to execute Pastor

A Christian pastor in Iran is scheduled for execution this weekend. Pastor Yousef Nadarkhani was convicted of apostasy, a crime that carries the death sentence in the Islamic state of Iran, while his wife was sentenced to life in prison. Nadarkhani led one of the largest Christian communities in Iran; he was singled out by authorities for helping Muslims turn to Christ; he was finally arrested last October after protesting against the enforced reading of the Qur'an to Christian children. Rights activists are petitioning for the release of both Nadarkhani and his wife.

Pray: to the Lord that He would send angels to protect Pastor Yousef and bring about his release. (Lk.4:10)

More: <http://www.worthynews.com/9700-iranian-authorities-to-execute-pastor-for-apostasy>

■ Indonesia: Christian villages at heart of triple disaster

Mainly Christian islands are at the heart of the three-fold disaster of earthquake, tsunami and volcanic eruption that have killed hundreds and displaced thousands in Indonesia this week. A 7.7 magnitude undersea earthquake triggered the three-metre high tsunami, which pounded the Mentawai Islands, off the coast of West Sumatra, on Monday evening. The following day Mount Merapi on the island of Java erupted, spewing out clouds of ash and jets of searing gas. The combined death toll has topped 300 with over 400 missing and tens of thousands displaced as homes were destroyed.

Pray: that the aid agencies and authorities would be enabled to bring speedy relief to those in desperate need.

More: <http://barnabasfund.org/UK/News/Latest-emergencies/Christian-villages-at-heart-of-Indonesias-triple-disaster.html>

PRAISE REPORTS

■ Gambia: British missionary freed from jail

The Foreign Office said it had been informed of David Fulton's release on Friday but could not confirm if he had returned to the UK yet. Mr Fulton's wife Fiona was freed in December last year and deported back to the UK after serving a year of hard labour for sedition. In a statement at the time Mr Fulton apologised to the Gambian public and the country's president. Gambia is a former British colony ruled by the same regime since President Yayha Jammeh seized power in a 1994 coup. Its people are given limited scope for free speech. The couple were reportedly advised to admit the sedition charges in an attempt to win a less stringent punishment. The tactic arguably failed when the hard labour sentence was handed out. The pair pleaded guilty in December 2008 in a Gambian court and were sentenced and also fined £6,250 each. The Fulton's moved to Gambia 13 years ago to work as missionaries. (See also Prayer Alert 5008 -12 December 2008)

Praise: God for answering all of our prayers for the Fulton family. (Lk. 4:18)

More: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/africaandindianocean/gambia/7996640/British-missionary-David-Fulton-freed-from-Gambian-jail.html>

■ Japan: 1,765 decisions for Christ

A three-day evangelistic festival in Japan headlined by US preacher Franklin Graham concluded Sunday with 400 new commitments to Christ, bringing the weekend total to 1,765. The Festival, held in Osaka, was the culmination of efforts by hundreds of churches, 400 of which had invited Graham to preach in a region which represents about one quarter of Japan's national population. 'This is God's time for Japan,' Graham said at the conclusion of Saturday's evening service. When asked on Thursday how the event's success would be measured, Graham told reporters that the success of any evangelical meeting depends on prayer. 'There have been thousands of people praying. If one person were to give their life to Jesus Christ this week, it would be successful,' he responded. With this Festival finished Graham will prepare for the next one which will be held in Riga, Latvia, November 5 to 7.

Praise: and thank God for His miracle of salvation and ask for thousands more to enter his kingdom in future outreach events.

More: <http://www.christiantoday.com/article/franklin.graham.festival.in.japan.concludes.with.1765.decisions.for.christ/26960.htm>

PRAYER FORUM OF BRITISH ISLES & IRELAND

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