

# PRAYER ALERT...

An initiative of the Prayer Forum of the British Isles & Ireland  
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## BRITISH ISLES & IRELAND

### ■ Children treated for sexually transmitted infections

Figures released by a selection of NHC foundation trusts have shown that almost 1,000 under-16s in their care have been diagnosed with venereal diseases such as herpes, chlamydia and gonorrhoea in the past three years. A boy as young as 11 needed hospital treatment after developing chlamydia, a boy of 12 was treated for genital warts and herpes and a 12 year old girl was treated for herpes. Since 2008, there have been 46 children aged 13 who have received treatment for STIs. In addition, 200 14 year olds have been treated for infections and 602 15 years olds. The new figures come as no surprise to health care professionals. Figures released last year by the Health Protection Agency showed that STI's are on the rise amongst young people. The agency reported 482,696 cases in UK sexual health clinics in 2009, with teenagers and young adults accounting for the majority of the increase from the previous year.

**Pray:** [that those with the responsibility to get the message over to the young will be given the necessary skill and influence. \(1Cor.6:18\)](#)

**More:** <http://www.christianconcern.com/our-concerns/education/more-children-being-treated-for-sexually-transmitted-infections>

### ■ Government must not betray its moral duty to troops

The Church of England is to make a rare direct political intervention in the House of Lords this week over legislation to enshrine the 'military covenant' in law. The proposals will guarantee soldiers that their sacrifice is honoured by provisions including council tax rebates for those on operations, extra NHS help for the injured and free bus travel for those who have been wounded. But senior bishops, who are backed by former chief of the army staff General the Lord Dannatt, say that the scheme needs to go further. Under the current plans, the Ministry of Defence would be solely responsible for governing the level of care given to troops. The Rt Rev Stephen Platten, the Bishop of Wakefield, will move an amendment to the Armed Forces Bill in the House of Lords on Tuesday, arguing for the Government to set up an independent review of the welfare needs of serving armed forces personnel.

**Pray:** [for all those who are injured in action and that our Government will respond to requests that their welfare needs be independently administered. \(Lk.10:9\)](#)

**More:** <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/defence/8739428/Government-must-not-betray-its-moral-duty-to-troops-says-Bishops.html>

### ■ Advice UK cuts ties with Christian charity

Advice UK, the largest support network for free advice centres in the UK, has pushed out a Christian debt counselling charity from its membership for offering to pray with clients suffering from debt problems. Despite being an active member of Advice UK for six years, Christians Against Poverty ('CAP') was forced to leave Advice UK as they were told that its

prayer offer was 'incompatible' with the organisation's membership criteria. Andrea Williams, director of the Christian Legal Centre, said: 'This is a very sad development and further highlights show how intolerant our society has become to the Christian faith. There is increasingly a chilling notion prevailing that there is something wrong, something sinister, about being motivated by faith. It should come as no surprise that an organisation with the term 'Christian' in its name may have a Christian ethos and may offer prayer alongside its primary services.'

**Pray:** for the volunteers in CAP that God will lift them above such ill-advised political correctness and use them more powerfully than ever. (Ac.4:33)

**More:** <http://www.christianconcern.com/our-concerns/social/advice-uk-cuts-ties-with-christian-charity-for-offering-prayer-to-clients>

#### ▣ Joining a library? Are you transgender?

People are being asked about their sexual orientation, any 'hidden impairments' and whether they are transgender when they want to join a library. A national newspaper has learned that councils, including Islington and Haringey, are asking for the information reportedly in an effort to comply with equal opportunity rules. But critics attacked the questions, calling them unnecessary, intrusive and a waste of taxpayers' money. In Islington people are quizzed on whether they have a 'hidden impairment', such as cancer, HIV or diabetes. They are also asked, 'do you consider yourself to be a Gypsy or Traveller', whether they are transgender, and: 'how would you describe your sexual orientation'. Haringey Council asks: 'Does your gender differ from your birth sex?' Matthew Elliott, chief executive of the TaxPayers' Alliance, said: 'Taxpayers will be alarmed to discover that their hard-earned cash is being wasted on such unnecessary and intrusive questions for people who just want to take out a book'.

**Pray:** for common sense to return to these councils so that intrusive personal questions will be dropped. (Pr.16:2)

**More:** <http://www.christian.org.uk/news/joining-an-islington-library-are-you-transgender/>

#### ▣ Defence Secretary Liam Fox supports abortion amendment.

Defence Secretary Liam Fox has said he would support efforts to reduce the 'far too high' number of abortions. He is the first high profile politician this week to say so. Amid tensions within the coalition over a backbench bid to change the law on counselling for women considering a termination, Dr Fox said he would back anything that made people 'think twice'. Tory MP Nadine Dorries is currently rallying support for an amendment to the Health and Social Care Bill which would provide women, who wanted it, to receive counselling that was independent of the abortion industry. However the Government appears to be changing their mind about supporting the amendment as Mr Cameron and the Health Minister, Anne Milton now say they will oppose it. Ms Dorries branded Cameron as 'gutless' and said he had supported her amendment but had been forced into a U-turn by Liberal Democrat Deputy Prime Minister Nick Clegg to save coalition stability.' (See last week's Prayer Alert)

**Pray:** for the amendment to be supported by an overwhelming majority in Parliament. (Ps.67:4)

**More:** <http://pjsaunders.blogspot.com/2011/09/defence-secretary-liam-fox-gives.html>

#### ▣ Most schools 'shunning law on Christian assemblies'

Almost two-thirds of parents responding to a survey said their children did not take part in collective worship at school every day, it was revealed. Secondary schools are far more likely to shun the traditional requirement which has been compulsory in the state system since the Second World War. The disclosure – in research commissioned by the BBC – will add weight to growing calls to drop the legislation. It comes after a delegation of teachers, secularists and religious leaders wrote to Michael Gove, the Education Secretary, last year insisting children should not be 'coerced' into religion in schools. Under the 1944 Education Act, schools must provide 'broadly Christian worship' every day. Parents have the right to pull children out of religious assemblies but the power is not extended to pupils themselves.

**Pray:** that schools will not keep ignoring this law and pray that the authorities will enforce it. (Pr.6:23)

**More:** <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/education/educationnews/8743072/Most-schools-shunning-law-on-Christian-assemblies.html>

#### ▣ The Scottish Government should not redefine marriage

The Scottish Government has launched a public consultation asking whether the law should be changed to allow religious ceremonies for homosexual civil partnerships, and whether the legal definition of marriage should be changed to allow homosexual marriage. Mike Judge argues that the law should stay as it is. All the legal rights of marriage are already available to homosexual couples through civil partnership registrations. Last year only 465 civil partnerships were registered in Scotland. This is not about rights, this is about redefining marriage for the whole of society at the behest of a small minority of activists. If marriage is redefined for homosexual marriage, that new definition will be the one that the state promotes as the standard. It will have huge implications for what is taught in schools and for wider society.

**Pray:** against this and any further moves to change God's definition of marriage. (Lev.18:22)

**More:** <http://www.christiantoday.com/article/the.scottish.government.should.not.redefine.marriage/28559.htm>

## EUROPE

#### ▣ Spain: Radical branch of Socialist Party pushing euthanasia

The organization Professionals for Ethics has warned that pro-euthanasia associations, working together with the radical wing of the Socialist Party, are hoping to 'achieve their ideological goal of making death legal,' reports Catholic News Agency. The organization said that pro-euthanasia forces are attempting to influence local governments until euthanasia is approved at the national level. Ramona Estevez, a 90-year-old comatose woman in the city of Huelva, has become the

poster child for supporters of euthanasia. Her son recently won approval from officials in the province of Andalusia to have her feeding tube withdrawn. Dr. Maria Alonso of Professionals for Ethics pointed out that the regional law establishes that every person has the right to reject any procedure in writing that is suggested by health care workers. This can be done even if such rejection would endanger that person's life, she added.

**Pray:** against this increased pressure to allow euthanasia to become law. (Job.13:14)

**More:** <http://www.christiantelegraph.com/issue13804.html>

#### ■ **Belgium: Seeks new Government after 450 day milestone**

Divided French and Dutch speaking parties gathered in Brussels on Tuesday in a fresh bid to forge a new Belgian government. It is now more than 450 days since Belgium had a fully functioning administration; the country passed that unenviable milestone on Monday. Despite 15 months of deadlock it is hoped the latest round of talks will finally break through the impasse. Reporting from Brussels euronews Gulsum Alan says: 'Some believe a deal can be reached if the Liberals and Christian Democrats want it badly enough. The alternative could be elections'. Longstanding linguistic and cultural divisions lie at the heart of the political stalemate, however the most acute problem is the future of Brussels. French speaking parties oppose plans to break up the city's current electoral boundaries, a key demand of their Flemish counterparts. Belgium's socialist leader Elio Di Rupo is the man currently charged with trying to strike a deal. He has had 10 predecessors since the elections in 2010.

**Pray:** for the spirit of unity to prevail and differences be healed. (Eph.4:3)

**More:** <http://www.euronews.net/2011/09/06/belgium-seeks-new-government-after-450-milestone/>

## WORLDWIDE

#### ■ **Somalia: UN warns of 750,000 deaths**

Up to 750,000 people could die as Somalia's drought worsens in the coming months, the UN has warned, declaring a famine in a new area. The UN says tens of thousands of people have died after what is said to be East Africa's worst drought for 60 years. Bay region becomes the sixth area to be officially declared a famine zone - mostly in parts of southern Somalia controlled by the Islamist al-Shabab. Some 12 million people across the region need food aid, the UN says. A sixth region of Somalia has been declared a famine area by the UN, which warns the situation will only worsen in the coming months. In total, 4 million people are in crisis in Somalia, with 750,000 people at risk of death in the coming four months in the absence of adequate response. Half of those who have already died are children.

**Pray:** for God's mercy to rest upon the people and famine aid to reach the most needy. (Ps.108:6)

**More:** <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-14785304>

#### ■ **Uzbekistan: Christians face fines and abuse**

Uzbekistan's authorities continue to punish peaceful religious believers with fines, physical abuse and court-ordered destruction of religious literature. According to a story by Forum 18 police in eastern Fergana Region police raided the home of a Protestant couple. The police inspector who led the raid said that police found and confiscated 'banned' religious literature. Asked what literature found in their home was banned, he identified the Bible and the New Testament. Also courts in the capital of Tashkent and eastern Syrdarya Region have handed down fines of up to one hundred times the minimum monthly wage to ten Protestants to punish them for unregistered activity. In both cases, Forum 18 said, the courts ordered that confiscated Christian literature - including Bibles and New Testaments - be destroyed. Another court in central Samarkand Region fined a member of an officially registered Baptist Church for 'illegal' religious teaching.

**Pray:** for the Church in Uzbekistan the God will be their ever present help in times of trouble. (Ps.9:9)

**More:** <http://www.christiantoday.com/article/christians.face.fines.and.abuse.in.uzbekistan/28566.htm>

#### ■ **Nigeria: Jos hit by new wave of attacks**

At least 16 people have been killed in the latest violence between rival groups in central Nigeria's Plateau state, officials say. The villages of Babale and Dabwak, mostly inhabited by a Christian community, were attacked on Sunday night, the officials said. Eleven people were killed the previous night in another village, Tatu. More than 1,000 have been killed in religious and ethnic violence in Jos over the past two years. The state lies in Nigeria's so-called Middle Belt, between the mainly Muslim north and Christian south. The BBC's Ishaq Khalid in the state capital, Jos, says the violence is widely seen as religious, but there are many other factors that trigger it - including political rivalry. In the Plateau state which surrounds Jos, Hausa-speaking Muslims are seen as supporters of the opposition, while ethnic Beroms, who are mostly Christian, are perceived to favour the governing People's Democratic Party.

**Pray:** that God would intervene and bring peace to this troubled nation and protection for His people. (Ps.5:11)

**More:** <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-14788525>

#### ■ **Sudan: Gunfire erupts on tense north-south border**

Heavy gunfire broke out on Tuesday in the capital of Sudan's Blue Nile border state where government soldiers have been fighting armed opposition groups, a Reuters correspondent said. Tensions have mounted in states along Sudan's poorly-defined border with South Sudan since the south declared independence in July. Thousands fled after fighting erupted last week in Blue Nile state. Blue Nile and Southern Kordofan - both states on Sudan's side of the border - and the disputed Abyei area, saw heavy fighting during decades of civil war between the Khartoum government and South Sudan. Fresh clashes have broken out in all three this year. They are all still home to tens of thousands of people from ethnic groups that

sided with the south during the civil war. Khartoum has accused people from those groups of trying to spread chaos along the border, backed by South Sudan's government - a charge denied by South Sudan.

**Pray:** for a resolution to this conflict bringing peace and stability to this area. (Pr.29:4)

**More:** <http://www.france24.com/en/20110907-tension-gunfire-sudan-border-kordofan-blue-nile-south-new-state>

#### ■ Tanzania: Christians live in cloud of fear in Zanzibar

On Tanzania's semi-autonomous island of Zanzibar, Christians live in a climate of fear. It's a place where a young man flees the island to escape death threats from his Muslim family where others opt for jail, by entering a guilty plea, rather than face certain death from a furious mob. Yusuf Abdalla fled to Moshi, mainland Tanzania, after his family threatened to kill him in June. Having converted to Christianity after hearing the gospel on the radio when his family found out that he had left Islam. The beating he then received from family members left him with injuries to his head, hand and torso, as well as a serious mouth wound and substantial loss of blood, said an area pastor who requested anonymity. As soon as he had recovered enough to leave, Abdalla found refuge at the pastor's church before fleeing to Moshi. Click on the 'More' link for more stories.

**Pray:** that God would lift the fear from His people and give them a spirit of boldness. (Act.4:29)

**More:** [http://www.compassdirect.org/english/country/tanzania/article\\_117316.html](http://www.compassdirect.org/english/country/tanzania/article_117316.html)

#### ■ Egypt: Christian billionaire seeks Egypt's presidency

The Egyptian Revolution began on January 25th of this year, marked by President Hosni Mubarak stepping down on February 11th, and still continues as a new government is formed. One of those figures who has thrown his hat in the ring to be the new president is Naguib Sawiris, a 'billionaire telecom scion and art patron' according to a Forbes report. Sawiris is also a Coptic Christian who has already founded a new political party known as the 'Free Egyptian Party.' His goal is to establish a secular democratic government in Egypt. Money certainly won't be an issue in his run for office; Sawiris is number two on the billionaire list in Egypt - his father is at the top spot. Coptic Christians in Egypt have suffered much violence and persecution especially in the last year, but Sawiris seems to be unafraid of the risks involved in seeking to be head of his country.

**Pray:** that God would use Sawiris to bring His light into this election and sound government. (Ez.2:6)

**More:** <http://www.breakingchristiannews.com/articles/>

## PRAISE REPORTS

#### ■ Surge in born again Christians since 9/11

A Barna Group study has revealed that New Yorkers are more 'spiritually active' today than they were immediately following the attacks of 9/11. As reported in the Christian Post, the new study says following an initial lapse, the faith of New Yorkers—'faith' meaning going to church, reading the Bible, praying, etc. - began to increase 'significantly' after September 2004. 'Most of the change in spiritual behaviour seems to have happened since the middle of the last decade. Church participation in the New York market especially has shifted most since 2004,' said David Kinnaman, Barna Group president. According to the report, another interesting statistic coming out of the study shows that the percentage of New York's residents who qualify as born again Christians surged from 20 percent in the late 1990s to 32 percent today. 'The research shows that spiritual change can and does happen, even in large population centres like the New York media market,' said Barna.

**Praise:** God for this growth in adversity of new believers. (1Pet.5:8-10)

**More:** [http://www.breakingchristiannews.com/articles/display\\_art.html?ID=9288](http://www.breakingchristiannews.com/articles/display_art.html?ID=9288)

#### ■ Slovakia: The beginning of huge revival

A Church in the town called Vrútky, Slovakia, offers prayers for healing to non Christian people, reports Lusi Gertliová, Liecenie press centre. A couple of months ago the church put an advertisement in the newspaper and 400 new visitors came in the first event and almost all of them were healed by the power of God. 300 of them accepted Christ as their personal Saviour and Lord. Today events called 'Healing' take place all around the country. There are thousands of testimonies online that could be found on [www.liecenie.com](http://www.liecenie.com). 'Slovakia is a tiny little country in the middle of Europe. But the movement of God in this country is becoming greater and more powerful these days. We are witnesses of something miraculous that God is doing in charismatic Pentecostal churches. We can see the beginning of huge revival,' notes Lusi Gertliová.

**Praise:** God for this stirring of faith through His healing power and miracles. (Ps.77:14)

**More:** <http://www.christiantelegraph.com/issue13818.html>

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