

# PRAYER ALERT...



An initiative of the Prayer Forum of the British Isles & Ireland  
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Issue 40-2011

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Thursday 6 October  
2011

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## BRITISH ISLES & IRELAND

### ■ National week of prayer for our streets

From 24th to 31st October 2011 Christians across the British Isles will set aside time to pray for the Nation based on the extensive network of Street Pastor projects. The focus for the week is asking God's blessing on our nation and 'Thy kingdom come Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven'. Praying locally for a change nationally. Asking God what he wants his church to do in their area and then involving as many people as possible from other churches and ministries to join Street Pastor groups. Participating churches are being encouraged to do as much or as little during the week as they ask God to bless our towns and nation. Churches can ask their Council if there is something they can do to help. As this falls in half-term week in many areas it will be a good opportunity to involve the children and young people in prayer events.

**Pray:** for many churches to catch this vision of corporate prayer for our nation. (Ps.20:4)

**More:** <http://www.streetpastors.co.uk/WeekofPrayer/tabid/781/Default.aspx>

### ■ PM says faith has role to play in restoring morality

The latest edition of 'Keep The Faith', a magazine for Britain's black Christian community, is focusing on the riots that swept through English cities during the summer. Writing in the latest edition David Cameron said faith had a role to play in mending the breakdown of responsibility in Britain. 'For too long in our society we have been unwilling to talk about behaviour and morality. I believe faith leaders have a key role to play in instilling this greater sense of right and wrong – and it is up to us to help in this mission to build a fairer, stronger and more responsible society.' Offering his take on the cause of the unrest, the Rev Ade Amooba of Christian Concern for the Nation wrote that a united black Christian community could have prevented the riots. Rev David Shosanya called churches to give financial support to organisations working with disenfranchised and vulnerable youths whilst Rev Rose Hudson Wilkins said that liberal society had left a void which churches will have to address.

**Pray:** for a united church, demonstrating and speaking out something new that addresses economic and ethical issues. (Ps.133:1 & Jn.17:23)

**More:** <http://www.christiantoday.co.uk/article/pm.says.faith.has.role.to.play.in.restoring.morality/28727.htm>

### ■ Rise in food handouts for poverty-stricken families

An NHS report covering the Highlands, Argyll and Bute said poverty was the biggest issue with 53,000 people in poverty last year, see:- <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-highlands-islands-15153821> Elsewhere, across the British Isles poverty-stricken families are joining lengthening queues for food handouts from charities and voluntary groups and alarm bells are ringing at the number of people going hungry. Food charity FareShare distributes donated food across the country

to church halls, homeless projects and other charities struggling to help families hit by unemployment, price rises and benefit changes. They have reported a 20% rise in demand for food handouts from families unable to make ends meet. FareShare is a marker for chronic hunger as the economic forecasts worsen. This weekend the Conservative party meets in Manchester to discuss what can be done about it.

**Pray:** that the Lord will lead all those in authority to address the causes of poverty wisely as well as the symptoms. (Job.5:16)

**More:** <http://www.guardian.co.uk/society/2011/oct/01/families-queue-for-food-handouts>.

#### ▣ Christians in Parliament

Recent weeks have seen political party conferences debate environment, climate change, international development and the economy, the Olympics, Paralympics and the NHS. Within our Government God has placed many Christian MPs who consider it a duty and a privilege to serve the nation. It can be a lonely place. The Christian Conservative party's website requests prayer for their MPs in positions of responsibility, naming David Burrowes, Caroline Spelman, Gary Streeter, Nicky Morgan, Jeremy Lefroy, Margaret McVeigh, Alexandra Wilkinson, Colin Bloom, Kofo Sanusi and the many other Christian MPs, that they may have clarity, vision and a Christ-like witness to the Party and all whom they meet. Prayer is also requested for The Big Society initiative saying, 'Christians do not need a definitive answer to the question 'What does Big Society mean?' For many Christians this is easy to embrace, as those who follow Jesus have been preaching the importance of giving for centuries and many churches are experienced in promoting social justice. See:

<http://www.ccfwebsite.com/home.shtml>

**Pray:** for Christians in local and national government to be led by God to be an influence in policy making and strategies. (Ps.23:3)

**More:** <http://www.christiansinparliament.org.uk/>

#### ▣ Prayers in Local Councils and Parliament

The Christian Peoples Alliance is opposing attempts to ban prayers at local council meetings. Two councils in East Sussex have been warned that Christian prayers are 'not part of their duties'. The warnings come despite Christian prayer being part of the English constitution since Saxon times and said daily in the House of Commons since 1558. Mayfield Parish Council was issued the advice by the Sussex Association of Local Councils after voting to include a prayer session in its meetings. Councillors were told it was not appropriate and should be taken off the agenda. Former Newham Councillor, Alan Craig, said, 'This demand is part of the secular-isation of our society. The most important thing is to get Christian values and Christian prayers back into our society and not take them away. Having Christian prayers is saying Christian values are good values for public life and a council meeting is a part of public life.'

**Pray:** for more, not less time to be spent in prayer each week in every borough and government meeting. (2Ch.7:14)

**More:** <http://www.cpaparty.org.uk/?page=news&id=393>

#### ▣ Duncan Smith asks for tax break for married couples

The Work and Pensions secretary, Iain Duncan Smith, urged the Prime Minister on Wednesday to recognise marriage in the tax system in an effort to encourage 'couple formation' and stable families, reports Christian Concern for our Nation. The Prime Minister had pledged to introduce a tax incentive for married couples before the last election but has not, as yet, implemented the policy. Mr Duncan Smith sees the family as a foundational element to a stable society and he highlighted the need to address the 'bias' against married couples. Andrea Williams of Christian Concern said, 'The family is indeed the bedrock of a stable and successful society. It is high time the Government implemented policies which promote marriage and the family.'

**Pray:** that the PM will recognise and implement reforms that build stable families. (Is.30:20,21)

**More:** <http://www.christiantelegraph.com/issue14129.html>

#### ▣ Thousands say 'People First' in Scottish anti-cuts march

Last weekend thousands of people marched in Glasgow protesting against government cuts and calling for a just UK-wide economic policy. The People First rally brought together politicians from a range of parties, trade unionists and faith groups campaigning to protect those hardest hit by service and benefits cuts across Britain. The march included a range of fringe events in places of worship, student unions and hotels across the city. The aim was to send a clear message to the coalition Government of the need for a Plan B to avoid recession, rising poverty and damaging cuts in services.

**Pray:** for Chancellor George Osborne and the coalition as they develop strategies to close the economic gap between rich and poor. (1Sa.2:8)

**More:** <http://www.ekkleisia.co.uk/node/15479>

## EUROPE

#### ▣ Hungary: Village still suffers one year after disaster

A painted portrait and empty child stroller is all that remains of 14-months-old Angyalka, who drowned in the village of Kolontar in the burning sludge flood of the nearby aluminium plant on October 4, 2010, in Hungary's worst ever chemical disaster on record. Some villagers pause to remember, or pray, around a memorial to those who died when 180 million gallons of red sludge flooded the village of Kolontar and nearby towns, 150 kilometres west of Budapest. The town's struggling farmers have only just started working their lands again, after removing most of the sludge. Local authorities

provided them with new fields to plant their crops. Environmentalists remain concerned about the long term impact of the disaster. Hard working residents who lost their loved ones say it's little satisfaction that the owner of the Ajka Alumina plant was fined nearly 650 million dollars because of the disaster. They say nothing in the world can ever compensate for the lives that were lost.

**Pray:** That, as the land is slowly being restored, emotions and spirits will also be healed. (Ps.34:17,18)

**More:** <http://www.bosnewslife.com/18532-hungary-village-still-suffers-after-worst-chemical-disaster-special-feature>

#### ▣ Greece: Another general strike

A 24-hour general strike is under way in Greece in protest at the nation's austerity measures. Flights and ferry services have been cancelled, schools, government offices and tourist sites closed and hospitals are working with reduced staff as at least 16,000 people joined protests organised by the main unions in central Athens. The European Commission is discussing ways of propping up banks in Europe to protect them from the Greek crisis.

**Pray:** for God to give all those in positions of authority in Greece much wisdom. (Pr.3:13,14)

**More:** <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-15177457>

## WORLDWIDE

#### ▣ Philippines: Struggle to deliver aid for typhoon victims

Philippines authorities say they are struggling to get food and supplies to thousands of people who remain trapped by flood waters days after back-to-back typhoons pounded the nation. Officials say almost three million people were affected by the storms, most of them concentrated in three northern provinces. In parts of Pampanga on Monday, boats provided the only means of transportation. 'You don't see any land here, you don't see any more roads.' Officials say the two typhoons, Nesat and Nalgae, killed 58 people and left at least 28 others missing. They say about 360,000 people are still housed in evacuation centres or stranded in flooded areas. Also, Thailand has had the worst floods in five decades. This year's monsoon season has already left more than 200 people dead and affected some two million others. The United Nations is calling on governments in Asia to spend more on disaster risk reduction. Several major dams are near their breaking point, with more torrential rain forecast in the coming weeks.

**Pray:** for God in His mercy to enable NGOs and governments to meet the present and imminent needs of the people. (2.Sa.22:7)

**More:** <http://www.voanews.com/english/news/asia/Philippines-Struggles-to-Deliver-Aid-After-Back-to-Back-Typhoons-130963153.html>

#### ▣ Uzbekistan: Christians face fines and abuse

Uzbekistan's authorities continually punish peaceful religious believers with fines, physical abuse and court-ordered destruction of Christian literature. Prior to 1991 Uzbekistan was part of the Soviet Union. According to a story by Forum 18, police in eastern Fergana Region raided the home of a Protestant couple in late July and are preparing an administrative case against them. The police inspector who led the raid said police found and confiscated 'banned' religious literature. Asked what literature found in their home was banned, he identified the Bible and the New Testament. In a separate case ten Protestants were given fines of up to one hundred times the minimum monthly wage for unregistered activity. In both cases confiscated Christian literature, including Bibles and New Testaments were destroyed. Also, an officially registered Baptist Church was fined for 'illegal' religious teaching. For instances of further persecution click the More button below

**Pray:** that Uzbekistan's Christian communities would be free to cater for their spiritual needs. (Ac.2:34,35)

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

#### ▣ Kuwait: Pray for the underground church

Kuwait was part of the 'Arab Spring' of 2011. Thousands of protesters took to the streets demanding the resignation of the Prime Minister. Unlike demonstrations in Egypt and Tunisia, this unrest slowly subsided with most of the government still intact. Sharing the Gospel is not permitted but expatriate Christians continue to witness with discretion. This has resulted in a growing underground Church. We can praise God for expatriate testimonies, satellite Christian television and internet ministries which are successfully proclaiming the Good News in a Muslim nation that forbids this activity. There is potential for a great harvest of souls in Kuwait. We are asked to pray for Christians to be protected as they tell friends, families, and neighbours about Jesus Christ.

**Pray:** that the Lord would open doors for Christians fearlessly to share the Gospel. (Ro.10:14; Eph.6:19)

**More:** <http://www.win1040.com/countries/kuwait.htm>

#### ▣ Egypt: Church of St George destroyed

In mid-September Middle East Concern requested prayer for a situation concerning the renovation of a church building in Aswan province. Regretfully on 30th September, the church was destroyed by an estimated mob of 1,000 local Muslims who also damaged other property belonging to Christians. The security and fire services failed to intervene. The church was being renovated with all necessary building permits in place. In August there were confrontations between local Muslim and Christian residents. Church leaders agreed to forgo the construction of a spire and external cross in order to maintain communal harmony. But further threats demanded the domes be removed from the roof structure. Further meetings failed to agree a way forward.

**Pray:** for the situation to be defused and for Christians to know the presence and peace of Jesus. (Ps.3:3)

**More:** [http://www.givengain.com/cgi-bin/giga.cgi?cmd=cause\\_dir\\_news\\_item&cause\\_id=1489&news\\_id=110097&cat\\_id=434](http://www.givengain.com/cgi-bin/giga.cgi?cmd=cause_dir_news_item&cause_id=1489&news_id=110097&cat_id=434)

#### ▣ USA: Protest movement spreads

In September Adbuster magazine in Canada put out a call for supporters to occupy Wall Street and drew hundreds of protesters with 2,000 attending a march the following Saturday. This protest movement has been developing through Twitter, Facebook and shared GoogleDocs, enabling protesters to stand against corporate greed, unemployment and the political corruption that they say Wall Street represents. They have taken to the streets in Boston, Los Angeles, St Louis and Kansas City. The core group, Occupy Wall Street (OWS), claims people will take part in demonstrations in as many as 147 US cities this month, while the website [www.occupytogether.org](http://www.occupytogether.org) lists 47 US states as being involved. Around the world other protests are also planned. The speed of the leaderless movement's growth has taken many by surprise. Occupytogether.org, one of several sites associated with the protest, has had to be rebuilt to accommodate the traffic.

**Pray:** for a peaceful outcome to this movement's activities and that the media attention would not inspire violence.

**More:** <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2011/oct/04/wall-street-protest-movement-spreads?newsfeed=true>

#### ▣ Iran: Death threats and death sentence

Eleven Iranian Christians who fled Iran in the wake of a government campaign against evangelical Christianity received death threats via email from a group called 'the unknown soldiers of the Hidden Imam' (the Messiah-figure in Shia Twelver theology). Christian Solidarity Worldwide says the e-mail calls on the believers to either repent or face extra-judicial execution. The 'unknown soldiers' are alleged to have links with Iranian security services. The emails warned that although they managed to flee Iran they are not hidden from the 'cute eyes of the unknown soldiers' - who claim they have been advancing to the heart of the 'Zionist regime' over a number of years. Meanwhile, the written verdict of the most recent trial of Pastor Youcef Nadarkhani is still being awaited. Unconfirmed reports indicate that the fate of the pastor may now lie in the hands of the local religious leader, Ayatollah Ghorbani.

**Pray:** for God's continued protection over Iranian Christians and for the global media support of Pastor Youcef to secure his release. (Ps.16:1)

**More:** <http://www.assistnews.net/Stories/2011/s11100006.htm>

#### ▣ Sudan: Post secession

It is two months since South Sudan's peaceful secession from the North after decades of civil war, but violence in the border regions has flared since May. In a split still lacking clarity over border demarcations and the division of resources, several reports have outlined escalating tensions that have killed scores of people and pushed tens of thousands to leave their homes. A report by the International Crisis Group (ICG) says the lack of political inclusivity and the heavy-handed approach of President Omar al-Bashir's ruling National Congress Party to crush rebels and dissent could lead to a civil war and destabilize the whole region. The think-tank says conflict is spiralling out of control following Sudan's attempts to forcefully disarm and dissolve the northern branch of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement that fought against Khartoum for autonomy with the South for years. Sudan's refusals to pull troops out of the contested Abyei region and listen to marginalized people in eastern states and western Darfur could lead to mass unrest.

**Pray:** for opposing groups to be able to communicate over political and economic differences. (Eph.4:3)

**More:** <http://www.irinnews.org/report.aspx?reportid=93874>

## PRAISE REPORTS

#### ▣ Council refuses lap dancing licence

Last Wednesday Bedford Council threw out an application made on behalf of the 'Saints and Sinners' nightclub to allow lap dancing/sex entertainment to take place on the second floor of its venue. The Council rejected the applicant's proposals on the basis that such a licence would be inappropriate in that location. Local business owners and residents, supported by the Christian Legal Centre, argued that such a venue was not suitable in an area where there were schools, churches, shops and homes. More than 1000 letters of objection were received by the Council in advance of the hearing. The finding demonstrated that it is possible to successfully challenge lap dancing/sex establishment licences and that Councils are aware of the real risks and detriments of allowing a sex club to operate in city centres.

**Praise:** God for the outcome for the people of Bedford. May this encourage other communities to object to similar applications. (Ps.106:3)

**More:** <http://www.christianconcern.com/our-concerns/social/council-refuse-lap-dancing-licence-for-bedford>

#### ▣ USA: Boston Night of Worship

Boston Night of Worship 2011 will be held at the Agganis Arena on Sunday, October 9 at 6 p.m., and will feature 60+ worship leaders and a 100-strong choir. United Night of Worship (UNOW) is a worship movement where thousands of people locally and across the world gather in desperation to pursue the one true and living God, Jesus Christ. It began in 2007 when a missionary from Malawi was instructed by the Holy Spirit during a 21-day fast to rally as many worship leaders as possible from Boston to stand united on one stage 'declaring the Lordship of Jesus over the city' - A gathering which started with 30 worship leaders united on one stage across cultural, denominational and social lines, and has exploded into a fiery worship movement igniting spiritual hunger, passion and united desperation for Jesus and His manifest presence. It is evident that something new is happening spiritually all over New England.

**Praise:** God for His presence in Boston and across the world. (Jn.4:23)

**More:** [http://www.breakingchristiannews.com/articles/display\\_art.html?ID=9396](http://www.breakingchristiannews.com/articles/display_art.html?ID=9396)

▣ **Global: JESUS Film new digital distribution**

For 30+ years the JESUS Film Project (JFP) has engaged people with Jesus through films in their native language with missionaries travelling the world with film, projectors, and movie screens as they share the story of Jesus. Now a new strategy will multiply global outreach through digital distribution. Over the years a library has grown to 40+ video products in 1,136 of the world's languages. The new technology allows these tools to seamlessly be embedded in websites, cell phones and apps of ministry partners around the world in over 1,100 languages through 50,000+ speakers - and the digital technology provides the ability to see how many times the different films are viewed, downloaded, in what languages and from where. This information will help in the development of new materials. To date, the classic JESUS film has been shown in 220 countries.

**Praise:** God for the massive potential this technology provides. (Ro.10:17,18)

**More:** <http://www.assistnews.net/Stories/2011/s11100014.htm>

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