

PRAYER ALERT...

An initiative of the Prayer Forum of the British Isles & Ireland
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Issue 30-2012

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PRaise REPORTS

■ Thousands to receive Bibles in Greece

Tourism in Greece may be way down because of the uncertain economic situation and the highly publicised anti-austerity demonstrations. But this has not prevented 320 volunteers from around the globe descending on the Alexandroupolis in the north-eastern corner of Greece. They will be part of Operation Joshua, a Hellenic Ministries project to distribute modern Greek New Testaments, both audio and printed, to 125,000 households. Operation Joshua began on 17 July and continues through to 25 July. Teams of people from young teens to senior citizens are participating in this special effort to bring the hope of the gospel to a beleaguered nation. Not only will they be bringing the message of hope to the Greeks but also 17,000 Turkish Bible packs will be distributed to the Islamic villages on the Turkish border.

Praise: God for Operation Joshua and pray that the thousands of Bibles will bear much fruit. (Jn.15:8)

More: <http://www.christiantoday.com/article/thousands.to.receive.bibles.in.greece/30314.htm>

■ US pastor 'thanking God' after kidnapping ends In Egypt

An American evangelical pastor is 'thanking God' that he and two others have been released after they were kidnapped in Egypt last week. Reverend Micheel Louis, 61, and 39-year-old Lissa Alphonse, both Boston-area residents, had been kidnapped from a bus on Friday, July 13, along with their guide, Haytham Ragab. The kidnapping took place on a Sinai Desert road by a Bedouin who was demanding the release of his uncle from prison. His uncle had reportedly been detained by Egyptian police on suspicion of drug possession. However, after three days of negotiations, Abu-Masuh released the prisoners to security officials near the northern Sinai city of el-Arish. 'We are a people of mercy and the hostages don't have anything to do with this,' Abu-Masuh said in published statements, monitored by BosNewsLife last Friday. Pastor Louis' Presbyterian Church in the U.S. city of Boston takes a trip to Israel every year.

Praise: God for the release of Pastor Michael Louise and the other two people and pray that his testimony will have spoken to his captors. (Mk.6:11)

More: <http://www.bosnewslife.com/22681-us-pastor-thanking-god-after-kidnapping-ends-in-egypt>

2012 LONDON GAMES



■ Releasing the Fire: Healing on the Streets - HOTS

In partnership with Healing on the Streets mission teams from around the UK will be sent out from The Cornerstone, Leyton to Olympic Live Sites and other festival events in the vicinity of the Olympic Park. From Saturday 28th July until August 12th there will be two training sessions everyday in the morning from 10am - 12pm and in the afternoon from 2pm - 4pm. The organisers of this powerful witness to London of God's power and love are inviting Christians to come and be a part of what

He is doing at this time. Basic training is provided for those who sign up at <http://www.londonsburning2012.org.uk/group/group.aspx?id=183494> and Christians who are already part of HOTS in their local communities are being made welcome to join the London teams with the dates and the times they would like to come. They just need to email the organisers with the dates and times they would like to come to londonsburning2012@gmail.com

Pray: that many who have never previously been a part of Healing on the Streets would sign up for basic training and experience God's power and love in the coming weeks. (SoS.8:6)

More: <http://www.londonsburning2012.org.uk/group/group.aspx?id=183494>

■ London's Christian community ready for the Olympics

London is awash with many Christian groups ministering across the city and there are many others throughout the British Isles. Please pray for: a team of former Olympians known as 'Chaplains to the World's Olympians'. Their ministry 'Bridging the Gap 2012 UK Outreach headquarters is based in the Kingsway International Christian Centre. Pray also for the Olympic Village Chaplains in each Olympic host city made up of a local component and an international contingent. Please pray for the 3,000 copies of commemorative English-language Scriptures available as a welcome gift in the Olympic Village, and the 'More Than Gold' ministry providing sports clinics, a ministry providing cups of water on every street corner for Olympic visitors, and 'street chaplains' welcoming people to London and helping visitors find their way around. Prayer is the secret ingredient in any evangelism and for Olympic ministry it is particularly important as the world comes together in goodwill.

Pray: for clear unhindered communication to flow through every event, particularly between volunteers and the public, organising agencies and volunteers.

More: <http://www.assistnews.net/Stories/2012/s12070141.htm>

■ Christian athletes

Josh Davis is a swimmer who won three gold medals at Atlanta in 1996 and two more medals at the 2000 games. He is now a full-time motivational speaker, addressing secular and church audiences at least 70 times a year and has edited 'The Goal and the Glory'. He was the only man at the 1996 Atlanta Olympic Games to win three gold medals. He travels all over America telling people how great God is and reminds himself that even as his hard-earned Olympic medals are now dented and scratched from handling, God's Word is eternal. See <http://www.christianpost.com/news/interview-olympic-gold-medalist-josh-davis-on-christian-athletes-the-games-and-michael-phelps-78742/#8WQwtMMH3q4iTBpw.99> Being a Christian in a secular club or team can be challenging and in the UK 'Christians In Sport Network' gives Christians the opportunity to find and link in with other Christians actively involved in their sport. There are currently 15 different men's and women's sports providing sport specific resources, training and events to help believers live and share their faith in their team or club.

Pray: for Christian sport initiatives and Christian athletes to shine during and after the Olympic season. (Heb.12:1,2)

More: <http://www.christiansinsport.org.uk/networks.asp?section=25§ionTitle=Sport+Networks>

■ Sunday trading laws suspended for Olympics

The Government has lifted Sunday trading laws for the duration of the Olympics in an attempt to boost the economy, the BBC has reported. Currently, laws permit shops with a floor area of more than 280 square metres (3000 square feet) to open for no longer than six hours between 10:00 and 18:00 on a Sunday. But a spokesman for the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills said that shops would be 'free to choose their opening hours on a Sunday' with 'no restrictions on these hours' until the Olympics Games are over in September. The move has been criticised by the shop workers' union Usdaw who claim that there is 'no evidence' that the suspension will help retailers to maximise profits. Concerns have also been raised that the move will pave the way for a permanent relaxation of the laws restricting Sunday trading.

Pray: that the Government would abide by its commitment that this would be a temporary suspension and not lead to extending Sunday opening hours. (Gen.2:3 & Ex.35:2)

More: <http://www.christianconcern.com/our-concerns/employment/sunday-trading-laws-suspended-for-olympics>

BRITISH ISLES & IRELAND

■ Plan to weaken gambling laws come under fire

Betting shops should be allowed to install more high-stake gambling machines, according to a committee of MPs. The machines, dubbed the crack cocaine of the high street, allow players to place bets of up to £100 with prizes of up to £500. An editorial in one national newspaper said it was 'appalled that a Conservative-led group of MPs is seeking to revive the liberalisers' discredited agenda'. The report, by the Culture, Media and Sport Select Committee, suggests that strict rules on gambling machines should be relaxed. The report, an investigation of the 2005 Gambling Act, recommends raising the number of high-stake (B2) machines in casinos from four to 20. And it says that local authorities should be free to allow betting shops to install more than the current maximum of four if it would prevent betting shops clustering together.

Pray: against this move to legalize further higher stakes gambling machines. (Pr.1:15)

More: <http://www.christian.org.uk/news/mps-plan-to-weaken-gambling-laws-come-under-fire/>

■ Christian campaigners hit out at tax evasion

A Christian movement to end poverty has spoken out against tax evasion by wealthy people. The group Micah Challenge is calling upon church leaders to hold the super-rich to account after a report by the Tax Justice Network suggested that up to \$20trillion was being siphoned off by the world's wealthiest people into tax havens. The movement says that Jesus would have hit out at such excessive greed, especially at a time when millions remain in extreme poverty and without access to

basic health care. The campaigners are urging churches the world over to raise their concerns with politicians. 'Once again the poor are paying the price of the greed of the wealthiest,' said Head of Campaigns Amanda Jackson. 'The money being siphoned off to tax havens is more than the American and Japanese GDPs put together. Yet millions of the world's poorest are suffering. It is so wrong.'

Pray: that greed will not govern the hearts of men and for the poor to be treated fairly. (LK.12:15)

More: <http://www.christiantoday.com/article/christian.campaigners.hit.out.tax.evasion/30336.htm>

■ TV watchdog slammed Britain's Got Talent

Britain's Got Talent stunned parents by failing to censure ITV for outrageous performances by Rihanna and Christina Aguilera on The X Factor. Now Ofcom has done it again – this time clearing Britain's Got Talent despite parents complaining about the broadcast of a burlesque performance before the watershed. In one routine Beatrix Von Bourbon – real name Stephanie Brooks – gave a performance in front of judges Simon Cowell, Amanda Holden, David Walliams and Alesha Dixon which saw the burlesque dancer remove jacket, skirt and bra to reveal nipple tassels, corset and stockings. Almost 100 people made formal complaints and scores more took to social networks to complain for the fact the performance took place before the watershed and questioned whether it was suitable for children. The regulator is facing accusations of being 'permissive' and 'toothless' after it found the reality show did not breach guidelines.

Pray: that Ofcom will take seriously the complaints of the public and use its authority to control the media.

More: <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2177836/TV-watchdog-slammed-Britains-Got-Talent-avoids-censure-pre-watershed-screening-Burlesque-performance.html#ixzz21Xzzx1CI>

■ The Church in Wales unveils major overhaul

The Church in Wales has unveiled radical plans to ensure its future ahead of its centenary in 2020. The Church makes 50 recommendations for change in a published report. Recommendations include setting up supersize parishes run by teams of vicars and lay people. These would replace parishes with larger 'ministry areas' and mirror the catchment areas of secondary schools. Recations are intended to address the problem of small, unsustainable parishes and overstretched priests having to serve multiple parishes. The report also recommends that churches invest in ministry to young people and come up with 'creative ideas' to ensure they stay at the heart of their communities. To implement the vision, churches are being asked to allow their buildings to be available for use by the whole community. Other recommendations include: training lay people to play a greater part in church leadership; developing new forms of worship to reach out to those unfamiliar with church services; encouraging tithing.

Pray: for the Church in Wales to rise up and meet the challenge. (Mt.16:18)

More: <http://www.christiantoday.com/article/church.in.wales.unveils.major.overhaul/30316.htm>

EUROPE

■ Russia: New law could restrict ministries

Russia's parliament has passed a law restricting international support to work of non-government organizations work. The bill forces groups to register as 'foreign agents' and file quarterly reports about their activities. Failure to comply can result in large fines and possibly jail. Critics say the law is aimed at making the work of NGOs more difficult, to intimidate them, and tarnish their image. The U.S.-based group Russian Ministries, working with church leaders throughout the former Soviet Union, believes it will impact their ministry and other NGOs in similar work.

Pray: that God will strengthen Christian ministries throughout the region as they face the implementation of this new law. (1Cor.1:27)

More: <http://www.cbn.com/cbnnews/world/2012/July/New-Law-Could-Restrict-Ministries-in-Russia/>

■ Ukraine: Homosexual groups enraged at bid to ban homosexual propaganda

Ukraine parliamentarians have re-submitted a bill to outlaw the promotion of homosexuality in public, and the homosexual movement around the world. Their supporters in the mainstream media, have erupted in outrage. The bill's sponsor said that the growing acceptance of homosexuality in the West was 'not evolution, but degradation'. It would ban the promotion of homosexuality in television shows and movies, as well as prohibit public 'Gay Pride' events. It is intended to preserve 'the moral, spiritual and physical health of the nation' according to co-author MP Pavlo Ungurian, speaking at a news conference Monday. 'We are not against homosexuals, however, we do not share their values,' he said. 'Our goal is the preservation of the moral, spiritual and physical health of the nation,' Ungurian said adding 'We must stop the propaganda, the positive description and the publicity of this abnormal lifestyle.'

Pray: for the government in Ukraine that it will stay firm on its stand against homosexuality. (1Tim.1:9-10)

More: <http://www.lifesitenews.com/news/international-homosexualist-groups-enraged-at-ukraine-bid-to-ban-homosexual>

WORLDWIDE

■ Iraq **INSIGHT:** Al-Qaeda chief vows comeback

The first online statement from the new leader of al-Qaeda's affiliate in Iraq claims the terrorist network is preparing operations to free prisoners and assassinate court officials. The audio identifies the speaker as Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, who became head of the Islamic State of Iraq in 2010. It was posted on a website regularly used by al Qaeda to make statements. Al-Baghdadi invited Muslims to come to Iraq to join his movement and released the statement as Sunni insurgents, now thought to be dominated by the group, stepped up attacks against Shiites, government officials and other

targets. 'I bring you good news. We are starting a new phase in our struggle with a plan we named Breaking the Walls, and we remind you of your priority to free the Muslim prisoners,' al-Baghdadi said. He urged tribal leaders to send their men to join al Qaeda as it returns to areas from which it withdrew. See: <http://www.worthynews.com/top/washingtontimes-com-news-2012-jul-22-al-qaedachief-vowscomebackin-iraq/>. For INSIGHTS to aid intercession for Iraq click the 'Info' button
Pray: against the fear and panic caused by militants, and for the political parties to restore stability. (Ps.5:8)
Info: http://site.prayer-alert.net/index.php?option=com_docman&task=doc_download&gid=395&Itemid=93

■ Syria: Christians caught in conflict

Aleppo has seen fierce clashes between rebels and Syrian government forces, is Syria's largest city and is the country's industrial and financial centre. It has the largest population of Christians in the country, and along with a mix of other religious and ethnic communities, the city's demographics largely mirror those of the country as a whole. Aleppo has been slow to enter the violence, and while activists say opposition has existed for some time inside the city, its relationship with the Free Syrian Army (FSA) is less clear. See: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-18957096> Open Doors reports, 'In a church in Aleppo, children are singing and laughter fills the halls. Christians are providing a summer retreat from the trauma. Despite all the challenges they are trying to organize a daily Christian retreat for the six-week summer camp; having their meals together, playing and learning crafts, pray and simply having a good time together.'

Pray: for God's power and authority to protect all facing fear of violence and uncertainty. (Ps.68:1)

More: <http://www.opendoorsusa.org/pray/prayer-updates/2012/%297-July/syrian-children-enjoying-a-summer-respite>

■ Afghanistan: Indigenous peoples

An Afghan believer writes, 'A growing number are illegally addicted to heroin – resulting in soaring human and social costs, destroyed families and increased crime. Please pray for the destruction of poppy crops, and planting of food crops. Child exploitation - some children that work long hours at hard and dangerous jobs in illegal coal mines with no safety equipment. Laws against child labour are not enforced. Please pray for laws to be justly enforced, and that families would find other ways to pay their debts. Praise God that the number of believers is growing – but there is limited support for new believers.' For a link to a terrorist training video revealing Taliban preparing to cause Afghanistan chaos click the more button.

Pray: for new believers in Afghanistan to find other Christians to help them in a culture where converts are persecuted by friends, family and village leaders. (Ps.68:5,6)

More: <http://www.aljazeera.com/video/asia/2012/07/2012722171149565287.html>

■ Iran & Nigeria: Churches continue to suffer

Churches ministering in Iran and Nigeria are experiencing increasing levels of persecution by authorities and extremists attempting to stamp out Christianity. Assembly of God in Tehran had its summer campsite closed and were warned of severe consequences should anyone try to enter. Also Friday Farsi Language services and Bible classes have been closed. AG Eurasia Regional Director said, 'The increasing pressures put on churches in Iran recently is a cause for great concern. We are doing everything we can to help them, but they need God's intervention most of all.' In Nigeria extremists are demanding the adoption and enforcement of Sharia law and the establishment of a new Nigeria under those laws. Villages, churches, government institutions, and schools (especially Christian schools) are being violently attacked. Central Assemblies of God has lost more than 25 churches this year, with many members fleeing for their lives.

Pray: for the suffering church around the world and particularly for Iran and Nigeria who are paying such a heavy price for their faith. (Ps.68:28)

More: <http://www.assistnews.net/Stories/2012/s12070143.htm>

■ Worldwide: Legalising prostitution and drugs

A report issued by the United Nations-backed Global Commission on HIV and the Law recommends that nations around the world remove laws against prostitution and decriminalize the voluntary use of illegal injection drugs in order to combat the HIV epidemic. The Commission of 15 former heads of state, legal scholars and HIV/AIDS activists recommends 'Decriminalise private and consensual adult sexual behaviours, including same-sex sexual acts and voluntary sex work.' and 'Reform approaches towards drug use, rather than punishing people who use drugs but do no harm to others.' The UN backed commission interviewed prostitutes, activists and public health advocates in 140 countries across the world to come to its conclusions. They received funding from Canadian, Norwegian Australian and the US Government plus billionaire Geroge Soros through his Open Society Foundations.

Pray: for the UN would work with Christian organisations for righteous and moral ways to help and heal populations at the highest risk of HIV. (Ps.107:44)

More: http://cnsnews.com/news/article/un-commission-calls-legalizing-prostitution-worldwide?utm_source=feedburner&worldwide?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=feed&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+delicious%2Fgqlf+%28Christian+Headlines+Top+Headlines%29

PRAYER FORUM OF THE BRITISH ISLES & IRELAND

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Prayer Alert is a partnership project of the Prayer Forum of the British Isles and Ireland
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