

# PRAYER ALERT...

An initiative of the Prayer Forum of the British Isles & Ireland  
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## PRAISE REPORTS

### ■ Prayer road-show to criss cross UK

The organisers of the National Day of Prayer have announced plans for a prayer road-show to visit towns and cities across the UK. The road-show is the follow-up to the day of prayer for the nation which brought 30,000 Christians to Wembley Stadium in September. Organisers hope to engage with some of the people who were at Wembley and many more who couldn't make it on the day but have a heart to pray for the nation. Churches are being invited to sign up to host one of the stops on the road-show, which is being run in conjunction with United Christian Broadcasters and the Neighbourhood Prayer Network. 'You came to Wembley and now we would like to come to you,' said road-show organisers. 'Let's work together to reach this Nation for Jesus.' If you want the road-show to come to your town, register at [ndopwembley.com/roadshow/](http://ndopwembley.com/roadshow/)

**Praise:** [God for the organisers of the road-show and for many churches to respond to the invitation to host the show. \(Mk.16:15\)](#)

**More:** <http://www.christiantoday.co.uk/article/prayer.roadshow.to.criss.cross.uk/31125.htm>

### ■ Paraguay: Does prayer marathon indicate revival?

For 12 years, a prayer marathon has brought Christians together in the South American country of Paraguay. The 24 hours of uninterrupted prayer involves thousands of people from all Christian denominations, in 85 locations around the country. Christian groups, churches, denominations, are understanding that the personal, spiritual revival movement reaching out to neighbours and the country in general, is accomplished much through prayer. Some individuals report miracles taking place since they have gathered to pray, including people healed without any medical explanation. But above all, these believers pray for the gospel of Jesus Christ to reach the whole the the country, including government authorities. Although there are no precise statistics on the percentage of evangelical Christians in the Paraguayan population, most churches report a growth of 10 to 15 percent annually, with thousands of baptisms nationwide.

**Praise:** [God for the many blessings He has given to the people of Paraguay. \(Dt.8:8\)](#)

**More:** <http://www.charismanews.com/world/34707-does-paraguays-12-year-prayer-marathon-indicate-revival>

## BRITISH ISLES & IRELAND

### ■ Widespread support for teaching children Christianity

There is widespread support in England for teaching Christianity in schools, according to a YouGov poll released by Oxford University. Almost two-thirds (64%) of the more than 1,800 people questioned said that children need to learn about Christianity to understand English history, while more than half (57%) said it was important if pupils are to understand the

English culture and way of life. The poll also revealed that more than two-fifths (43%) of the adults surveyed said that more attention should be given to teaching about Christianity in RE lessons. More than half (51%) also said they felt Christianity distinguishes right from wrong. But just over a third (37%) said they believe that many RE teachers do not know enough about Christianity to be able to teach it effectively. We are often given the impression that teaching about Jesus and His message is old-fashioned and irrelevant. This survey shows that many people value the Christian framework and see the need for Christianity to be taught properly.

**Pray:** that the results of this poll will lead to the educational authorities taking notice and raising the standards of Christian education in our schools. (Ez.11:12)

**More:** <http://www.christianconcern.com/our-concerns/education/poll-reveals-widespread-support-for-teaching-children-christianity>

#### ■ Justin Welby calls for cap on total cost of payday loans

The incoming Archbishop of Canterbury has joined forces with the Labour Party to launch an attack on the Government over its failure to curb the excessive charges of legal loan sharks. The highly political intervention by Justin Welby, the Bishop of Durham, is his first since being announced as the successor to Dr Rowan Williams as leader of the Church of England. Bishop Welby has denounced payday loan firms and the levels of interest they charge as 'morally wrong' and even a 'sin'. He is stepping up his campaign with a House of Lords amendment – jointly with a Labour peer – to a Coalition finance bill which would give regulators the power to cap the total cost of loans. He said 'The reality is interest rates are in the thousands of per cent, which at any time in history would have been called usury, and which the church has always considered a sin, and I think that even now it is a sin to charge that level of interest.'

**Pray:** for the success of this amendment and also for all those affected by such exorbitant loan repayments. (Ex.22:25)

**More:** <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/religion/9700796/Justin-Welby-the-Bishop-of-Durham-calls-for-cap-on-total-cost-of-payday-loans.html>

#### ■ Domestic violence accounts for 10% of emergency calls

One in 10 emergency calls to police are categorised as domestic violence related, rising in some areas to a fifth of all 999 alerts. The figures, obtained following freedom of information requests, have prompted fresh demands for a long-term strategy to tackle Britain's 'hidden crime.' Home Office data reveals that more than a million British women a year experience domestic violence, although experts believe the vast majority of incidents remain unreported. However, domestic violence conviction rates in the five years to 2011 stood at just 6.5% of incidents reported to police. Yvette Cooper, Shadow Home Secretary, said: 'Last year the domestic violence rate was twice as high as the burglary rate. Two women every week are killed at the hands of their abuser in England and Wales, yet it still isn't given enough priority to keep people safe.' Cooper is currently consulting on ways to better protect women, saying too much complacency surrounds the issue.

**Pray:** for all those affected by domestic abuse and for measures to be taken to reduce the level of such abuse. (Col.3:19)

**More:** <http://www.guardian.co.uk/society/2012/nov/24/domestic-violence-emergency-calls-data>

#### ■ Campaigners to switch off Facebook over tax dodging

Anti-poverty campaigners are urging people to switch off Facebook for a day in protest against the company's alleged tax avoidance. The Facebook blackout was initiated by Church Action on Poverty after it emerged that the company had paid £196,000 in corporation tax on estimated UK sales of £175 million in 2011. Facebook users are being urged to share images advertising the day-long initiative on 1 December and leave a message telling their friends why they are switching off. CAP is hoping the message will go viral and alert other Facebook users about the company's contentious tax practices. National Co-ordinator Niall Cooper said: 'Despite media coverage, many of Facebook's 43 million users will be unaware of the company's tax dodging. CAP is engaging in the protest as part of a wider effort to make the Government clamp down on tax dodging.' (See also Prayer Alert 47-2012)

**Pray:** for the success of this campaign against the companies which are avoiding corporation tax. (Mk.12:14)

**More:** <http://www.christiantoday.com/article/campaigners.to.switch.off.facebook.over.tax.dodging/31148.htm>

#### ■ Concern about marriage breakdown

Most Brits feel that marriage's fall from grace has not been good for society, a new survey has found. In a poll by the Centre for Social Justice, 60% agreed that marriage has become less important and that this is a 'bad thing' for Britain. Over half (55%) said there was at least one area close to where they lived that was affected by serious social problems like broken families, poor schools and crime. Most of those surveyed (85%) felt that family and parenting were key to mending broken society. When asked what they felt was the most important for children to have when growing up, 46% said a safe community and environment, followed by having two parents at home (31%). The findings were released as the CSJ prepares to launch Breakthrough Britain II, a major study into the causes of poverty and social breakdown that will run until 2014.

**Pray:** that the recognition of the importance of marriage in our society be realised and once more become central. (Heb.13:4)

**More:** <http://www.christiantoday.com/article/brits.concerned.about.marriage.breakdown/31136.htm>

#### ■ Majority want gay marriage referendum

Most people support the idea of holding a referendum to decide whether marriage should be redefined, a new poll has shown. In a recent survey commissioned by the Coalition for Marriage, 54 per cent agreed that redefining marriage should be put to a public vote. Of those surveyed, only 26 per cent disagreed with the idea of a referendum of the people. The Coalition for Marriage, which campaigns against the Government redefining marriage, says the results aren't surprising. Campaign director Colin Hart said: 'This poll follows a series of bad news stories for the PM's profoundly undemocratic plans.' He added, 'ordinary men and women have never been able to cast a vote on the issue as neither the Conservatives,

Lib Dems, or Labour included this proposal in their manifestos and they are fed up with being told it is going to happen regardless of what the majority of people in this country believe.'

**Pray:** for the political leaders that they will listen to the majority of the people and allow for a referendum on redefining marriage.

**More:** <http://www.christian.org.uk/news/majority-want-gay-marriage-referendum-poll-shows/>

#### ■ **UKIP foster carers banned: could conservative evangelicals be next?**

The news that two foster carers have had the children they lovingly cared for taken away by Rotherham Council because they belong to UKIP raises a question: could conservative evangelicals be banned as foster carers because of their opposition to women bishops? As was very clear in the exchange in the House of Commons following Tuesday's sinking of the women bishops' measure by the General Synod's House of Laity, the conviction that the pastoral leaders of local churches and of dioceses should be male is utterly despised by the establishment. UKIP's opposition to multi-culturalism was cited as the reason why the two foster carers in Rotherham were banned; why should not the opinion of conservative evangelicals about male headship in the family also fall foul of social workers? That would be very sad indeed for children needing a loving home, because conservative evangelicals thinking about the complementarity of the sexes should in theory at least lend itself to good parenting.

**Pray:** for political and religious views to become an impediment to high quality foster care. (Mt.6:33)

**More:** <http://archbishop-cranmer.blogspot.co.uk/>

## EUROPE

#### ■ **Church planting in France**

Next year's World Day of Prayer will be focusing not on Malaysia, Chile or Cameroon (as the last three did), but on our neighbouring France. While France is often thought to be a Catholic country, now only five per cent of the country would identify themselves as such, and 74 per cent of French people have never opened a Bible. And although when thinking of France we often imagine great food, good wine and a long cultural history, it also has the highest rates of depression in the world. Over 90 per cent of the country's towns and villages have no evangelical church. However, the evangelical church has seen a growth of nearly 10 times since 1950, and half of this number are younger than 35. And there is a new evangelical church planted somewhere in France every 10 days.

**Pray:** that our prayers will help towards a revival of the church in France. (Ps.85:6)

**More:** <http://www.eauk.org/current-affairs/news/church-planting-in-france.cfm>

#### ■ **Spain's secret shame - baby black market exposed**

At a cemetery in Barcelona, trucks arrived for a court-ordered exhumation. All across Spain, officials are opening the coffins of dead newborn babies to see if there are any human remains inside, many of the coffins were empty. Spain is reeling from one of the worst crimes since World War II. It is known simply as 'los bebés robados,' the stolen babies. The sheer scale of it is staggering: perhaps 300,000 Spanish babies have been taken from their mothers at birth and sold on the black market. Beginning during the Franco dictatorship in 1939 and continuing until the 1990s, newborns were stolen from hospitals and trafficked by a network of doctors, nurses, priests, and nuns. The attending nurse would take the newborn from the mother to have it examined or cleaned. The nurse would return with a dead baby that was kept in a freezer at the hospital as proof that the child had died.

**Pray:** for God's forgiveness for all those who perpetrated these crimes and healing for the mothers and children involved. (Tit.3:11)

**More:** <http://www.cbn.com/cbnnews/world/2012/October/Spains-Secret-Shame-Baby-Black-Market-Exposed/>

## WORLDWIDE

#### ■ **NIGERIA: Police and prisoners**

Two police officers died when a gunman attacked a police base in Abuja, enabling five suspected robbers to escape. Suspected robbers and militants from the Boko Haram Islamist group are often held at the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (Sars) base. The attack came a day after a double suicide bombing killed 11 people in a church inside a military barracks north of Abuja. Many are wondering how the attackers could have entered the barracks, which houses Nigeria's elite military training centre, without some inside help. The base is near several government buildings and security is normally extremely tight in the area. The militants have a history of attacking prisons and freeing Boko Haram members. Day 17 of the Year of Prayer for Nigeria tells us that contrary to God's word many Nigerians curse the police. See: [http://www.pray4nigeria.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=341:day-17-police-and-other-security-agencies&catid=47&Itemid=285](http://www.pray4nigeria.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=341:day-17-police-and-other-security-agencies&catid=47&Itemid=285)

**Pray:** for an improved standard of recruitment of police officers; and ask God to reverse the curses people have placed on the police. Pray blessings, protection and righteousness on them. (1Tim 2:1-4.)

**More:** <http://www.kbc.co.ke/news.asp?nid=79191>

#### ■ **Nigeria: Gunmen 'dressed as soldiers' fire in pub**

Ten civilians have died after gunmen stormed a pub in central Nigeria's Plateau state and opened fire on customers, authorities say. The attackers wore military uniforms according to eye witness reports, but the army has denied any involvement. 'You can get camouflage clothes from the market,' a military spokesman told the BBC Hausa service. Hundreds of people have been killed in Plateau state in recent years in clashes between rival ethnic groups. The state lies

on the fault line between a mainly Muslim north and predominantly Christian and animist south. As a result rival groups, split along religious, ethnic and political lines, have clashed in the region on numerous occasions over the past decade. The pub shooting took place in the remote village of Heipang in the predominantly Christian Barkin Ladi region, army spokesman Capt Salisu Ibrahim Mustapha said. No responsibility has been claimed for the attack so far.

**Pray:** against these ongoing attacks by those who hide under the guise of the authorities. (Pr.26:24)

**More:** <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-20512754>

#### ■ **Egypt: Tension high in Cairo after mass protests**

Police and protesters clash after thousands rally overnight against President Morsi's assumption of expanded powers. Egyptian police have fired tear gas into Cairo's Tahrir Square, where several hundred protesters spent the night after a mass rally to denounce President Mohamed Morsi's action. Clashes erupting on streets near Tahrir Square spilled into the square on Wednesday morning, with canisters falling into the crowd forcing protesters to run and sending clouds of tear gas over the tents housing the demonstrators. Al Jazeera's Hoda Abdel-Hamid said there was a huge difference between Wednesday and Tuesday's turnout, which she said was a huge success for the opposition in terms of the amount of people they were able to rally. 'Today, you have those die-hards who say that they will stay in the square until the president retracts his constitutional declaration,' she said.

**Pray:** that the protests will not escalate leading to wide scale rioting, pray that peace will reign. (Ps.120:6-7)

**More:** <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2012/11/201211288183393655.html>

#### ■ **India: Extremists in most violent state follow Christians to hospitals**

Christians in India's most religiously intolerant state have witnessed heightened violence in the past weeks, including Hindu extremists attempting to slit the throat of a pastor as he lay hospitalized from a previous attack, sources said. Christians or their property are attacked an average of three times per week in Karnataka, Christian Legal Association Senior Advocate S. Nova Bethania told Morning Star News, who said the extremists took four Christians to a Hindu temple, where they forcibly bathed them in water and told them to eat sacrificial meat, said a pastor who goes by a single name, Annaiah. Christian leaders reported the incident to police, but officers refused to take action. Later Morning Star News reported, the Hindu extremists marched toward the district collector's office shouting anti-Christian slogans, demanded Pastor Annaiah's arrest on accusations of forceful conversion and burned an effigy of him.

**Pray:** for all those who are under attack from Hindu extremists that God will protect them from violent assaults. (2Th.3:3)

**More:** <http://www.assistnews.net/Stories/2012/s12110134.htm>

#### ■ **Congo: Oxfam steps up response to growing crisis**

As the humanitarian crisis in eastern Congo worsens, with thousands of people fleeing new fighting, Oxfam is stepping up its supply of aid to more than 80,000 people in and around Goma. Deliveries of vital clean water have been made to people in Lac Vert camp, on the edge of Goma, many of whom have fled violence in Sake over the past few days. Oxfam teams have constructed 40 new latrines for 8,000 people sheltering in squalid conditions at the Don Bosco site in Goma city. With tens of thousands of people descending on Goma this week, and a lack of power in the city, there are serious shortages of water and better sanitation is urgently needed to prevent the spread of cholera. Tariq Riebl, the development and aid agency's humanitarian coordinator, commented: 'Conditions here are grim. Thousands of people are sheltering in schools and churches throughout the city, under plastic sheets hung from the walls.' Rebel forces have set out conditions for their withdrawal from Goma which they captured last week.

**Pray:** that negotiations between the Government and rebel forces will lead to a solution to this conflict. (Pr.15:18)

**More:** <http://www.ekklesia.co.uk/node/17482>

#### ■ **Uganda: Fishing communities missing out on HIV treatment**

Fishing communities in Uganda do not have adequate access to life-prolonging antiretroviral drugs (ARVs), posing a possible setback to the country's fight against HIV, new statistics reveal. As of June 2012, just 15 percent of 6,225 fisher folk - considered one of the country's most at-risk populations - in need of ARVs were receiving it, according to the Uganda AIDS Commission (UAC) in its annual review of the Uganda National AIDS Strategic Plan. Officials blamed low literacy among this segment of the population as well as the remoteness and inaccessibility of the islands where many of them are found. 'Our HIV intervention among the fishing community in Uganda remains low and a big challenge. Most of these people stay in islands, which are hard-to-reach areas. Most of the islands lack health facilities,' Peter Kyambade, most-at-risk populations coordinator at the Ministry of Health, told IRIN/PlusNews.

**Pray:** that the authorities will find the necessary funding to reach these remote fishing communities. (3Jn.1:2)

**More:** <http://www.plusnews.org/Report/96894/UGANDA-Fishing-communities-missing-out-on-HIV-treatment>

## PRAYER FORUM OF THE BRITISH ISLES & IRELAND

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