

Prayer Alert

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The heavens are Yours, and Yours also the earth; You founded the world and all that is in it. You created the north and the south; Tabor and Hermon sing for joy at Your name. Your arm is endowed with power; Your hand is strong, Your right hand exalted. (Psalm 89:11-13)

We are pleased to enclose this week's edition of Prayer Alert.

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Thank you again for standing with us in prayer over the nations.

David Fletcher – Editor

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Praise Reports

Israel: a message of peace worldwide

During the Hebrew month of Elul, Jewish people mark God's creation of the world. This year's celebration included an event its organisers believe could be a fulfilment of biblical prophecy. The sound of shofars, scripture projected onto Jerusalem's Old City walls, and music from an orchestra and choir marked the World Creation Concert. The Sanhedrin's spokesman hopes that the annual concert will spread throughout the world to usher in peace, blessing and health, with similar concerts in other venues and with people praying towards Jerusalem: 'this is our prayer to the entire world', he said. The organisers are already preparing for next year - the Temple Mount, a house of prayer for all nations.

Praise: God for this wake-up call to unite in prayer for the nations. (Isaiah 56:7)

More: www1.cbn.com/cbnnews/israel/2018/september/creation-concert-organizers-hope-to-spread-a-message-of-peace-worldwide

Prison chaplain returns to work

Volunteer chaplain Paul Song has shared the gospel with inmates at Brixton prison since 1998. Many have become Christians. Last year, after a Muslim imam was appointed head chaplain, Pastor Song came under frightening opposition. Islamic militants attacked his classes and physically assaulted and abused him because of his faith. 'My classes were often disrupted. At times inmates openly spoke in the chapel in support of IS and suicide bombers. There was nothing I could do about it. They spoke with such hatred of Britain that it was frightening.' The imam said that the Christian material used by the pastor (and by churches throughout the world) was 'too radical', and called the pastor's Christian views 'extreme.' He was dismissed, but a petition to reinstate him was signed by over 40,000 people. His case was reviewed and he has been reinstated.

Praise: God for Pastor Song's ministry. Pray for ongoing fruitfulness for the Kingdom. (Matthew 16:18)

More: www.christianconcern.com/media/pastor-paul-song-reinstated-as-chaplain-at-hmp-brixton

British Isles & Ireland

Transformation: children

The following is part of a Prayer for the Nation publication. 'We thank You Lord, for those who have served faithfully within our Sunday Schools, children's churches and organisations over the years. Now we declare this is a new day, and we declare this is the time for a new move of Your Spirit amongst the children of our land. In the Name of Jesus, we call forth those carrying fresh revelation and creative ideas, able to teach Your children with relevance, life and depth. We thank You for the new wineskins You are releasing regarding children's ministry, and we speak shift and change into any curriculum, plan, or methodology which is of the old season. We decree the children's ministries of this land will take hold of the challenge and opportunity of the day. We declare, Lord, Your people will be willing volunteers in this day of Your power.'

Pray: for children and teens to grasp the power of the gospel, and God's purpose for them. (Psalm 127:3)

More: passionforthenation.uk/transformation-children-2/

Brexit: solution or 'no deal'

Despite Theresa May's earnest hopes, Europe is not supporting the Chequers border plan, and some of her own Conservative Party are not behind her. Theresa May accused the EU of failing to treat the UK with respect, capturing positive newspaper headlines the next day. But she now faces the Tory party conference, from 30 September to 3 October. Pray for God to strengthen her as she faces a cabinet civil war over EU membership. Ask God to dilute the deep differences of opinion within the Conservative party and soften the sharp edges of aggressive voices. The clock is ticking towards the Brexit deadline of March 2019. The next milestone is 18 October, when Donald Tusk expects the British government to provide a solution that will avoid a hard border in Ireland. Unless this problem is resolved, no final treaty with the UK on trade and other matters will be agreed.

Pray: for God to inspire the direction of every Brexit conversation leading up to deadlines. (Psalm 143:10b)

More: www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/opinion/alban-maginness-theresa-may-must-agree-a-border-solution-or-we-are-facing-into-a-no-deal-brexit-disaster-37353187.html

Prenatal testing for Down's Syndrome

Jane Fisher's statements on Radio 4 sounded appealing. The new non-invasive prenatal testing (NIPT), she says, is safer and more accurate than the current test, is available in Wales, is being delayed by bureaucracy, and women in England are 'desperate' for it. Those against the test were not mentioned in the interview, even though the plan takes the form of an abortion. In Iceland and Denmark, which have such screening, the abortion rate of babies with Down's is almost 100%, as technology advances and testing becomes more precise. In a society that highly values intelligence, will we one day decide there is an IQ level so low that it would be better for a child to be aborted? What about blind people in a world where visual media like TV and WhatsApp messages are taking over from radio and phone calls? People have committed suicide because of bullying over their hair colour: could parents decide that their ginger unborn baby should be aborted?

Pray: for prenatal parents to realise children and adults with disabilities can be happy, loving and loved. (Colossians 3:12).

More: www.eauk.org/news-and-views/prenatal-testing-for-downs-syndrome-a-slippery-slope

The MediaNet

The MediaNet is a UK network and community that supports, encourages and inspires Christian producers, journalists, photographers, editors, content creators, social media managers, and press officers. Their vision is to see Christians in the industry flourish and become key influencers, to see churches engaging positively with the media, and to see the life-affirming Gospel message of faith, hope and love increasingly reflected in the media. At a time when fake news and unhelpful agendas are encroaching more and more on what we read and view, we can pray for God to encourage and spiritually strengthen His people in broadcasting so that they expose what is really going on. Pray for the work of MediaNet to grow as it encourages and helps organise meet-ups and online networking to help Christians understand how their faith and work interact more effectively, whilst meeting the demands of the industry. May there be honest, reliable, and accurate journalism and programming.

Pray: for Christians in newsrooms and production companies to bring positive change. (Psalm 119:30)

More: themedianet.squarespace.com/

Bombed church reopened for Bristol's young people

A church in Bristol, closed after it suffered bomb damage during the Second World War, will be reopened with a vision of making Jesus known to the city's young adults and vulnerable people. Rev Toby Flint, formerly a lead pastor at Holy Trinity Brompton in London, is going to lead St Nicholas on Baldwin Street. He said, 'We're really excited to have been invited to reopen and restore the church to its original purpose, demonstrating the love of God. We want to build on the deep foundations of faith in the city, to reimagine church for a new generation, and play our part in meeting the needs of the most disadvantaged in Bristol.' The setting for two major universities, Bristol has experienced an influx of students and young professionals in recent years. It is estimated that 60% of people living in the city centre are aged between 15 and 29.

Pray: for those exploring faith to be touched by God's Spirit at St Nicholas. (Jeremiah 29:13)

More: www.premierchristianradio.com/News/UK/HTB-pastor-to-reopen-bombed-church-for-Bristol-s-young-people

PM rebuts archbishop's comments

Theresa May has replied to the Archbishop of Canterbury after he criticised the Government's record in tackling poverty. She said that working hard was 'the best route out of poverty', rather than state interventions. Jeremy Corbyn used his speech to the party conference to praise the Archbishop and his recent report, in which, he said, 'economic justice needs to be hard-wired into the way the economy works'. Justin Welby has adopted an increasingly strident tone in recent weeks, most notably with an outspoken attack on zero-hours contracts and the lack of opportunity for young people at the TUC's annual conference. He said the wealthy should pay more tax, adding, 'We cannot continue with an economy that works so badly for so many'. Theresa May's reply to the archbishop was made on her trip to the USA, where she addressed 200 business leaders about the advantages of investing in the UK after Britain leaves the EU.

Pray: for the government and the church to speak out wisely and truthfully for justice. (Psalm 33:12)

More: www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2018/09/26/theresa-may-hits-back-archbishop-canterbury-saying-work-best/

The Welsh language

A poet and songwriter has complained to the Welsh Language Commissioner after HSBC told him it could not respond to his letter because it was written in Welsh. The bank asked Mr Lovgreen to resend his message informing them of his change of address

because it was in a foreign language. HSBC has since apologised, and said it will offer better training to staff. Earlier this year MPs were able to speak Welsh during parliamentary debates for the first time at Westminster, after translation facilities were made available. See also the Europe article on Greater Europe Mission (GEM UK).

Pray: for the Welsh language to be freely recognised as part of Welsh culture and heritage. (1 Peter 2:17a)

More: www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-45657561

Europe

EU: ambassadors discuss no-deal Brexit

A leaked document has revealed that EU officials are making no-deal Brexit preparations due to 'uncertainty' over a deal passing through the House of Commons. EU ambassadors held a rare 'closed session' on 26 September, to discuss the prospect of Parliament rejecting the final divorce settlement. Officials will discuss mini-deals to keep aircraft flying, medicine supplies and ports moving in the event of a no-deal, as part of European Commission 'contingency planning'. A restricted agenda states, 'Preparedness work has to intensify in the months ahead at national as well as EU level, as uncertainty remains about the outcome of the negotiations and the ratification of a possible deal.' Under such a scenario, Britain and the EU could do temporary deals, deferring 'no deal' problems, before permanent solutions are negotiated. France's finance minister said, 'There is something more important for us than the future of the UK, and that's the future of the EU.'

Pray: for an orderly transition as the UK leaves the European Union. (Psalm 85:10)

More: www.itv.com/news/2018-09-26/eu-ambassadors-gather-for-closed-session-to-discuss-impact-of-no-deal-brexit/

Greater Europe Mission UK (GEM UK)

GEM UK is part of a global mission, focused on reaching Europe by multiplying disciples and growing Christ's Church. They mobilise missionaries from the UK to serve as a catalyst throughout Europe (including the UK) to assist churches in their local vision in planting new communities, encouraging a culture of discipleship multiplication and resourcing them with the many skills their missionaries bring. Their heart is to see cities transformed by Christ and churches working together. GEM currently serves in 25 countries across Europe. In 2019 GEM Global will celebrate 70 years as a mission. A predominately non-Christian Welsh community use the phrase 'Iaith y Nefoedd' as a joke. It means 'everyone will speak Welsh in heaven.' The exact translation is 'the language of heaven.' Today GEM reaches the many forgotten Welsh people still using the Welsh language. See also the UK article 'The Welsh language'.

Pray: for God to bring revelation through every word spoken by His missionaries. (Romans 10:14)

More: www.globalconnections.org.uk/vocations/organisations/greater-europe-mission-uk-gem-uk

Worldwide

Intercessor Focus: Iran

70% of Iranians are under 30 and are the most politically active in the 57 Islamic nations. Iranians are eligible to vote from age 15. President Rouhani promised to improve Western ties, revitalise the economy and implement a civil rights charter. But soaring inflation due to damaging US sanctions has prompted Iranian youth to protest regularly against the regime. Pray for peaceful political changes. Although Iran has its own state-controlled Internet and doesn't support Twitter, Facebook, or Instagram, Iranian youth are internet-savvy and network the same as other teenagers - despite laws strictly forbidding it. Pray for Christian broadcasting in Farsi that is secretly reaching today's fast growing underground Church. Iran and Israel enjoyed good relations until Iran's Islamic revolution. May God's Spirit reignite a flame of peace between the nations. For over thirty years, there was a Star of David on the roof of Tehran airport's main terminal building. The symbol stood there in silence, until Google disclosed it: [see https://www.jpost.com/Jewish-World/Jewish-News/Tehran-Star-of-David-dome-destroyed](https://www.jpost.com/Jewish-World/Jewish-News/Tehran-Star-of-David-dome-destroyed)

(Linda Digby – Prayer Alert Team)

Pray: for the Church to multiply and mature despite persecution against non-Muslims. (Romans 10:9)

More:

South Africa: 'Uprising'

A youth prayer movement is springing up in the nations, and South Africa's 'Uprising' event (4 to 6 October) is about to ignite the spiritual atmosphere over South Africa. Their website states, 'We, the youth, are saying that we are uniting in prayer, rising as a body of young people, forming a revival wave, taking a stand, marching to the gates of Hell to give the devil back his surname and take our identity back. Black or white, every tribe, we are putting our differences aside and praying non-stop with every young person across South Africa, Africa and around the world, because where there is united prayer (Psalm 133:1-3) God is present, and where God is, there is hope, love, transformation and honour.' We can ask God to protect all delegates travelling to the event, and for the strength and stamina of organisers and speakers. Pray for consistent electricity and internet supplies into the venue to enable clear, far-reaching teaching and fluid unbroken worship.

Pray: for God to empower this generation's Kingdom Kids and Awesome Adolescents. (1 Cor. 4:20)

More: www.uprising-south-africa.org/our-vision.html

Mexico: more police under investigation

In June Ocampo's entire police force was arrested: [see](#) Now, in Acapulco, three senior police officers have been arrested, and all the police have been disarmed and replaced by the military while investigations are made into infiltration by drug gangs. With low pay and little training, police are easy targets for cartels. Last year there were 30,000+ murders involving bloodthirsty drug cartel rivalries. Two of the senior police officers arrested are accused of murder. There has been a military-led campaign to battle the

cartels for over ten years. The decision to act in Acapulco was the consequence of increased crime and lack of action by police to deal with it. The port city of Acapulco, once a glamorous beach resort, has been transformed by deep-rooted drug crime into one of the most murderous cities in the world. The area is a hub for opium poppy production.

Pray: for the army and the navy to disarm and remove all elements related to drugs. (Psalm 5:4,5)

More: www.aljazeera.com/news/2018/09/mexico-acapulco-police-investigation-drug-ties-180926053137555.html

China: Vatican deal

The Vatican and China have signed a provisional agreement to allow jointly-approved Catholic bishops in China for the first time. Some say it is a significant step towards re-establishing diplomatic relations between the two countries. But critics ask why the church, historically a defender of human rights and Christian values, would willingly join forces with the increasingly authoritarian atheist Chinese government. The agreement will allow the Holy See and the Chinese Patriotic Catholic Association to approve jointly the appointment of bishops in China. It comes at a time when religious persecution is escalating after the Chinese government issued new regulations forcing churches to display the national flag and the president's portrait, while at the same time removing crosses from buildings. See <http://worldwide-pa-site/item/10973-china-relentless-destruction-of-crosses>

Pray: for pastoral pacts not political ploys. May the many bishops who have 'disappeared' at the hands of the police be returned to their congregations. (Psalm 7:6b-8)

More: edition.cnn.com/2018/09/22/asia/vatican-china-bishops-intl/index.html

Maldives: army will guarantee election result

The British high commissioner tweeted on 26 September that Maldivians were 'looking forward to the election commission formally confirming the results of the presidential election on 23 September, so that an orderly transfer of power can begin'. However Abdulla Yameen, who was defeated, was 'preparing to annul' the vote that raised Ibrahim Mohamed Solih as president. The police and army said they will act to guarantee the election result. After Yameen conceded defeat on election day, political prisoners were released, exiled leaders said they planned to return, and media outlets that closed during his rule said they would re-open. His five-year term was marred by the arrest of scores of activists, opposition leaders being charged with trumped up terrorism offences, and sharp restrictions on free expression. Many are apprehensive and unwilling to believe that a leader who jailed political rivals and top judges will go willingly.

Pray: for a peaceful transition of power from Yameen to Solih. (Psalm 72:14)

More: www.theguardian.com/world/2018/sep/27/maldives-army-vows-to-uphold-election-result-amid-rumours-of-challenge

Dominica: two-way communication needed

Last year Hurricane Maria caused damage, deaths, and disruption to Dominica's communication networks for 65,000 people. Survivors needed to let aid providers know what they needed. When help arrived, it didn't meet people's needs. Dominicans described initial silence from aid providers. They were frightened by the lack of information after Maria struck. The first responders were amateur radio operators, civilian volunteers, and diaspora communities on social media. When information from national and international responders finally filtered through, it lacked detail; there were inaccuracies, communication delays, and rumours everywhere. People said they wanted to know what assistance they were entitled to and how decisions were made. But fragmented, late, confusing information in the wrong language left people in the dark. As Hurricane Florence and Typhoon Mangkhut remind us of the devastation large storms can cause, there is a need to make two-way communication a priority in the aid response effort, so that more lives are saved in the future.

Pray: for international standardised networking that avoids delays and confusion. (Proverbs 11:25)

More: www.irinnews.org/opinion/2018/09/17/lesson-hurricane-maria-communicate

Saudi Arabia unstable

Saudi Arabia's stability is becoming fragile as the judgment and competence of Mohammed bin Salman, the young crown prince, are questioned. The kingdom has been stable since 1964, and there was a smooth transition when Salman became king in 2015. However, Prince Muqrin, next in the line of succession, was recently removed with no explanation, in favour of Mohammed bin Salman. He has a track record of impulsive and reckless decisions at home and abroad, which call into question the kingdom's future. The changes have alienated significant parts of the family. The crown prince's signature initiative is the war in Yemen, now in its fourth year with no end in sight. The Royal Saudi Air Force has wrecked Yemen's feeble infrastructure and attacked civilians. One observer said Yemen is now in a death channel. See <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-6197679/DAVID-MILIBAND-UK-not-let-Yemen-Afghanistan.html> The kingdom is unpredictable, and the Trump administration financially supports the Yemen war with a blank cheque.

Pray: for God to change the spiritual atmosphere over the area. (Isaiah 2:4a)

More: www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2018/09/saudi-arabia-stability-crown-prince-mohammed-bin-salman.html

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