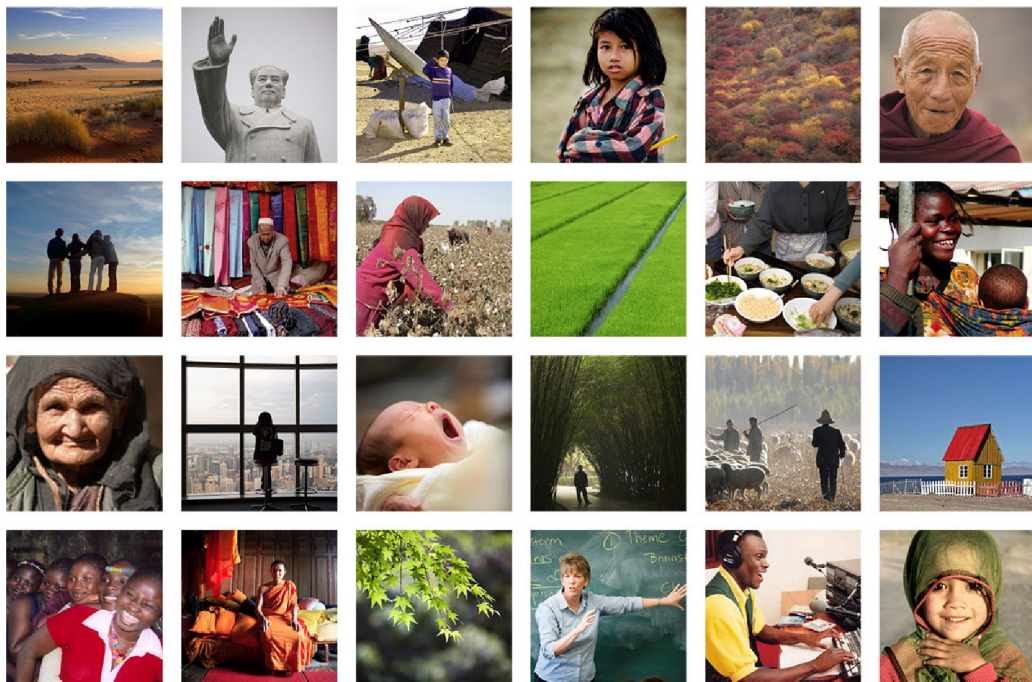




World Prayer News

A guide to help you pray for people around the world

May - June 2020



www.globalconnections.org.uk/



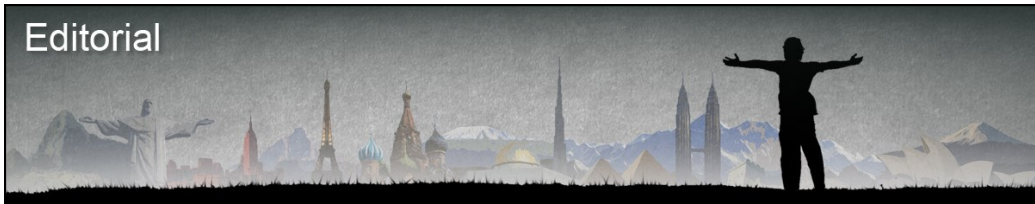
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**Global
Connections**



God gives the increase

Recently I stepped down from my leadership position at the European Christian Mission. This was at the end of a life in cross-cultural mission that had taken me to OM ships, OMF International and a spell as the Chair of the Board of Global Connections.

From the beginning, there have been several prayer partners who have stayed the course with myself and my family. They have faithfully received and prayed for the issues raised in our regular newsletters. Some of them have told me that they have diligently prayed for us every day. Without them, would we have survived in the hurly-burly world of international mission where things have sometimes not worked out as one would have liked? There is no doubt that in the many partnerships that most cross-cultural workers have, the prayer support is an essential foundation and a key relationship.

This is not surprising. In the Lord's prayer we pray 'your kingdom come'. Here, there is a link between the prayer of the righteous for people involved in mission who are working, by faith, to see the kingdom of God arrive in every community around the world. Our prayer partners are fully involved in this effort.

All of this illustrates the teaching that Paul outlines in 1 Corinthians 3: "What, after all, is Apollos? And what is Paul? Only servants, through whom you came to believe – as the Lord has assigned to each his task. I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God has been making it grow." So, neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God who makes things grow. The one who plants and the one who waters have one purpose, and they will each be rewarded according to their own labour. For we are co-workers in God's service; you are God's field, God's building."

Our prayer partners have faithfully carried out their assigned task and, as we have reflected on the many answers to prayer over the years, we are certain that it is God who has brought the growth. At times, it has seemed that this has been typical of the God whom we worship. He has increased the prayers thirty-fold, sixty-fold, and a hundred-fold, and given grace upon grace. So much more than we either expected or even deserved!

Chris Wigram

Former International Director,
European Christian Mission

During this time of crisis, whilst we recognise more than ever the need to be praying for the needs of the world, we may not be able to continue to send this prayer guide by post. It will be available online or we can send it by email. Please also note that we are unable to send multiple copies via post at this time. If you do require additional copies or if you can receive future copies by email, please email info@globalconnections.org.uk.

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Global Connections, Caswell Road, Leamington Spa, CV31 1QD

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Pray for Northern Africa and the Middle East



1. Muslim World

The *30 Days of Prayer for the Muslim World* is an international movement that began in 1993. It calls the church to make a deliberate but respectful effort to learn about, pray for, and reach out to our world's Muslim neighbours. It coincides annually with the important Islamic month of religious observation – Ramadan, a time of the year when Muslims are much more deeply aware of spiritual matters. Join the millions of Christians around the world, and churches and ministries from many denominations, who regularly participate in this largest ongoing prayer focus on the Muslim world. A new, full-colour prayer guide booklet – available each year in both adult and kids versions – is a proven tool to help Christians to understand and to persistently pray for Muslim neighbours and nations. Pray that many Muslims will have an encounter with Jesus during Ramadan this year.

Copies of *30 Days of Prayer for the Muslim World* Prayer Guide can be ordered from Global Connections or www.30daysprayer.com.

2. Middle East and North Africa

The coronavirus pandemic has had a huge impact on many Muslim countries, affecting Frontiers workers and those they seek to reach among many of the unengaged Muslim people groups in the world. Muslim communities are suffering from fear, anxiety and loneliness. Many teams have stayed on the field and are encountering unprecedented opportunities to proclaim the gospel, as Muslims ask questions about life and death. Pray that God will use these days of uncertainty to draw even more Muslims to Jesus. Pray that God will sustain and protect workers as they offer comfort to those around them and boldly share the everlasting hope and perfect peace of Christ. (Frontiers)

3. Lebanon

Please pray for a drama team in Lebanon as throughout the coronavirus lockdown, they have been doing a lot of online work: the team are answering messages about faith in French, Arabic, and English. Many people have had a lot more time to be on the internet, so please pray for spiritual fruit from good conversations. There is a new online Sunday School resource for Arabic speaking churches so pray that it blesses the children and churches receiving it. Pray for the plans to share the gospel through future events and activities for schools. (AWM Pioneers)

4. Iran

Christians in Iran are requesting prayer for the Islamic Republic's efforts to stop the spread of coronavirus. As part of this effort, the state has begun releasing crowds of prisoners which include persecuted Christians. It is reported that 70,000 people are expected to be released, and Christian charities are aware that some of these are Christians, so pray that many will be released. (Interserve)

5. Middle East and North Africa

Since the Middle East and North Africa have gone into lockdown, our Nisa'a team has been supporting families across the region. Nisa'a provides an online women's magazine that reaches into 10 countries and with face-to-face workshops to support vulnerable women. The team are now looking to resume the 'Heart Story' workshops, but online. These workshops give vulnerable women a chance to express their needs and stories in a safe space; often the only chance they have to be themselves and to be vulnerable. Join with us in praying for the Nisa'a team and all the women they support across the region. (Middle East Media)

Pray for Europe



6. United Kingdom

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, universities across the UK have been closed and international travel has been restricted. This has led to tough circumstances for international students who have come to UK universities from abroad. Some have become stuck in the UK and many who have lost their part-time employment are unable to fund their studies anymore. Please pray for those who are stranded and vulnerable at this time. Pray that Christians would use innovative ways online to reach out and support these students at this difficult time. (Friends International)

7. Ukraine

International Aid Trust gives thanks for local churches such as God's House at Klehivka, who reach out to, and support their local communities throughout the year, including after-school and holiday clubs for children. We pray for an end to the coronavirus lockdown before the summer so that holiday clubs and camps can happen and many children and young people can hear the gospel. (International Aid Trust)

8. Slovenia

Please pray for the coronavirus situation here: as Slovenia borders Italy, there is a real danger of a large outbreak. A youth conference in March was cancelled due to restrictions against gatherings of over a hundred people. Please pray that the work would continue and that we would keep trusting God. (European Christian Mission)

9. United Kingdom

Christian Witness to Israel (CWI) continues to reach out to Jewish people around the world. In the midst of the coronavirus pandemic and country-wide lockdowns, the Good News is being shared with Jewish people as they ask questions about death, suffering and human mortality. CWI missionaries have been providing answers to these questions by staying in regular touch with their Jewish contacts, most of whom are also in self-isolation, by phone and online. We have been conducting Bible studies and sharing the gospel in conversation, as well as safely distributing food parcels to addicts, the homeless, and Holocaust survivors in Israel. Please pray for all the Jewish people we are reaching out to at this time, asking that many will turn to Jesus as their Saviour. (Christian Witness to Israel)

10. France

Please pray for the ongoing and longer-term impact of COVID-19 on France. The country has been hard hit and there will certainly be significant challenges ahead, even once the worst of the pandemic is over. Please pray particularly for the reputation of evangelical churches in France: a significant number of the initial cases of COVID-19 were traced back to a large evangelical gathering that took place in the French city of Mulhouse (near the border with Switzerland and Germany) in February before any restrictions were announced by the French authorities. Pastors and church members have subsequently been unfairly stigmatised in the press and even subjected to threats (including death threats). Ask the Lord to supply his peace and protection. (France Mission)

Pray for Sub-Saharan Africa



11. Sierra Leone

International Aid Trust gives thanks for the outreach from New Hope Church, which takes the gospel to the surrounding villages, and also for the medical care that is part of the outreach. Please pray for good health and protection from the coronavirus in this very poor area, pray that the teaching about handwashing and social distancing will help keep people safe. (International Aid Trust)

12. West Africa

No one, nor any situation, can stop the advancement of the kingdom of God. Despite the persecution faced from terrorist attacks in Burkina Faso and the condemnations in Algeria, many people are turning to our Lord Jesus Christ and being baptised. And when the light comes, the darkness has to leave. Therefore, beloved, do not be afraid or discouraged. The Lord our God is with us and not one of his sheep will be lost. Pray for those persecuted for their Christian faith. (World Outreach International)

13. Mozambique

The Leprosy Mission in Mozambique works in close cooperation with the Health Department in support of the Leprosy Control project in the province of Cabo Delgado. There are also strong links with community partners, including community volunteers and self-care groups. People affected by leprosy and their communities are best-placed to resolve many of their own problems. The *Community Value Chain* project works to give communities the tools and skills to do this. Pray that this will contribute to transformation in those communities. (The Leprosy Mission International)

14. Africa

Due to the COVID-19 crisis, many African governments have now closed down public gatherings, including churches. Many Christian radio stations are providing free airtime to pastors; radio dramas are being produced for oral cultures on the topic of the prevention of the coronavirus; some are setting up helplines for their communities to help the most vulnerable. One partner station has opened up airtime to the Muslim community to give advice to their followers, not allowing them to preach Islam but as a way of showing love to the whole community. Pray that many people will witness these as salt and light and begin a journey with Christ. (Reach Beyond)

15. Africa

Praise God for the expertise of HEAL Africa staff in treating Shabani, a boy with life-threatening burns. Thank God that the hospital's Mercy Fund meant that he could get the treatment he urgently needed, free of charge. Pray he would be recovering well from his operation. (WorldShare)

16. Malawi

Please pray for the Starfish teams in the UK and Malawi as they wrestle with the impact that the coronavirus is likely to have on the work of the charity. Fundraising events in the UK are already being cancelled or postponed, with the effect of decreased income for this year. Projects such as *Bible Explorer* in Malawi, have already been affected as the schools and nurseries have been closed. Please pray for wisdom in deploying staff onto other projects. (Starfish Malawi)

Pray for the Americas



17. Argentina

In March, the Argentine Bible Society helped run another workshop for potential translators for the Bermejo Wichi New Testament. The intention was to hold several more workshops in neighbouring zones before taking decisions about the team of (probably six) translators, but this is now on hold because of the coronavirus lockdown. It is not yet clear whether the annual training courses in Juarez in May or Misión La Paz in June will be able to go ahead. Pray for the Lord to open up the way for what he wants to happen this year, and for good decisions about what events to suspend. (Church Mission Society)

18. Paraguay

People belonging to most of the indigenous groups in Paraguay live and die with almost no access to God's good news. SIM is partnering with other mission agencies to record scriptures in the heart language of these communities. Pray for these workers and for the ministry teams being sent to disciple and train believers. (SIM-UK)

19. Brazil (1)

Betel's mission is to bring long-term freedom and restoration to lives broken by drug and alcohol abuse through building values, skills and character – living, working and worshipping together in a caring Christian community. Betel in São Paulo, Brazil, is strong and prospering. They are planning to develop a new business in the nearest large town, with the goal of establishing a new residential facility and a second church. Pray that God will make this possible. (WEC International)

20. Brazil (2)

Phil Rout, Latin Link member in São Paulo, Brazil, writes: "Social distancing measures seem to be having the desired effect. About half of the deaths (in Brazil) have occurred here in São Paulo state, as São Paulo city is the epicentre of the virus in Brazil. However, it is difficult to be sure what the real situation is, because rates of testing are still very low.

"Brazil's public health system is rather precarious, and some cities and states recently announced that they have reached capacity and now have people waiting for beds in intensive care. It is very worrying to think what might happen to the most vulnerable in society – our church has been taking food out to the streets every day to feed the homeless."

Please pray for: Brazil's leaders, for God to give them wisdom and make the right decisions. Also pray for Christians in Brazil, that they would discern opportunities to share the hope that we all have in Jesus, at a time when many are very fearful or are struggling to cope. (Latin Link)

21. Guatemala

As all of WorldShare's ministry partners face restrictions due to COVID-19, please pray that God would help them to make wise decisions to ensure that their beneficiaries are safely cared for.

Please ask God to protect the vulnerable in Guatemala. Due to a general quarantine, Potter's House have had to close their doors, meaning many will be without food and support. (Worldshare)

Pray for Southern and Central Asia



22. India (1)

At Santhosha Vanam, the boarding school attached to the Dohnavur Fellowship, nearly 100 children are there along with staff and a small number of parents, who got stuck as a result of the sudden coronavirus lockdown. Some children have been stranded on their way back home. There is an organisation called MUT (Missionaries Upholders Trust) which takes care of such children and parents and they are now under their care. (The Dohnavur Fellowship)

23. Southern Asia (1)

Life as a widow can be so difficult, but in many places in Asia, becoming a widow is like living in hell on earth. Society often believes widows have sinned in some horrible way which resulted in their husbands' deaths, and, as a result, widows can be labelled as cursed and rejected as outcasts. Pray that widows will be able to grieve their husbands' deaths, and for God to provide for each widow's needs. Pray each widow will find hope and the joy of Jesus for her and her children's future. (GFA World)

24. India (2)

Please give thanks for our team in India seeking to share Jesus's love with people living in great poverty. Pray for God's help and provision as they seek to support daily wage earners unable to work during the lockdown. Pray for Christians to keep growing in faith day-by-day, even when meeting together is difficult. (International Aid Trust)

25. Sri Lanka

Remember those who are suffering from the impacts of natural hazards, conflicts, and ongoing crises, and are facing, or recovering from crises. On Easter Sunday in 2019, suicide bombers killed 259 people in Sri Lanka's capital, Colombo. BMS' partner continues to help those who were affected, particularly children, with psychosocial support. Remember Sri Lanka and pray that the country will know God's peace and presence, and be united. (BMS World Mission)

26. Southern Asia (2)

The COVID-19 pandemic is like an evil tidal wave, rushing around the world, bringing death and untold destruction wherever it lands. As we watch the news and see with horror the estimates of the number of people who might die in the UK, we know that India and South Asia are just now at the start of what promises to be a nightmare.

Our hearts are broken for what we see today – and for what we know is just around the corner. Already, we see that the limited medical resources will be overwhelmed – but what is most heart-breaking is to know that before long, the most immediate danger for millions will be the prospect of starvation.

In the middle of a 21-day lockdown and with proper approval from their local governing authorities, our brothers and sisters serving in Asia are walking the streets, being God's hands and feet to the poorest and most disadvantaged people in their communities.

Please keep our brothers and sisters serving in Asia in your prayers as they continue to seek ways to help the most disadvantaged people suffering because of the COVID-19 pandemic. (GFA World)

Pray for Eastern Asia and Oceania



27. China

Persecution of Christians in China has risen since 2018, when China imposed tough religious restrictions. Freedom of faith is guaranteed under the constitution but in practice, the authorities bulldoze churches, tear down crosses and imprison pastors. It used to be only unofficial churches that were targeted, but now China is destroying state-registered churches and persecuting their pastors. Prayer meetings in homes and the sharing of religious messages with children are banned. Please pray for strength for the Church in China in this era of growing repression.

(Release International)

28. Japan

The church in Japan is small and ageing rapidly. Many church leaders are well past retirement age, but feel obliged to continue due to the lack of younger leaders/trainees. Please pray for their health and that they will be good witnesses to younger people. Pray for young people to become the church leaders and evangelists of the future. Christians in churches in rural areas in Japan can feel very isolated as churches and other Christians are few and far between. There can be significant pressure to conform to Japan's religious traditions of Buddhism and Shintoism, which tend to be much stronger in these areas. Pray for revival – for Christians in rural areas to find fellowship and for spiritual strongholds held by Buddhism and Shintoism to be broken.

(Japan Christian Link)

29. Thailand

On the border of Thailand and Myanmar lie several refugee camps, some of which have been there for decades and which house up to 100,000 people. These camps are primitive and the people who live in them are reliant upon

supplies being brought to them on a regular basis. Curfews and travel restrictions between provinces in Thailand are creating a situation which, if not addressed, will result in a massive shortage of basic necessities and food for these people. Pray that authorities will recognise what could become a bigger problem than the coronavirus itself, and relax measures in order that food and water can be made available within the camps. Pray for Christian people within the camps that they would be able to find ways of showing the love of Jesus to those who are in need. (AsiaLink)

30. Myanmar

There are still some 600,000 Rohingya living in Myanmar who need our prayers. A new radio programme made for them was broadcast recently, called 'Navigating Wisely Through Life's Challenges'; a result of consultations with Rohingya families on health, welfare, and peace and reconciliation. These will be also loaded onto 3,000 memory cards to be given to mobile phone users. Pray for impact among this unreached group. (Reach Beyond)

31. China

China is returning to "normal" life after the coronavirus. In many parts, this is a return to the usual; in some parts there are still restrictions and many small businesses will struggle to re-open due to the loss of income. There is no sign the government is relaxing its restrictions on the church and on Christians. So, economic challenges are added to pressure on students to complete studies after schools were closed and Christians still face the pressure to deny they belong to Christ. Please pray for the Christians to continue to walk with him, to share his life and for his church to continue to grow and increase his Kingdom on earth. (Chinese Church Support Ministries)