

PRAYER ALERT...

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BRITISH ISLES & IRELAND

■ Violence in schools

Tens of thousands of school pupils were suspended from English schools last year for attacking their teachers or classmates. Almost 17,000 of these suspensions involved primary school pupils aged 11 and under, and over 63,000 of them involved children in secondary schools. The Department for Education's statistics also revealed that there were 1,240 cases of children aged four and under being suspended for a variety of reasons during 2008/09. According to the report, boys are three times more likely to be suspended than girls, and three and a half times more likely to be permanently excluded. Schools minister Nick Gibb has responded by reiterating the Government's commitment to improving behaviour in schools and raising academic standards. He said: 'We will introduce further measures to strengthen teacher authority and support schools in maintaining good behaviour'. In February a survey revealed that one in four parents avoid disciplining their children because they want an 'easy life' and fear upsetting them.

Pray: that all families of disaffected pupils are granted strength to instil respect for those in authority. (Ex.20:12)

More: <http://www.christian.org.uk/news/over-80000-suspensions-for-violence-at-school/>

■ 11 and 12-year-olds on the pill

Over 1,000 girls in the first year of secondary school were prescribed the contraceptive pill last year, according to new figures. This represents a fivefold increase in the past decade, and critics are concerned about the increasing sexualization of the nation's children. The figures, from the General Practice Research Database, also revealed that 200 girls between the ages of 11 and 13 were prescribed long-term implanted or injectable contraceptives last year. Dr Trevor Stammers, a GP and chairman of the Christian Medical Fellowship, said: 'These figures illustrate the fact that the UK is facilitating the sexualisation of young people at an ever younger age'. If sex education is introduced in primary schools in the way being proposed, we will see many more 11-year-olds seeking contraception and if we pay GPs to give out contraception without pointing out the risks we are going to make matters worse'.

Pray: for our youngsters, and for guidance and support to resist the sexualisation of the young. (Ps.34:11)

More: <http://www.christian.org.uk/news/more-than-1000-11-and-12-year-olds-are-on-the-pill/>

■ Campaign to stop funding NHS Chaplains

The NHS should stop funding chaplaincy services and put the money towards frontline services instead, it has been claimed. A campaign has been launched to persuade the Welsh Assembly Government to set up a charitable trust to fund religious and faith services for patients. Alan Rogers, a member of the National Secular Society, believes that NHS money would be better spent on clinical services for patients. His comments come as the NHS in Wales is facing the prospect of making savings of £1.9bn over the next five years. The NHS currently spends £1.3m a year on chaplaincy services across Wales and 33.83 whole time equivalent staff are employed in this area. Unite, which represents NHS chaplains, said they

are as much a part of the health service as physiotherapists. Mr Rogers' campaign comes after Health Minister Edwina Hart issued fresh guidance and new standards to the NHS to ensure patients have access to spiritual and religious support.

Pray: for the continued availability of hospital chaplains to those in need, however funded. (Mt.10:1)

More: <http://www.walesonline.co.uk/news/health-news/2010/07/28/welsh-secular-campaigner-urges-nhs-to-stop-funding-chaplains-91466-26944766/>

■ **OECD: Britain is the European capital of broken homes**

An international report exposes Britain's moral failure on family values. The study found we have the worst record on teenage pregnancy in Europe with more children living in one-parent families than any other European country. More of our single mothers are unemployed and on benefit than anywhere else on the continent, largely because we hand out so much in benefits. Britain's rates for divorce and out-of-wedlock births are among the highest in the Western world, and our mothers are among the oldest, putting their health and that of their baby at risk. Critics said the UK is paying the price for its promotion of sex education to ever younger children and that, since the permissive society of the 1960s, so few value the institution of marriage. The OECD's gloomy report is the first to highlight Britain's poor record.

Pray: that your church's voice is strong in persuading the nation that the family unit is the cornerstone of society. (Ps.119:130)

More: <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1297268/Britain-European-capital-broken-homes.html?ITO=1490>

■ **DEC Pakistan floods appeal**

The Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC) has publicly announced the launch of the 'DEC Pakistan Floods Appeal' in response to the monsoon catastrophe. Special broadcasts began yesterday on the BBC, ITV, Sky, Channel 4, Channel Five and independent radio stations and will continue. The money raised will help fund the life-saving work in Pakistan of the DEC's members and their partners. Responses to the Pakistan Floods Appeal are being made by all the DEC agencies, namely: ActionAid, Age UK, British Red Cross, CARE International UK, CAFOD, Christian Aid, Concern, Islamic Relief, Merlin, Oxfam, Save the Children, Tearfund and World Vision. The special broadcasts will be presented by well-known figures and mark the formal launch of the Appeal. Automated telephone lines and the DEC website, SMS, post and over the over-the-counter donations at Post Offices and banks are open for donations. The automated donation line is 0370 60 60 900 and website www.dec.org.uk (See also World Article following.)

Pray: for a huge response from the British people to alleviate this humanitarian disaster. (Ac.20:35)

More: <http://www.ekklesia.co.uk/node/12779>

■ **CMS Ireland appoints new Mission Director**

Church Missionary Society (CMS) Ireland is delighted to announce the appointment of Ronnie Briggs to the post of Mission Director. Ronnie has previously worked as part of the staff team, but for much of his 30 years with CMS Ireland, he and his wife Maggie have served as Mission Partners, working alongside the Church in Kajiado Diocese, Kenya. Ronnie brings to the role a genuine passion for mission, a wealth of experience of the Global Church and an intimate knowledge of the unfolding story of CMS Ireland. Speaking about this important and strategic appointment, the Chair of CMS Ireland's Board of Trustees, Clifford McSpadden remarked: 'We're thrilled with this appointment and we really look forward to Ronnie joining the team and helping to lead the Society at a time when God is doing new and exciting things, both in Ireland and with our Global Partners in Africa and Asia. We thank God for this answer to prayer.'

Pray: for Ronnie as he takes up this important post. (Isa.48:15)

More: <http://ireland.anglican.org/index.php?do=news&newsid=3119>

■ **Christian group opposes marriage equality for homosexuals**

The Head of a Christian advocacy group says Christians must resist attempts to broaden the definition of marriage. However, Simon Hughes, Deputy Liberal Democrat leader, and who is a Christian and admitted previously to being bisexual, said he believed the Government would make it possible for the term 'civil marriage' to apply to same-sex couples before the next General Election. 'It would be appropriate in Britain in 2010 and 2011 for there to be the possibility of civil marriage for straight people and gay people equally,' he said, adding 'That's different of course from faith ceremonies which are matters for the faith communities they have to decide what recognition to give.' Andrea Minichiello Williams, barrister and director of Christian Concern for Our Nation, said: 'We should resist this attempt to undermine marriage at the heart of our society and fight to retain the traditional status of marriage as that between a man and a woman.'

Pray: that the explicit purposes of matrimony being procreative and unitive are recognised by all. (1Co.16:13)

More: <http://www.christiantoday.com/article/christian.group.opposes.marriage.equality.for.homosexuals/26350.htm>

EUROPE

■ **God's time for Greece**

The bravery and courage of ancient Spartans is legendary. The name conjures up visions of fearless soldiers charging into battle without thought of life or limb. The word 'spartan' has crept into the English language to describe conditions that are at the opposite extreme from comfortable and luxurious. For the past week Sparta has been the epicentre of a missionary outreach that has reached and touched thousands of homes through a team of 180 from countries as diverse as Canada, Romania, Italy, South Africa, Germany, the Netherlands, the USA and Albania. In all 60,000 households received a copy of the New Testament in contemporary Greek as part of a project called Operation Joshua. One participant described it as a

'Tsunami of blessing' as energetic teams using some 50 cars, criss-crossed the sparse and mountainous region. They have gone to over 800 villages in some of the remotest areas of Greece bringing the message of life.

Pray: that the blessings thus achieved in Sparta will take root and prosper. (Lk.13:19)

More: <http://www.christiantoday.com/article/gods.time.for.greece/26430.htm>

■ **Spain: Judge forced to return salary over gay adoption**

Spanish Judge Fernando Ferrin Calamita has been suspended for ten years and ordered to return his salary of about 100,000 euros to the government because he delayed a decision to allow a lesbian to adopt her partner's child. He must also pay the couple more than 5,000 euros in compensation and pay another fine of \$700. Calamita was found guilty of obstructing the adoption process when he denied the lesbian's request to adopt the child while waiting for a report on the impact of same-sex families on children. He was initially suspended for two years from the practice, but the Supreme Court in December 2009 increased the suspension to 10 years. 'The powerful Spanish homosexual lobby, with the consent or passivity of all the institutions, decided to punish Ferrin and make him an example,' commented the conservative Spain-based Professionals for Ethics, according to the Catholic News Agency.

Pray: for Judge Calamita to be reinstated with his reputation intact. (Job 5:4)

More: <http://www.christiantoday.com/article/spain.orders.judge.to.return.salary.over.gay.adoption.trial/26383.htm>

WORLDWIDE

■ **Pakistan: Discrimination against Christian communities**

We have been asked to pray for Christian communities in flood disaster areas who are not receiving aid due to religious discrimination. A trusted source said, 'Things in the West province Khyber Puktoonkhaw are quite bad. The province was already hit badly due to the war against terrorism with military action continuing in some areas. Millions of people are displaced, have lost their houses, businesses and loved ones, and more rains are to be expected. Just in this one province 1300 Christian families have lost all. I have reports that they have been moved into some mission schools in Peshawar and they would need assistance with basic items of life. I know the government is trying to send aid but the devastation is quite huge. Christians already are marginalized and when the aid is given by the government normally it does not reach them due to the discriminatory behaviour and nature of the majority, which adds to their misery. Please pray also for fair distribution of aid in the Punjab and Baluchistan province'.

Pray: for God's mercy and grace to provide all that is needed in this terrible disaster. (Ps.31:1)

■ **INSIGHT ARTICLE Kenya: Pray this weekend for peace**

Kenya's President appealed for peace as Kenyans vote this weekend on a draft constitution intended to limit the powers of the president and set up a commission to settle land disputes that fuelled past violence. Pastor D.S.W. writes, 'Put our nation Kenya in the hands of God. The leadership is not united. There is much tension towards the referendum and much frustration among tribes receiving letters telling them to leave where they are staying just because of land. This happened during the 2007 election and stirred fighting which resulted in many people being killed. Please pray for us. Spiritually as Christians we are praying and serving God as he called us to be His ambassadors among the nations.' President Mwai Kibaki and former President Daniel Arap Moi, who opposes the draft, have delivered hate speech during the campaign. This INSIGHT article gives some background information to assist prayers.

Pray: for God to drench Kenya with joyful passions and positive anticipation; and for the Kenyan Church to become a symbol of unity. (Ps.131)

Info: <http://www.prayer-alert.net/info/Kenyareferendum2.pdf>

■ **Rwanda: News media closed prior to election**

A week before the Rwandan presidential election the authorities have violated press freedom by jailing journalists and closing news media. Also a newspaper editor was murdered last month. The repressive measures intensified prior to the election with the suspension of 30 news media outlets. By excluding them from an approved government list Rwanda's leading newspapers and radio stations have been banned. 'The Media High Council's measures just before the election are highly suspect,' Reporters Without Borders said. 'They aim to prevent journalists from doing their job as independent and impartial observers of the election process.' Meanwhile, in the first workshop for Rwandan Christian youth, 300 believers were told, 'You are the future leaders of this country and what you do now determines how and where this country will be in the future. Help your families regarding peace building which will lead to the development of Rwanda.' See:

<http://allafrica.com/stories/201008030002.html>

Pray: that God's purposes for the country will overcome any adversity. (Ps.37:18-19)

More: <http://en.rsf.org/rwanda-around-30-news-media-closed-a-few-02-08-2010,38076.html>

■ **Iran: Authorities arrest 15 Christian converts**

A pre-planned and coordinated attack by security forces on a bus full of Christians in the city of Mashhad resulted in all the occupants being arrested. They were travelling to join fellow believers when security forces arrested and transferred them to a central detention centre. After a week of inhumane interrogations 13 were freed on bail. Stephen Reza and Ehsan Behrooz remain detained. Ehsan Behrooz is a university student and an active member of the Assemblies of God church in Mashhad. Mr. Reza is married with two children. Mashhad city is a centre of pilgrimage and despite Muslim clerics claims of

having full control over the minds of locals, evidence shows that God has been doing a wonderful work in the minds and the hearts of the people of this great Islamic centre as many people have come to faith in Jesus Christ in the last few years.

Pray: [the Holy Spirit to keep in perfect peace these and other detained Christians in Iran. \(SS.4:16\)](#)

More: <http://www.cbn.com/cbnnews/world/2010/August/Iran-Arrests-15-Christian-Converts/>

■ **Kyrgyzstan: Six more churches attacked and robbed**

Following news that an Evangelical church in Bishkek, the capital of Kyrgyzstan, was robbed three weeks ago, comes news that six other churches in the city have since been attacked. Sending details of the original attack Jed Courley the church's pastor said 'At about 1am in the morning four men climbed over the fence and broke into the back door of the church. A parishioner called Valya was badly beaten, tied up with tape, and then beaten more when very little money was found. Rooms trashed, safe demolished. Some music equipment, a computer, and other things were taken. Since our church was robbed we have heard of six other churches who were robbed recently and a couple of other people also beaten in the process. The police are doing nothing. In one case, they never even arrived on the scene. Please pray against these obvious attacks of the enemy.'

Pray: [this escalation of violence against Christians will end and for no retributions to be considered. \(Ps.119:86\)](#)

More: <http://www.assistnews.net/STORIES/2010/s10080004.htm>

■ **USA: Petitions to stop Ground Zero Mosque**

A conservative group is preparing legal action to challenge last Tuesday's vote that cleared the way for a mosque to be built near the site of the Sept. 11 attacks. The American Center for Law and Justice is representing New York City fire-fighter Timothy Brown, a first responder who survived the 2001 terrorist attacks but lost nearly 100 friends. It is planning to file a petition in state court alleging that there has been an abuse of discretion in the Landmarks Preservation Commission's decision. The city commission voted 9-0 Tuesday to deny landmark status to a building on Park Place that a Muslim group wants to convert into a mosque and Islamic community centre. Landmark status would have made it difficult for the group to build the centre there. (See Prayer Alert 2410) Thousands have protested the proposed 'mega mosque,' arguing that an Islamic centre just two blocks away from Ground Zero is insensitive and insulting to the families of the 9/11 victims.

Pray: [for God to weave His purposes into the atmosphere over and on Ground Zero. \(Ps.2:1\)](#)

More: <http://www.christianpost.com/article/20100804/acj-petitions-to-stop-ground-zero-mosque/index.html>

PRAISE REPORTS

■ **Shop manager dissuades would-be armed robber**

A 20-year-old Christian mobile phone shop manager in Florida stopped a would-be armed robber by preaching to him about Jesus. Nayara Goncalves spent nearly five minutes persuading the man that he was doing the wrong thing. The man eventually apologised, explained his gun was a replica and left the shop in Broward County. 'She was able to remain calm and keep him calm,' a sheriff's office spokeswoman said. During the incident on 23 July, Ms Goncalves told the would-be robber: 'I'm just going to talk with you about Jesus.' The man said he was a Christian and was 'embarrassed' to be doing what he was doing but that he needed \$300 (£190) to avoid being evicted.

Praise: [God for Nayara and the initiative of the Holy Spirit. \(Ac.4:29\)](#)

More: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/mobile/world-us-canada-10822923?SThisFB>

■ **Billionaires to give away over half their fortunes**

Forty of USA's richest people pledged on Wednesday to donate over half of their fortunes to charity as part of 'The Giving Pledge' campaign organised by Microsoft co-founder Bill Gates and legendary investor Warren Buffet. The group includes CNN founder Ted Turner, New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg, Oracle co-founder Larry Ellison and Hollywood director George Lucas, as well as Microsoft mogul Gates and investment guru Buffett. The idea, which was announced just six weeks ago as 'The Giving Pledge,' is to convince billionaires across the country to give up most of their money - 50 percent or more - to charity. 'The pledge is a moral commitment to give, not a legal contract,' a statement released Wednesday said by www.givingpledge.org

Praise: [God for the generosity of these people and pray that their gifts will bless the most needy. \(2Cor.9:11-12\)](#)

More: <http://www.france24.com/en/20100804-us-billionaires-pledge-massive-donations-charity-warren-buffet-bill%20gates>

PRAYER FORUM OF BRITISH ISLES & IRELAND

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