

October 2018 Prayer Items

Kenya—Three Christians were stoned to death in Mandera, Kenya near the Somali border by a crowd of Muslims sympathetic to Al-Shabaab. The stoning is thought to be in retaliation for the discovery of the bodies of three Al-Shabaab militants found just outside the town a few days earlier. This attack comes just four months after Al-Shabaab militants killed four non-local workers in the town and an overall increase in violence by Muslims across the country. Over 200 Christians have been killed by Islamist militants in Kenya over the past three years. Please pray for the families of those killed and for the attackers, that their hearts would be changed through a saving faith in Jesus Christ. (*Source: International Christian Concern*)

Iran—Naser Navard Gol-Tapeh, an Iranian convert to Christianity, is currently serving a 10 year prison sentence at Iran's infamous Evin Prison. He has been charged with carrying out "missionary activities" through his involvement with Iranian house churches which the theocratic regime considers a "threat to national security." In response to this clear injustice, Naser has written an open letter to the Iranian regime questioning how his participation in a house church could possibly be a threat to national security. Those close to him have also reported that through his imprisonment, he has had the opportunity to share the Gospel in new ways and has led several inmates to faith in Christ. Please pray that God will continue to strengthen Naser and use his unique placement to continue to advance the cause of Christ. Also pray for the people of Iran, many of whom have a desire to learn more about Jesus but do not have ready access to Bibles or sound teaching. (*Source: Open Doors USA*)

Democratic Republic of Congo—The DRC may be headed toward another civil war as current dictator Joseph Kabila is set to step down from power following this December's upcoming elections. The central African country has been wracked in past decades by violence and civil war, most recently the 1998-2003 civil war which left over 5 million people dead and millions more displaced. None of those seeking to replace Kabila appear to offer any real hope of change in direction. However, Fred Bauma, leader of non violent LUCHA group has been a leading proponent of non-violent forms of political protest. Please pray that this non-violent movement takes hold across the country and that the Congolese people recognize alternatives to violence, lest the country descend once again into conflict. (*Source: The Economist*)

Canada—Toronto has been described as a hub for Canada's human trafficking trade. Last year saw 885 reported cases but the actual number is thought to be much higher. Recently however, a former victim "Timea," who was trafficked to Canada from Hungary but managed to escape, has been fighting back against this trade. In addition to establishing a shelter for women escaping sex trafficking, she has been an effective in coordinating efforts between Canadian police and Canada's financial institutions in tracking down those who carry out this trade. Please pray that Timea's efforts will continue to yield results, that victims of this evil practice will be delivered and the perpetrators will be brought to justice. (*Source: The Economist*)

West Bank—Nuns at a Coptic Orthodox church and convent are awaiting the results of three cases involving assault by a family illegally occupying a portion of the church since 1998. The family involved in the attacks is said to have influential connections within the Palestinian Authority and are said to be wielding that influence to continually delay the court proceedings. We join with Middle East Concern in praying that "the hearings will take place without further delay and that fair and impartial judgements will be given, the judges and court officials will not be prejudiced against the Egyptian

nuns, the Ministry of Finance will complete the survey of the properties in the old part of Bethlehem and that this will solve ongoing disputes, the family will leave the church property and find accommodation elsewhere.” *(Source: Middle East Concern)*

China—The minority Muslim Uighurs in western China continue to suffer under a government wide crackdown against religious minorities in the communist state. US and UN estimates place the number of Uighurs placed in internment camps at over 1 million wherein they are forced to renounce their religion, eat pork, and drink alcohol. The US Congressional-Executive Commission on China has described the situation as “the largest mass incarceration of a minority population in the world today.” Chinese officials deny the existence of reeducation camps despite wide evidence to the contrary. Please pray that the Chinese government will end its persecution against its citizens of all religions and that those interred will be quickly released and face no further persecution. *(Source: The Atlantic)*

Nigeria—Boko Haram recently released a video of the execution of a 25 year old midwife working for the Red Cross. The Islamist group is now threatening to kill a Nigerian Christian teenager, Leah Sharibu and two other hostages it recently kidnapped if its ransom demands are not met. This comes as the latest in a series of attacks by the group against Christians and aide workers. Please pray that those being held hostages will soon be freed and unharmed and that members of Boko Haram will turn to Christ and renounce their terrorist activities. *(Source: Open Doors USA)*

Iraq—Last month again saw an increase in Turkish airstrikes against predominantly Christian villages in northern Iraq. Reports indicate that seven villages were targeted by Turkish forces under the pretense of battling the Kurdish PKK and Turkish troops continue to advance in northern Iraq, controlling large areas. Human rights organizations argue though that the Kurdish threat in no way warrants the scale of the Turkish advance and that Turkey is seeking territorial expansion and the elimination of non-Turks in the area. Please pray for Christians in Iraq as well as in Syria who have been threatened from multiple sides for many years now and are battling for the very existence. *(International Christian Concern)*

Myanmar—A renewed crackdown against Christians in Myanmar’s ethnic Wa state is underway. Recently, several churches were systematically closed and several pastors and evangelists were arrested by the Wa Army. A Christian daughter of a high ranking Wa official however, offered to take the place of 14 Christians who had been recently arrested. The Christians were subsequently released after having their heads shaved so as to make them more identifiable to authorities. Please pray for Christians in Myanmar, that they will find both strength in and relief from their ordeal, that authorities will cease their efforts to persecute Christians and that the Gospel will continue to take hold in that country. *(Voice of the Martyrs)*

Rwanda—The government of Rwanda has closed 7,000 churches this year across the country for supposed building code infractions. The widespread closures began this past March when a Seventh Day Adventist Church was struck by lightning leading to the deaths of 16 people. Reports indicate that the church did not of a government approved lightning rod installed leading the government to begin nation wide inspections of all churches. While some are told what to fix, others are simply shut down without further recourse. Because the government’s response has been so widespread, it has had a very adverse effect on churches in Rwanda leading some to protest the government’s action and question its true motivations. Please pray that church closures will cease and that Christians in the impoverished

country will soon be able to worship again without unnecessary impediment. *(Source: International Christian Concern)*