

Email

Dear Friend,

This week we are continuing to pray for the Muslim communities of Turkey and the Balkans. We will be praying into areas that are still in need of more workers and have yet to see many people turn to Jesus. Thank you for praying with us for these peoples and places.

Thank you so much to those of you who have given to and/or are praying for our prayer weekend 'AWAKEN' for the young adults who are part of our *Prep Steps* community (mostly 20's - 30's seriously considering serving God overseas amongst the unreached). This will happen in July and the focus will be on prayer for the Muslim World.

We will be hosting this event at Waverley Abbey, home of 24-7 Prayer, with their support. In order to allow these young people to come, many of whom are students, we are aiming to raise £4000 for this event. We would like to invite you to join us in raising up prayer for the Muslim world, by supporting this weekend. We have already raised over £600 and are very grateful for all these gifts. If you would still like to contribute you can give here:

<https://www.stewardship.org.uk/pages/AwakenPrayer>

We would also like to ask you to be praying for our team as they plan this weekend, that we discern wisely which people and places we should be interceding for and for the young adults as they prepare to come. Next week we will be praying into this in more depth.

May God bless you as you pray and intercede this week.

For His glory in the nations,

Charlotte and Richard

Prayer Mobilisation Team

Monday 24th June



Bosniaks

Country-wide there are around two million Muslims in Bosnia; just over half of the population. Small numbers of long-term workers have been reaching out to them for decades. The end of the war brought a sense of openness and hope amongst them, and some small local fellowships were formed. These have since been hit with strong persecution, with many Muslim-background believers returning to their Islamic roots and church leaders experiencing disillusionment and burnout.

There are now believed to be only around 100 believers from a Muslim background in Bosnia. There is a small evangelical population from Catholic and Orthodox groups but historic religious tensions raise barriers to outreach.

Although there's a lot of work to do there's also now a growing sense of hope and expectation beginning to build. Local church leaders are making moves towards creating unity between themselves, seeking to shine as a beacon of hope to their many unreached Muslim neighbours. Long term workers are reporting a fresh wave of openness to the gospel. They ask for prayers for new workers to come and help them and be ready for the harvest as they believe God is preparing his people to have a significant impact in Bosnia. Now is the time to get involved!

Prayer

- The enemy has used conflict to 'steal, kill and destroy' unity between Croats, Serbs and Bosniaks. Pray for reconciliation and solidarity to strengthen the nation, on both social and economic levels.
- Thank God for the passionate Muslim-background church leaders who want to see Bosnia transformed by the gospel. Pray that they would find strength in unity, be spurred on and discover a fresh sense of vision in their work.
- Praise God for the gospel workers in Bosnia and their years of faithful service. Ask that they would be encouraged and would see even more fruitfulness in their ministries.
- Pray for more people to catch a heart for reaching the two million Muslims of Bosnia, as 'the harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few'.

For more information see:

<https://www.frontiers.org.uk/latest/pray-now.php>

Tuesday 2nd July



Balkan Albanians.

Modern day Albanians are believed to be the descendants of the ancient Illyrian people group who were the original inhabitants of the western Balkan Peninsula. As followers of Jesus these people are not unknown to us as, in his letter to the Romans, Paul declares in chapter 15:19 that ‘from Jerusalem all the way around to Illyricum, I have fully proclaimed the gospel of Christ.’

Illyricum was the Roman name for the region that comprises modern Albania, and parts of what are now Croatia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina. What is exciting is that the apostle Paul considered that the Gospel had been fully proclaimed throughout this region. Did he consider that every town or settlement had heard the gospel, or that his ministry had left sufficiently mature communities of Jesus followers in his wake to sustain the continued growth of the kingdom of God. We will probably never know quite what Paul had in mind for these words, but whatever he meant as he wrote 2000 years ago, the same cannot be said for the region today.

In the centuries since Paul the Illyrians were first pushed (in around the 6th century) from their original lands by pagan invading Slavs who then assimilated into local populations,

and then, in the 16th century, converted to Islam under the Ottomans. Albanian Islam has been heavily influenced by the pagan practices of the Slavs, their ‘folk Islam’ embraced occult practices like those found elsewhere in the Muslim world, prayers to the dead, cures for sickness, and protection from spirits and curses.

In 1967 Albania’s communist regime declared Albania to be ‘the world’s first atheistic state’ and closed its borders to the outside world. When they finally re-opened in 1990 Albania was utterly demoralized, economically, morally, and spiritually. Since then, the country has been open to religious evangelism of every sort, if only as an antidote to the soaring crime rate, and religious freedom was granted in 1998. It has allowed not only evangelical Christian missionaries to enter the country, but also Muslim missionaries.

This freedom has allowed an infant Albanian church to grow and mature and has led to the number of Albanians identifying as Jesus followers growing to several thousand.

Prayer

- Pray for spiritual maturity in Albanian believers who come from a long history of communism, atheism, or Islam.
- Pray that that the Gospel Paul preached in the region, would once more be ‘fully proclaimed’ to the Albanian people.
- Pray for more workers to train Albanian background believers to more effectively proclaim the Gospel to other Albanians throughout the Balkans.

For more information see <https://www.frontiers.org.uk/latest/pray-now.php>

Wednesday 3rd July



Balkan Albanians 2

Prior to the changes introduced by the Communist regime in the 1940s, Albanians were a tribal people who lived in extended family units or 'fis'. The fis had many old traditions, such as the vendettas, or "blood feuds," which often lasted for several generations. For protection during these feuds, families lived in fortified stone buildings called kulas. The ground floor of the kula was built with small slits rather than windows, while the upper floor had windows that could be closed.

Albania is a country with many isolated areas. Over the centuries, this produced a wide variety of regional lifestyles and settlement patterns. However, when the Communist regime began in 1944, the traditional lifestyles began to change drastically. Communist political authorities believed that the way to achieve national unity was to abolish differences of tribe, religion, and even dress. Huge community farms were established and education became mandatory. Large apartment complexes were built and much of the population became urbanized. Today, more than a third of Albania's population live in cities. The increasing industrial population and the introduction of mandatory education have, in fact, eliminated many regional differences.

The collapse of the Communist regime in 1991 brought on numerous traumatic and rapid

changes in Albania, leaving the people with an identity crisis. The people were shocked to discover that they had been reduced to poverty. Hurt, angry, and confused, they are now struggling to find their identity in a country that is considered to be Europe's poorest and least developed.

Prayer

- Ask the Lord to raise up additional long-term labourers to go to Albania and share the Good News.
- Pray that Bibles will be effectively distributed throughout Albania and impact on people.
- Ask the Lord to raise up strong communities of Jesus followers among Albanians.

For more information see <https://www.frontiers.org.uk/latest/pray-now.php>

Thursday 4th July



Northern Albania

Northern Albania refers to the northern half of Albania which is inhabited by the Gheg-Albanians. The Gheg are the larger of the two Albanian dialect groups and they live predominantly in the mountains north of the Shkumbin river.

The region is sometimes referred to as Ghegeria which is slightly misleading as this term describes the territory, which includes areas in Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia, where Gheg speakers are found.

Northern Albania is an isolated and mountainous region where the Gheg have lived in relative obscurity for a large part of their difficult history, in part because of the rugged terrain.

Albania as a whole is resource rich, and in particular the North of the country has considerable mineral wealth with reserves of chromium, copper, and iron-nickel. In the 1980s Albania was a world leader in chromium production, but the fall of communism and the poor organization that has characterized Albania's efforts to develop mean that the country is one of the least developed and the poorest in Europe.

As well as being isolated, remote, and poor the North of Albania has also been a gospel desert. Historically influenced by folk religions, Catholicism, Islam, and Atheism, it

has reverted to Islam, its most recent religious identity since the communist regime collapsed. There has been very little gospel outreach, even today there are only a couple of workers in the region, and there are no fellowships amongst the few MBB's who have followed Jesus.

Prayer

- Pray for more workers, and more long-term workers, who can build relationships over a sustained period of time.
- Pray for an opening of hearts and minds amongst this extremely tribal and traditional region that Islam has dominated for the last 600 years.
- Pray for the Albanian church in the central and southern regions of the country to be motivated and mobilized to engage the north.

For more information see <https://www.frontiers.org.uk/latest/pray-now.php>

Friday 5th July



Kurds in Turkey

There is deep-seated hostility between the Turkish state and the country's Kurds, who constitute 15% to 20% of the population.

In response to uprisings in the 1920s and 1930s, many Kurds were resettled, Kurdish names and costumes were banned, the use of the Kurdish language was restricted, and even the existence of a Kurdish ethnic identity was denied, with people designated 'Mountain Turks'.

In 1978, Abdullah Ocalan established the PKK, which called for an independent state within Turkey. They are seen as a terrorist organisation by the Turkish government. Six years later the group began an armed struggle, to try and end oppression and gain independence. Tens of thousands died on both sides during the long conflict between Kurds and Turks. There was a ceasefire in 2013, but the war in Syria ended that and conflict restarted and escalated.

Since then, more than 40,000 people have been killed and hundreds of thousands displaced.

Lets pray for this people to find peace through Jesus, the Prince of peace.

Prayer

- Pray for opportunities for believers to share Jesus amongst the Kurds, and for a move of the Spirit amongst Kurds in Turkey.
- Let's pray for Kurds to be set free from all oppression and fear.
- Pray for Kurds to find their true home in Jesus Christ.

"but whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life." John 4:14

For more information see:

<https://www.frontiers.org.uk/latest/pray-now.php>

Saturday 29th June

An update from a team working with those impacted by Turkey's earthquakes.



Since the devastating earthquakes in southern Turkey we have been providing aid to people in one of the worst affected areas. Through our regular visits we've come to love these precious people and had multiple opportunities to cry with them, pray for them and share Bible stories. However, the visits have been physically and emotionally exhausting and while we'd had opportunities to share the gospel, there was little response. It felt like something was missing.

At the start of 2024 we were asking, "What's our part here, Lord? How can we bring not just material help but Your Kingdom here in this swirl of grief, fear and loss? We want to see people coming to know you. They have to see the beauty of who You are!"

Nuray and her family were living in a tent until December when relief funds from donors enabled us to buy them a shipping container, modified to be a more secure shelter. Then, on our visit in January, I spoke with my friend. "Nuray, God sees you and your hardship, and He loves you. He wants to give you more than a container home. He wants to give you His Kingdom. Do you want it?"

She simply replied, "***Then teach me!***"

That same day we started to study a story about Jesus' power over darkness. The next day, with her whole household, we began reading a series of Bible stories from creation to Christ. We showed them how to continue to meet, read and discuss the God's word using an app they installed on their phones.

Since then, they have gathered weekly as a small group to read the stories and study together. It was so encouraging to see three generations of the same family helping each other to discover God's word. When Grandma's comprehension was a bit slow, one of the teenagers in the group took the lead and explained the story. She then led the next meeting!

On the one-year anniversary of the earthquake the whole group met in one of the tents. They invited neighbours and friends and were ready to read and discover together. Nuray messaged me to say, "***We are here tonight, and we are waiting for God to speak to us.***"

Seeing them taking their first steps of obedience even before coming to know Jesus is encouraging and humbling. The Lord heard our prayer and answered.

Prayer

- Please join us in praying for Nuray's family to hear God speaking to them as they keep reading God's word.
- Pray for them to continue to share what they learn with their friends and relatives, and that groups like Nuray's will begin to multiply.
- At least five other households also mentioned they want to start reading the Bible material, so pray for their readiness and growth.

<https://www.frontiers.org.uk/latest/blog/posts/2024-04-24-were-waiting-for-god-to-speak-to-us>