30DAYS OF PRAYER FOR THE MUSLIM WORLD

MAR 22 - APR 20, 2023

Welcome to the 2023 edition of **30 Days of Prayer for the Muslim World**

Praying With Joy

These last few years have presented the world with challenging situations. The global and local impacts of the coronavirus pandemic, wars, inflation and other looming crises, threaten to overwhelm. We may often feel like the writer of Romans 8:26, who confessed, "...we do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans."

30 Days prepares content for each annual prayer guide months in advance, not knowing what will be happening when Ramadan next approaches and what the world will be facing. So this year we decided to focus the theme of our prayers for the Muslim world away from tragedies and challenges, and towards hope and joy. While continuing to pray for the needs of Muslim people, in our 2023 prayers we will emphasise stories of good things that are happening in Muslim communities and focus prayer on seeing more good things happen.

This looks like testimonies from new believers and church planters. It includes communities working together to improve their living conditions and families investing in their future. We'll meet individuals who demonstrated courage and kindness, and groups who focused on achieving a goal to bless others. We will give thanks for what the Lord has done, and ask Him for more of His goodness to be released in the Muslim world. I thank my God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.

PHILLIPPIANS 1:3-6

About 30 Days of Prayer for the Muslim World

In April 1992 a group of Christians from a global missions organisation gathered by the Red Sea in the Middle East. Ramadan had just ended. Praying together, this group of men and women felt that God was directing them to pay more attention to His love for the Muslim world. Those involved in the meeting describe the revelation as a clear message, calling them to embrace the Muslim world in all its diversity, seeing Muslims as God does - as His beloved creation. They committed to obey this word, beginning with a time of 30 days of focused prayer and fasting for the Muslim world.

Every time that Ramadan has occurred since then, a prayer guide was created

to help Christians pray for Muslims during the 30 days of the fast. The aim was to focus on blessing Muslim people and helping Christians have greater understanding of, and love for, Muslims around the world. Christians working in Muslim communities were asked to share the needs of those communities and stories to inspire prayer. A team was formed to coordinate distribution to an increasing number of nations and to manage translation into over 40 languages, creating a global prayer movement unlike any other.

Today, Christians from many organisations, churches and ministries are involved in contributing, translating, and distributing the prayer guide, with many hundreds of thousands participating in prayer every year.

If you are using this prayer guide, you know that God works together with us through prayer, and you can see the fruit of over 30 years of faithful intercession. Your participation, prayers, and pursuit of a word spoken 30 years ago have changed the world forever.

How should we pray?

30 Days was created by a group of people who are committed to sharing the love of Christ with Muslims. Here are some scriptures to help you ready your heart for prayer.

We believe that Jesus is the Savior of the world, reconciling all people to God. John 14:6; Acts 4:12; 2 Corinthians 5:18-19

Every human being is made in the image of God according to, and thus has inestimable worth and dignity. *Genesis 1:26-28* God loves Muslims and does not want any to perish. 1 *Timothy 2:4; 2 Peter 3:9; John 3:16*

As followers of Christ, we take Jesus' strong exhortation to love God and love your neighbor very seriously. Muslims are our neighbors, and one way we love them is by praying blessings on them, their families, and communities. *Matthew 22:37-39*

Jesus commands us to love everyone – even those who hurt us - and to pray for them. *Matthew 5:44*

Our intercession for Muslims needs to be motivated by love. Our model is Jesus – who, while we were yet sinners, loved us and died for us. *Romans 5:8* As we receive God's love for us, He gives us His love for all others and enables us to fulfill the great commandment to love God and love our neighbour. We are not called to judge, fear, hate, or relate to Muslims in any way that is counter to the Kingdom of God. We are simply to love, live as Christ commanded us, pray, and trust God by His Holy Spirit to bring people to Himself in Christ. *Galatians 5:22-23; John 6:44; 12:32; 16:8; 1 Corinthians 13*

May your prayers be led by the love of Christ, and the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, as you participate in this year's 30 Days of Prayer for the Muslim World. WORLD MAP

Where Are Our Prayers Taking Us?

- UK
- France
- Ukraine
- Europe
- Iran
- Cameroon
- Suriname
- Burkina Faso
- India

- Indonesia
- Saudi Arabia
- Gabon
- Jordan
- Guinea
- China
 - Syria
- Yeman
- Ethiopia

- Pakistan
- Switzerland
- Afghanistan
- Caucasus
- Austria
- Malaysia

Photo from Unsplash by Jack Stapleto

United Kingdom

There are an estimated 3.4 million Muslims in the United Kingdom, mostly living in England. The majority of British Muslims are from South Asian families, but also from all over Africa, the Middle East, Central Asia and Europe. The Muslim community is well established in the UK and very engaged in British society.

When the COVID-19 pandemic was spreading rapidly through communities in the UK, British Muslims were among the first to respond, repurposing mosques as testing centres and temporary morgues, raising money for funerals and charities and delivering food to people in quarantine. Saira, a Muslim woman from Birmingham who helped deliver food parcels, found that being able to help others in need during the pandemic helped her own anxiety in those difficult times. "It was something I could do to help when there was so much I could not do. It was encouraging to see the community come together to help the most vulnerable."

Today, rising costs have created ongoing needs in the UK and Muslims are again helping their communities by providing struggling families with food for iftar, the meal taken at sunset to break the fast each day during Ramadan. At a time that usually brings people together to eat, a lack of finances can be especially isolating, so charitable giving is especially important now. I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people... This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.

1 TIMOTHY 2:1-4

How can we pray?

Pray for Muslims in the UK who are struggling financially to be connected to resources that can help them.

Pray for Christians in the UK to work alongside Muslims and be generous in helping Muslim families in need especially during Ramadan.

Pray for Muslims in the UK to have good relationships with Christians and for opportunities to serve their communities together.

France

Some estimates say that about 15 000 Muslims leave their religion each year in France. Equal numbers tend to convert to Islam, so the population figures do not change significantly, but ex-Muslims are a growing community.

Leaving Islam, even in a western nation, means facing possible rejection from family and friends, sometimes even threats or violence. But people who leave Islam may cause others to think about their faith and can be influential in leading them to consider the message of Jesus. The rise of secularism in a place like France spreads to other nations, as ex-Muslims influence people in their countries of origin - places like Algeria or Morocco, where practicing Islam is taken for granted. Farid immigrated to France from Algeria as a child. Growing up in France most of his friends were from other Muslim families, but as Farid grew older he had less interest in following Muslim rituals and more interest in hanging out with friends who were also not religious. Except for Sami. Sami was also Algerian but he had been born in France. Sami referred to God in a way Farid had never heard before so Farid asked Sami about his faith.

Sami described being given a book of the stories of Isa-Al-Masih (Jesus) and how they had transformed his life. He invited Farid to a gathering of other followers of Isa where they would study His teachings and support one another in their faith. Intrigued, Farid agreed to go. If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him.

JAMES 1:5

How can we pray?

Pray for Muslim background believers in France who are uniquely able to be an effective witness to others from their culture however they do, or do not, believe.

Pray for French Muslims who are seeking Jesus to bring their families and communities along with them.

Pray for Christians in France to be loving, welcoming, witnesses.

DAY 3 - MARCH 24

Ukraine

Only about 1% of the population of Ukraine are Muslims - it is an Orthodox Christian nation. But Muslims in Ukraine began assisting Ukrainians when Russian invaded in February 2022.

Most of the Muslims in Ukraine are Turkic people. Some, like the Crimean Tatars are no strangers to conflict over their homeland. Chechen Muslims also have a history of conflict with Russia which brought them to Ukraine - some of them see the recent Russian invasion as a continuation of a historic conflict. Muslims who remained in Ukraine did what they could to celebrate Ramadan last year amidst the sounds of war and a shortage of food. There are stories of those who remained in Ukraine, helping others to escape and caring for those left behind. The impact of the war in Russia and Ukraine, where much of the world's wheat supply is grown, has caused a rise in the price of the essential grain. This has had an impact in many Muslim nations, such as Tunisia, Lebanon, Pakistan, and Egypt, who is the biggest importer of Ukrainian wheat.

With Ramadan occurring last year during the beginning of the conflict, some Muslims were moved to direct their Zakat to help Ukrainian refugees. Zakat is a payment, like a tithe, that Muslims are expected to give as an annual charity, usually 2.5% of their income. This year, giving may continue to go to needs generated by the war in Ukraine. I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world.

JOHN 16:33

How can we pray?

Pray for Muslim refugees from Ukraine, to find safety in new places and have help to rebuild their lives.

Pray for Muslims in Ukraine and in Russia, that they would find salvation from the Prince of Peace.

Pray for Christians helping Ukrainian Muslims to provide refuge, help, hope and the Good News of the gospel.

Muslims in Europe

Jan and Mohammad share cold drinks and snacks after a football game enjoyed in the welcome early spring sunshine on a Sunday afternoon in the Netherlands. They are part of a community team of young men who meet up regularly to play football. The team consists of players from diverse ethnic backgrounds, all from the same neighbourhood in Amsterdam, all sharing a passion for the beautiful game. Jan, a Christian, is Dutch, and Mohammad, a Muslim, emigrated to the Netherlands as child, from Morocco.

The two men rarely discuss religion, except to give good wishes to one another on religious holidays. But when asked about the role of Muslims in Dutch society, Jan refers to his friendship with Mohammad as his biggest influence. "Some people believe Muslims want to take over the country," he says. "But none of the Muslims I know have any interest in imposing their religion on anyone. Like me, they just want to live their life in peace."

Studies have shown that personal relationships with Muslims are the main factor for non-Muslims to have positive views of Muslims. In Western Europe, controversies over immigration and the integration of Muslim cultures have become key issues in political campaigns, with worrying rises in nationalism and racist idealogy. But followers of Christ who have friends who are Muslim are better informed and less likely to be influenced by stereotypes and rhetoric. For the whole law is fulfilled in one word: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself."

GALATIANS 5:14

How can we pray?

Muslims make up about 6% of the population of western Europe. Pray for them to develop strong friendships in their communities and be a blessing in their homelands.

Pray for immigrant families and those with mixed-generations of immigrants adapting to cultural changes in Europe.

Pray for Christians in Europe to take a stand against racism and hatred, and be a witness to the love of Jesus.

Iran

When news broke of the Supreme Court's decision that it was not a crime to preach Christianity in a house church in Iran, Laleh rejoiced along with the others in her fellowship. However, since she became a follower of Jesus after watching Christian programming on satellite TV shows, she has always felt the need to keep her faith secret and she still feels uneasy talking about it with strangers. Meeting at the house church in a nearby town was her only connection with other Christians, some of whom are still in prison for preaching the Gospel. *Could things be changing*?

Iran is an Islamic republic and attempts to convert Muslims have, until recently, been punishable by death. At the end of 2021, Iran's courts declared that it was not illegal to preach Christianity although the law is not consistently applied. This was a huge shift in a nation that is notorious about persecuting religious minorities. Some believe that authorities' efforts to push a fundamentalist Islamic agenda has encouraged fewer Iranians to embrace Islam, associating it with a corrupt political system. Recent secular studies have confirmed the reports that Christian workers have been making for years about the growth of the Church in Iran.

Estimates suggest that there are over half a million Christians in Iran, but it is suspected that there are many more, possibly twice that number, given that most Christians still worship in secret, at home-based churches and private gatherings. ...If you continue in My word, you are truly My disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.

JOHN 8:31-32

How can we pray?

Pray for Christians in Iran to have good discipleship resources. Many Christian leaders have been imprisoned or have fled the country and materials are hard to get.

Pray for Iran to offer full religious freedom to all its citizens.

Pray for more Muslims in Iran to encounter Jesus and walk in His Freedom.

Cameroon

Musa comes from a Muslim family, but when his family needed medical care, they went to a Christian hospital. When his son was born, the Christian midwives took good care of his wife. The hospital even cared for a cousin who needed medicine and counselling for HIV.

Musa felt lucky to have a medical center within reach. There are less than 5 nurses for every 10 000 people in Cameroon and less than half that number of doctors. Health care centres offered by faith-based organisations provide a necessary service to all the people in the region. Faith-based organisation provide 40% of the health care services in Cameroon.

Musa recognised the corruption that made it impossible to get healthcare in state facilities. He was impressed by the work of the nurses at the Christian hospital and about their faith that motivated them to offer their service. Over time, Musa got to know the chaplain at the hopsital and he watched the Jesus film. Eventually, he gave his life to Christ. The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor.

LUKE 4:18

How can we pray?

Often in isolated areas, pray that they will be safe and have the resources they need to provide care for the communities around them.

Pray for the people of Cameroon to work together to improve access to healthcare and other services necessary for their nation to thrive.

Pray for Muslims in Cameroon to encounter Jesus through their experiences in Christian health centers and interaction with the workers.

Suriname

"Come in, come in!" Sarah called to her neighbours! Sweets were passed around and "Blessed Eid" greetings were exchanged. Children showed their new toys to their friends while the teenagers prepared to go to the celebrations in the city square and food preparations continued for the street party that would take place later. The celebration of Eid in Suriname is for everyone in this small nation which values it's multi-ethnic community.

The smallest independent nation in South America also has the highest proportion of Muslims in the Americas. Muslims in Suriname fit into a diverse, multicultural nation which speaks 14 languages.

About half of the population of 600 000 are Christian. The rest are a mix of folk religions, Hinduism, no religion and others. Muslims make up about 15% of the population but are a significant presence. Eid ul-Fitr is a national public holiday here, and people from other faith traditions join in the celebrations. This friendly tolerance, however, does occur alongside conflict and tension between minority groups in the nation.

Many of the Muslims in Suriname are descendants of indentured labourers from South Asia and Indonesia who arrived in the 1800's to replace African slaves in the British colonies. Muslim culture in Suriname mostly reflects the culture from these regions. But there are also groups of Muslims from Afganistan and parts of Africa. Then I saw another angel flying directly overhead, with an eternal gospel to proclaim to those who dwell on earth, to every nation and tribe and language and people.

How can we pray?

A diverse population can create division and Suriname faces conflict between its different groups. Pray for peace among the people of Suriname.

Pray for Muslims in Suriname to come to faith in Jesus.

Pray for Christians in Suriname to be a good witness to the grace of God and the love of Jesus.

Burkina Faso

For years now, the continent of Africa has led the way in Church growth. By 2060 it is estimated that more than 4 out of 10 Christians in the world will live in sub-Saharan Africa.

One study predicts that Burkina Faso will have the fastest growth rate of Christians. Currently, 62 % of the population are Muslims, but the number of Christians has been growing steadily, and is now around 22% of the population. Some of these are immigrants from places like Syria or Lebanon, but many are former Muslims who have chosen to follow Christ.

Conflict between political groups has led to violence with attempts to divide the nation by religion. But Burkina Faso has a history of tolerance for religious diversity and interfaith marriages are fairly common.

Aziz and Esther are one such couple. They met in college and despite some concerns from their families, have been married for 11 years. When they married, Aziz was a Muslim and Esther was a Christian but when their first child was born, they had serious conversations about how they would teach faith to their children. Over time, Esther's faithfulness in telling Bible stories to her children and teaching them about Jesus spoke to Aziz also. Before their third child was born, he had also decided to follow Christ. So the church throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria had peace and was being built up. And walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, it multiplied.

ACTS 9:31

How can we pray?

Pray for the Church in Burkina Faso to have good discipleship so that as it grows, it grows strong and mature and can be an effective witness to Muslims.

Pray for Muslims married to Christians to be won over to faith in Christ by the love and example of their Christian spouses.

Pray for peace in Burkina Faso, for continued freedom of religion and for the growth of the Church to continue.

Afghans in India

There are an estimated 20 000 Afghanis living in India. Most of these are refugees, who live in and around Delhi. Many of them are waiting for permission to move to other countries, and some have already been denied entry to other places, having left Afghanistan. They are not permitted to work in India legally, and it is difficult to get their children enrolled in Indian schools.

A group of local believers put their faith into action by serving these families. They provide education in math, English and computer training, and offer skills development classes to help them find work. They also distribute food and medical hygiene kits.

Alongside this practical help, Bible studies in Afghan languages are offered. One leader reports, *"We have made* good relationships with the people of this community and that has led to the opportunity to share the gospel. Please pray that more and more families here may experience the love Jesus by meeting Christian believers through our programs."

Muslims and Christians are both small minorites in India, although India has one of the world's largest Muslim populations. Rising Hindu nationalism has created conflict and violence towards both groups in recent years and threatened the peace of the entire nation. Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me.

MATTHEW 25:34-35

How can we pray?

Pray for peace in India, for the government to encourage freedom of religion and for the different religious groups to live in peace.

Pray for Christians like this group, who are boldly serving Christ and demonstrating His love to Muslims in India.

Pray for Indian Muslims and Muslim refugees in India to experience the love of Christ and come to faith in Him.

Indonesia

Anwar cranked up the air conditioning in the car. His family had been sitting in gridlocked traffic for hours now, trying to get out of Jakarta. He thought they had left early enough to miss the worst of it, but it seemed like half the city had the same idea. This was the first time in two years Anwar was able to take his wife and sons to visit his family for Eid al-Fitr because of COVID-19 restrictions.

The journey usually took about 4 hours but this year it was definitely going to take longer. Anwar was determined to go however, despite the kids' grumbling in the back seat. He had missed his grandfather's funeral, and too many other important events because of the pandemic. At last there was something to celebrate together. Indonesia, the world's largest Muslimmajority nation, had one of the highest rates of COVID-19 infection in Asia. The nation shut down travel in order to curb the spread of the disease. Tourism plays a significant part in the Indonesian economy and it is now recovering as the pandemic eases.

Indonesian pilgrims were also the first to arrive at Mecca in Saudi Arabia last year when that city increased access to the holy sites for Hajj. As Indonesian Muslims are on the move again, let's pray that they encounter Christ on their journeys. The steps of a man are established by the Lord, when he delights in his way; though he fall, he shall not be cast headlong, for the Lord upholds his hand.

PSALM 37:23-24

How can we pray?

Pray for the economic recovery of Indonesia, and for Muslims in Indonesia to work towards peace and prosperity in their islands.

Indonesian Muslims come from many different ethnic groups and speak hundreds of unique native languages. Pray for Christians who can reach each of these groups with the gospel in their own language.

Pray for whole families to come to faith in Jesus in Indonesia.

Hajj

Hajj is the annual pilgrimage made by Muslims to the holy city of Mecca in Saudi Arabia during the last month of the Islamic calendar. Hajj is one of the five pillars of Islam, so all Muslims make great efforts to make the pilgrimage at least once in their lifetime.

Usually, over 2 million people attend Hajj each year. During the COVID-19 pandemic, however, Saudi Arabia did not allow pilgrims from other nations and strictly limited numbers. In 2020, only 1000 pilgrims were allowed, and in 2021, 60 000. In 2022, Hajj was re-opened to foreign visitors but only 1 million pilgrims were permitted.

Many Muslims save for years to be able to afford Hajj, so the last couple of years will have been disappointing for many who hoped to go. During Hajj, Muslims participate in a series of rituals over several days. These are performed in obedience to God, as a duty for all Muslims. The rituals commemorate events in the life of Muhammad and other prophets, and honor symbols of God. Pilgrims from all parts of life are united in their faith at Hajj and believe that the journey allows them to be purified and return home with a heart cleansed from sin.

Saudi Arabia invests heavily in resources to host the Hajj safely and efficiently every year. It is also a major source of income for the Kingdom, with many residents of Mecca and the surrounding areas relying on the pilgrims for their livelihood. Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation.

The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.

2 CORINTHIANS 5:17

How can we pray?

In 2023, Hajj begins on June 26. Pray for the health and safety of all those who participate.

During Hajj, Muslims are seeking a deeper devotion to God. Pray that they will find new life in Christ.

Pray for Muslims in Saudi Arabia, particularly in Mecca, to have supernatural revelations of Jesus.

Eid al-Adha

When Hajj, the pilgrimage to Mecca, ends Muslims around the world celebrate Eid al-Adha. In 2023, it will begin on June 28. This is the "holiday of the sacrifice" and it remembers the story of Abraham and his willingness to sacrifice his son Issac if God willed it.

All Muslims take part in the celebration, although people returning from Hajj will be especially honored as new "hajii," – a title given to those who have returned from the pilgrimage. A sheep or similar animal is usually slaughtered and shared as a central part of the feast. In some places in the Middle East those who have recently returned from Mecca will put handprints from the blood of the slaughtered beast on the walls of their homes to protect from evil.

Eid al-Adha is an even more important festival than Eid al-Fitr, which marks the end of Ramadan. In some countries, celebrations last up to four days. Meat from the feast is divided to share with family, friends and those in need, and Muslims celebrate together, wearing new clothes and exchanging gifts. For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins. Consequently, when Christ came into the world, he said, "Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired, but a body have you prepared for me..."

HEBREWS 10:5

How can we pray?

Pray for Muslims returning from Hajj as they reflect on their experience to be open to the move of the Holy Spirit in their lives.

Pray for Muslims celebrating Eid al-Adha to hear the story of Jesus, the Lamb of God.

Pray for Christians in Muslim countries celebrating Eid to have the opportunity to celebrate with their neighbours and share the love of Christ.

Gabon

The small nation of Gabon on the west coast of Africa is a conservation leader in the Congo Basin. The Congo Basin is known as the "second largest set of lungs in the world" - a reference to the importance of its rainforest which, like the one in the Amazon, forms an essential part of the global ecosystem.

120

88% of Gabon is covered in rainforest which is home to endangered animals, birds and plants. Gabon takes its responsibility for the stewardship of its land very seriously and has invested heavily in protecting it through national parks, sustainable forest management, even marine sanctuaries. The rainforest in Gabon absorbs billions of tonnes of carbon dioxide and has a heavy influence on rainfall in the region, making it a crucial element in protecting against climate change.

Only about 10% of the population of Gabon are Muslims, but the country has had Muslim presidents since 1973 when the president converted to Islam. He was succeeded by his son, also a Muslim. Many of the Muslims in Gabon are immigrants from other parts of West Africa. The majority of the population are Christians, mostly Catholic, from the influence of Portugese colonists, and there is a small but growing evangelical presence. He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him.

COLOSSIANS 1:15-17

How can we pray?

Pray for Gabon's efforts to steward their part of the rainforest and preserve the ecosystem and all the creatures who live in it.

Pray for Muslims in Gabon who have connections all over West Africa, to follow Jesus and spread their faith to their families.

Pray for Christians in Gabon to work alongside Muslims for the good of their nation and be an effective witness. DAY 14 - APRIL 4

Jordan

Nasser is a good landlord who cares for his tenants in Amman, Jordan. During the Covid pandemic, when lockdowns prevented people from going to the grocery store, he would check to see if they needed anything and offered to buy bread for them.

As a Muslim, Nasser, sees caring for others as part of how he lives his faith. In this, he agrees with his Christian neighbour, Walid. They discovered a group of refugees living in a tent near their building who had little food. Together, they bought oil, flour, salt, sugar, tea, vegetables, and meat and distributed them among the families. Hospitality is an essential part of Middle Eastern culture. There is a saying that, "You can never outgive an Arab." Muslims give to the poor because they believe it will help them on the Day of Judgement and protect them from trouble, and also as an act of worship. While the performance of zakat the giving of a percentage of ones income - is a duty, sadaqah is a voluntary act of charity. Sadaqah acts are done to please God, as an act of generosity, compassion or faith and can include monetary gifts, or acts of kindness. Whoever is generous to the poor lends to the Lord, and he will repay him for his deed.

PROVERBS 19:17

How can we pray?

Jordan is one of the most welcoming nations for refugees, with over 750 000 of them, mostly fleeing the conflict in Syria. Pray for refugees in Jordan as they re-establish their whole lives.

Pray for those who are serving the poor in Jordan and other parts of the Middle East, whether Christian or Muslim, that they will have what they need to be a blessing to the poor.

Pray for Muslims in Jordan to respond to the message of Jesus and the Good News He has for the poor.

Guinea

The Republic of Guinea on the west coast of Africa is 85% Muslim. Before they claimed independence in 1958 the nation was known as French Guinea, although the French who colonised the nation had little influence on the spread of Islam here. The capital, Conakry, boasts the largest mosque in West Africa, the Grand Mosque, which can hold 10 000 worshippers!

In February 2021, southeastern Guinea had an outbreak of Ebola virus. Ebola is a virus that spreads from wild animals to humans and then spreads among humans, causing severe illness and death. Ebola has a very high fatality rate - up to 90% in some outbreaks. In 2013, an outbreak that began in the same area of Guinea lasted for three years and spread around West Africa, killing over 11 000 people. So when the 2021 outbreak began in Guinea, health authorities responded very quickly, using what they had learned from the previous outbreak in this region. As a result of swift action and cooperation among healthcare workers they were able to contain the outbreak, with 16 cases resulting in only 12 deaths over a period of four months.

About 8% of the population of Guinea are Christian and the nation does have freedom of religion. Both Muslims and Christians will also incorporate traditional, indigenous rituals into their religious practices. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits, who forgives all your iniquity, who heals all your diseases, who redeems your life from the pit, who crowns you with steadfast love and mercy,

PSALM 103:2-4

How can we pray?

Ebola is not the only health concern in Guinea. Pray for development in health care in this nation and for the ongoing work into disease prevention and treatment.

Pray for Christians in Guinea to be well discipled, mature and effective in sharing the love of Christ.

Pray for Muslims in Guinea to encounter Jesus and follow Him.

DAY 16 - APRIL 6

China

For decades, China has waged a war against malaria. Malaria is known to have existed in China for thousands of years. Last June, however, the World Health Organisation declared China to be malaria-free. A concerted effort between the Chinese government and the people of China focused on the use of insecticidetreated mosquito nets, the wide distribution of anti-malarial medicines and the development of drugs to treat and stop the spread of the disease. As of June 2021, the nation had recorded no local infections for five years.

Malaria had been a serious health concern in China for decades and was most prevalant in the Chinese provinces along the Myanmar border in Yunnan province - the last place in China to report the disease. Yunnan province is one of the most diverse provinces in China, with 26 different ethnic minorities. This includes Muslim communities such as the Hui Muslims – a Muslim group who are ethnically Han Chinese. Some of the Hui Muslims are descended from the first Chinese converts to Islam who were influenced by Muslim Arab traders in the 7th and 8th centuries.

Other Muslims in this region are from Myanmar. Rohingya Muslims have fled the religious violence against their community in Myanmar. In Ruili, for example, about 50 000 Muslims from Myanmar have settled, learning Chinese, even marrying local Chinese spouses. As for God. his way is perfect: The Lord's word is flawless: he shields all who take refuge in him.

PSALM 18:30

How can we pray?

Give thanks for the progress made in defeating malaria in China. Pray for efforts being made to improve health care among Muslim communities in China.

Pray for the Hui Muslim community in China which is concerned about religious oppression. Pray that they will be open to hear from their Christian neighbours, as Christians are also a minority present in Yunnan province.

Pray for Muslims from Myanmar who are taking refuge in China, that they will also have opportunity to find refuge in Christ.

DAY 17 - APRIL 7

Syria

Muna is the youngest in a family of 7.

After her father died in an accident, they lost everything and were forced to live in a small hut in a refugee camp in northern Syria. Muna lived in the camp with her mother, Yasmina, and 6 siblings under the age of 10. When Muna became ill, Yasmina took her to several doctors. One doctor mistakenly gave Muna the wrong medication, which caused Muna to go blind.

Doctors told Yasmina, "Sorry, there's nothing we can do to reverse the damage, Muna will stay blind all her life." Yasmina was very discouraged and felt helpless and angry. A group of Christians were serving among the refugees in the camp. Yasmina told them the tragic story of Muna and they listened with compassion and offered to pray for Muna. Yasmina agreed and the group prayed for Muna. Suddenly she was able to move her eyes again and her sight returned completely! For the first time since she had received the wrong medication, Muna was able to cry and tears streamed down her face. Yasmina and everybody who witnessed this with their own eyes, marvelled at this miracle of healing. Together they were overwhelmed with joy and celebrated God's gracious intervention.

Yasmina praised God: "The doctors had told us that nothing could be done for our daughter, but Jesus has completely healed her. Glory to God!" He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed.

1 PETER 2:24

How can we pray?

Pray for refugees in the Syrian camps to have access to good healthcare and education.

Pray for Christians serving in the camps to be bold and share their faith with Muslims and pray for the sick, and see many come to faith in Christ.

Pray for peace in Syria, for the nation to be rebuilt so familes like Muna's can thrive.

Yemen

Ada's husband was killed in the ongoing war between Saudi Arabia and Yemen and died in her arms. When he died, Ada and her children lost their income and had to leave their home. A woman in this society cannot live without male protection, but Ada's father could not afford to take her back. Heartbroken, he told Ada that in the Yemeni culture the only way to protect her from rape and other abuse was to put her into prison.

That night, Ada took her three small children, aged 6 months to 4 years, and fled to another city. There she lived on the streets and collected garbage. A Christian Yemeni lady named Farah met Ada and saw her misery. She took Ada and her children home to her family and shared her house, food, clothes, and also love and care with Ada. It did not take long for Ada to also become a believer in Christ. She said, "I discovered Christ, who comforts me and gave me hope. He provided me with a new family and a new future and hope."

There is no help from the state but the Yemeni Church cares for one other, and for their neighbors with the little they have. Ada learned to read and write. She became a talented evangelist and a good listener. Today, she is the leader of a women's group that supports other traumatized women. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.

REVELATION 21:4

How can we pray?

Pray for the physical and spiritual needs of traumatized widows and orphans in Yemen. They suffer from war, famine, loss, depression, and sickness.

Pray for Yemeni Christians who boldly follow Christ and help others.

Pray for peace in Yemen and for relief from the many ways this nation suffers.

Ethiopia

Jamila recently became a member of a small church in Addis Ababa in Ethiopia. She lives in a poor area of the city with her Muslim husband and two small children. Their home consists of one room without electricity or water. Jamila's husband is unemployed and is often drunk and idle. The family constantly fights to survive. Since Jamila became a follower of Jesus, it has become harder. Her family, who had supported her financially now and then, stopped all contact because of her faith.

Jamila does her best to earn some money by doing laundry. Recently, she was invited by a neighbour to a Christian service. She had refused the invitation several times, but now her neighbour told Jamila the story of how she had found Jesus and hope in Him, despite her difficult circumstances. So Jamila agreed to go with her to the meeting. She continued to go and after a few weeks, realised that she also wanted to follow Jesus.

Jamila says, "I want to be a good wife to my husband and a good mother for my children – an example. Jesus has changed me for good. I want my husband to realise this and keep praying that he too will follow Jesus."

Jamila is Oromo, the people who are native to Ethiopia and form the largest ethnic group there. About 30 million Oromos live in Ethiopia and while some follow the traditional religion, about half are Sunni Muslim, and there is a growing Christian population. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.

MATTHEW 5:!6

How can we pray?

Pray for more Oromo people like Jamila to become followers of Jesus.

Pray for the Church in Ethiopia to be a loving example of Christ's message.

Pray for Muslim families in Ethiopia to have opportunites for work, education, healthcare and peace.

Burkina Faso II

An evangelical bishop and his team had been newly elected in Burkina Faso. They visited the local authorities and leaders of other denominations in the area in order to introduce themselves and establish good relationships. They also felt it was important to visit the Muslim community as part of the interfaith dialogue that happened in their community.

The bishop chose a Friday to visit the mosque, when many Muslim worshippers were present. At the end of the prayers, they were welcomed inside the mosque. The Islamic cleric welcomed them and asked the reason for their visit.

"We came to introduce our new team and express our wish to have good cooperation with the Muslim community," replied the bishop. Burkina Faso is troubled by terrorist groups who are spreading fear, and radicals are trying to divide the population. But most of the population want peace and are grateful for leaders who call for social unity.

The bishop gave an encouraging speech to the gathered Muslims: "We have so much in common, we all live in our common homeland of Burkina Faso." He gave the imam a Bible which was received with respect, saying, "This is the best gift we have received this day, because it is the Word of God. But it is also a holy book. This Bible is worth more than money." In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God...In him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

JOHN 1:1-4

How can we pray?

Pray for those who are working for peace and unity in Burkina Faso.

Pray for Christians to have opportunities to offer the Word of God to their Muslim friends.

Pray for Muslims who read the Word of God to have Jesus revealed to them.

Pakistan

Education and community development is changing societies in the high places of northern Pakistan. Dignity and dreams rise like the morning sun over the mountain peaks and pierce the darkness of isolated valleys as women and girls are receiving education and opportunities previously unavailable to them through the efforts of Kingdom workers. From hidden villages come these testimonies:

"It is a miracle that you have come so far to be with us and to help us lift our lives. We are now a part of society, no longer outsiders."

"As a father I am so pleased. My daughter is well respected and will be a great contributor to society. We used to think it was a sin to educate our daughters, but we have learned it is not; it is a privilege and a blessing."

"I was not even able to write my name. Now I can write my name, and count to 100! I didn't know how to read the correct dose of medicine to give my children and now I can read, and I know more about health and hygiene. And (said with a cheeky smile) I can write my husband's name too!"

"I was told that I was the religious leader and to stick to my job. My people were against outsiders coming and girls being educated. I stood alone as I welcomed you to our community.Now they say thank you. They are seeing the fruit." Let the wise hear and increase in learning, and the one who understands obtain guidance.

PROVERBS 1:5

How can we pray?

Pray for increased spiritual openness in these communities and for protection and boldness for workers as they share the Gospel that is the true source of transformation.

For completion of a Bible translation into the local language and made available to those newly able to read it.

Ask God to raise up righteous leaders in Pakistan to encourage development in its most unreached regions.

Switzerland

The highest number of asylum applications in Switzerland come from Afghans. One of them is Fahim, a man in his fifties who came to Switzerland a few years ago. Last summer, he had an accident with his bicycle and damaged his right shoulder. He went to the doctor and was advised to apply ointment on the painful area.

Fahim was no longer able to manage his beloved garden. His other passion, which is sewing blankets for refugee children, also became impossible for him because of the severe pain. After three months, Fahim was sent to a specialist, who diagnosed that his shoulder had been broken and had now grown together incorrectly. This doctor prescribed him physiotherapy, but it was a long road to improvement. A Swiss friend and believer felt urged to pray for Fahim for his shoulder to heal. She asked, "Fahim, you know I pray to Jesus may I pray for you?" Fahim accepted the offer and his friend prayed in the name of Jesus for the healing of his shoulder.

After a few days, Fahim came to visit and he was very happy. "Sister," he said, "Two doctors recommended treatment that didn't help. But you prayed once, and the pain left!" His friend replied, rejoicing, "That wasn't me Fahim! Praise be to Jesus who has answered our prayer!" But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed.

ISAIAH 53:5

How can we pray?

Pray for Muslims like Fahim get to know Jesus as their Healer and Redeemer.

That Swiss believers will continue to help Afghani refugees to integrate and find healing from the trauma they have experienced. Many of them are still waiting for immigration decisions.

For the Swiss Church to pray boldly and pursue the ministry of love and care for Muslim refugees.

Afghanistan

Since the Taliban took control of Kabul in August 2021, the tensions between different people groups in Afghanistan have grown. There are over a dozen ethnic groups in Afghanistan, each with their own language, traditions, values and orientation within Islam. The Taliban, who are predominantly Pashtun, have been dominating all other ethnicities.

Diar and Aziz work in the same office. Diar is Pashtun, a group that values family and tribal traditions, and follows the expectations and pressures of their community. Like most Pashtuns, he doesn't make decisions independently, but according to the ideas and ideals of his tribe.

Aziz is Tajik, and the people in his homeland in the mountains defended their freedom during the first Taliban rule and are now in resistance, again. Over the years, on both sides many fighters lost their lives. From childhood, Aziz got used to having to fight for his freedom and the rights of his people. He has lost so many relatives and friends, that he stopped mourning their loss.

In the office, their differences gradually ruined the relationship between Diar and Aziz. Jokes were misunderstood and simple questions misinterpreted as personal assaults. Their cultures had taught them that revenge was the means of protecting honor and gaining acceptance, even creating justice. Both Diar and Aziz thought of revenge instead of peace.

But then they heard of the teachings of Jesus Christ and the option of forgiveness. And both decided to forgive one another and work towards peace in their nation.

So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.

JOHN 8:36

How can we pray?

Pray for the different ethnic groups in Afghanistan to pursue peace and unity for their nation.

Pray for more Muslims in Afghanistan to find Jesus, the Prince of Peace.

For freedom for the different tribes and people groups under the authority of Jesus Christ and His grace.

Caucasus Region

"I shared our first social media posts with our partners in Azerbaijan. This inspired them to make similar videos boldly proclaiming that they follow Jesus" wrote Frank, a staff member from the Caucasus, in early 2021.

The Caucasus region lies between the Black Sea and the Caspian Sea; and includes parts of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Southern Russia. It is a very diverse region ethnically, politically, and geographically. The southern part of the region is almost entirely Muslim.

Frank was temporarily not allowed to travel to the Caucasus, so this gifted evangelist worked from his western homeland. Social media allowed him the opportunity to make natural encounters with Muslims online and he produced videos and other media in Azeri. In nine months, several hundred thousand people had viewed his posts. Frank reports, "Hundreds have received a New Testament in Azeri and several dozen people have been referred to follow-up courses. Staff are personally delivering Bible portions and praying for people, despite the security risks."

"A brother from Azerbaijan told me that new people come to their house group every week. Another told me that he regularly gets phone calls asking for New Testaments for friends and cannot keep up with the interest.

Frank adds that, in addition, requests have come from people in the unreached republic of Nakhichevan - a region that has remained almost completely untouched by the Gospel since 1989. How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news, who proclaim peace, who bring good tidings, who proclaim salvation...

ISAIAH 52:7

How can we pray?

This is a challenging region to reach with the Gospel for many reasons. Pray for more opportunities to share God's love with Muslims in the Caucusus region.

Pray for Christians in this region to be discipled and grow in faith, and plant more churches among the different people.

Pray for Muslims in the Caucusus to have access to Christian media.

Austria

"I only have one saviour," my little neighbour, Shayla, randomly comments to me. "My saviour is Allah," she adds proudly. I think for a moment and then answer: "I also have only one Saviour and that is Jesus." Questioningly, Shayla looks up, "Who is Jesus?" And so a long conversation follows about who Jesus is.

Many children have migrated from Muslim-majority nations to live in Austria. Many of them have had traumatic experiences in their home countries and during their journey. They often do not fit into the school system and have had few educational opportunities. But they love it when someone takes time to get to know them and play games with them. In the process, they always ask questions about what Christians believe and love to talk about God.

Shayla and many other Muslim children think about God and about their Muslim faith. "Praying is so exhausting," says one girl, for example. "You always have to wash, change and say the right thing and I don't even know what to say. How do you pray?" she asked a co-worker who follows Jesus. It is incredible to see the hunger with which the children listen to the stories of Jesus and how they want to know more about who Jesus is and how He loves them. Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God—

JOHN 1:12

How can we pray?

Pray for refugee children in Austria to recover from their trauma, and find peace and security in their new home.

Pray for them to have the resources they need to learn new languages, cultures and ideas, and for those who work with them to have patience and compassion.

Pray for refugee families to find Jesus as their Saviour.

Malaysia

Approximately 1.5 million Pattani Malay people live in the area around the Thai-Malaysia border but fewer than 0.01% among them have heard about Jesus. As a minority religion in Malaysia, they are very pious, even more so than Muslims from Muslim majority countries in South East Asia. This community identity makes it hard for Pattanis to explore other faiths.

Susu learned about Jesus when working as a translator for a Christian group. She found amazing peace when praying in the name of Jesus and His love restored her life and relationships. For example, it is quite common in her culture to seek revenge on those who hurt you. But when Susu's colleagues spoke badly about her, she chose to forgive with peace and joy in her heart.

Susu has been reluctant to share her faith in Jesus with her husband, even though he is the closest person to her. They have two sons and she usually prays together with them and brings them to the secret believers meeting. As she learns more of God's Word and gets encouraged by other believers, she is praying to build up a family which has Jesus in the center. But in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect,

1 PETER 3:15

How can we pray?

Give thanks for how the Gospel changes lives, families and communities and pray for more Pattani Muslims to hear it.

Pray for secret believers in Malaysia to have wisdom and courage to share the teaching of Jesus with others.

For good discipleship for Malay Christians so they can be an effective witness to their families and comunities.

Night of Power

"Laylat al Qadr" or the "Night of Power" celebrates the revelation of the Quran's first verses to the Islamic prophet Muhammad. It is an exceptionally significant event and is a time when even the least devout Muslim will make an extra effort in spiritual matters. Prayers and good deeds performed on this night are considered to be of greater value than all the prayers and good deeds done in a thousand months.

This night is also known as the "Night of Destiny," when many believe that their fate for the following year is determined. Therefore, it is especially important for Muslims to pray for forgiveness and blessings on this night, and many will pray throughout the night – some even stay in the mosque for the whole of the last ten days of Ramadan so as not to miss this time.

Muslims observing Ramadan will increase their prayers and reading of the Quran during the last ten days to earn extra divine favour. It is also a time to seek forgiveness from others, to forgive others and to repair relationships. The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!

JOHN 1:29

How can we pray?

During Laylat al Qadr, Muslims are seeking God with real focus. Pray that God will miraculously reveal Himself to them in dreams and visions.

Many Muslims are seeking forgiveness for their sins on this night. Pray that they will have a revelation of Jesus, the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world.

Pray for this Night of Destiny to bring opportunities for Christian workers in the Muslim world to share the gospel.

Al Massira

With tears of joy in his eyes, Mousa embraces the young refugee who has become like a son to him, as he emerges dripping from the baptism pool. Around them, a circle of young men with arms draped around each other's shoulders stand cheering in celebration.

Mousa thinks back to his own story. He grew up in an Arab Muslim family in the Middle East. Mousa always believed in one God but did not think that this God would be interested in knowing him personally. After moving to Asia for work and eventually settling in Europe, he encountered friendly Christians who helped him to settle into his new city and also invited him to join an Al Massira group.

Al Massira is a 13-session film-based course available in 35 languages, now used

all around the world. It follows the stories of Biblical prophets from Adam and Noah, right through to Jesus the Messiah and His message of salvation. Mousa could barely believe the fascinating discussions which took place each week. It was after the story of Prophet David that Mousa decided to give his life to Jesus, and he was baptised alongside ten others from Arab and Persian backgrounds.

That was the beginning of an incredible story of restoration and redemption, including a miraculous healing from depression. Mousa was also mentored into leadership, where he now serves as a missions' pastor and trains others to take the gospel to all nations. He continues to grow in his adoration and worship of Jesus. May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.

ROMANS 15:13

How can we pray?

For new refugee believers to grow in the faith and understand their identity as God's sons and daughters.

For Christians to grow in confidence to use Al Massira resources in outreach with their neighbours.

For believers such as Mousa to grow into leadership positions and find their place in God's global kingdom purposes.

Women in Islam

In theory, Islam gives women more rights than some of those who practice it. The Quran is clear that men and women are equal in the eyes of God and lays out instructions regarding the protection of women.

In reality, many cultures where Islam is dominant have traditional cultural practices which are not reflective of these teachings in the Quran. Muslim women, like all women, face inequalities in education, work, health care and family roles. But Muslim women around the world are changing the world around them. Recognising their own value and skills, and organising themselves to work together, women in Muslim nations are rising as influencers, leaders and innovators around the world.

Pakistan, an Islamic nation which is no

stranger to female political leaders, appointed five women to key cabinet positions last year.

Saudi Arabia, which is particularly slow to change in this regard, has made small strides towards equality for women, recently allowing women to be in public spaces such as cafes and sports arenas with men. Women have also acquired the right to live and travel alone, without the permission of a male guardian. The number of women working outside the home in Saudi Arabia has doubled in the last five years.

Muslim women are being more widely represented in the arts, notably with the first Muslim female superhero introduced into the popular Marvel movie series. And in sport, some Muslim women are creating ways to compete at high levels even while wearing hijab. And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her from the Lord.

LUKE 1:45

How can we pray?

Pray for Muslim women to continue to have the opportunity to thrive and be safe and happy.

Pray for Muslim women in positions of influence to be strong, safe and successful in addressing inequality and injustice.

Pray for Muslim women to be blessed and have opportunity to hear the message of Jesus and follow Him.

Testimony

My name is Fatima. I was born in Morocco but my origins are Berber. My parents raised me, along with my 11 siblings, as Muslims. I celebrated Ramadan every year and I prayed every day with my father.

My parents argued frequently, each year becoming more violent. I prayed for peace in our home for years with no answer and finally I gave an ultimatum to Allah. "I'm going to pray three times and if you don't show up in front of me, I won't believe in you anymore." Nothing happened...but that night I had a dream. I was climbing a mountain and receiving encouragment to keep going. At the top of the mountain, I met a man dressed in white, beaming with kindness. He was surrounded by happy people, filled with peace. I would have liked to stay there forever. I told my family about my dream but they dismissed it. So I kept it in my heart and hoped to find out who the man in my dream was.

My life was dull and aimless. But then a couple came to live in our building who spoke to me about the love of God in Jesus Christ. They invited me to a gospel meeting where I felt the presence of God. I started to read the Bible in secret to find out who Jesus was. And then I realized that Jesus was the man in my dream! I cried out to God to release me from my suffering and receive his peace.

In my new life, I have joy and peace and I pray for my family to come to know Jesus too.

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.

2 CORINTHIANS 5:17

How can we pray?

Continue praying throughout the year for Muslims to have dreams and visions of Jesus.

Pray for Muslims who are seeking to meet Christians who can share the Gospel with them.

Pray for Muslim background believers to be faithful witnesses to their families.

How Can We Keep Praying?

Pray for opportunities to show the love of Jesus to Muslims around you.

Pray for, and offer generous hospitality to, those you know who are serving Christ among Muslim people.

When you gather with fellow believers, remember to pray for Muslims throughout the year and encourage them to also participate in 30 Days.

You can also donate to help 30 Days keep producing prayer guides around the world at : <u>www.pray30days.org/donate</u> Praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints,

EPHESIANS 6:18

More Information and Feedback:

We would be delighted to hear how 30 Days has impacted you! Tell us about it at: <u>info@pray30days.org</u>

Donate to 30 Days International to help keep the prayer guide going! <u>https://www.pray30days.org/donate</u>

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30DAYS OF PRAYER FOR THE MUSLIM WORLD

MAR 22 - APR 20, 2023

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