

The Christians of Ukraine

Despite the terrible devastation of war, the help that Christians outside and inside Ukraine are giving to the afflicted church and citizens is bearing much spiritual fruit. Accommodation, food, meals and spiritual counselling are just some of the ways Christians are making an impact. Evangelistic ministries through radio, internet and social media are bringing people to Christ and enlarging church congregations. Some ministries focus on frontline soldiers, military wives, war widows, fragmented families and the thousands who are refugees in their own country. The government encourages these activities and has called a number of pastors to be military chaplains.

FEBC

Nigeria: living with danger

A local church leader writes: "Our existence here is dangerous and when we go to church on Sunday we wonder if we will come home alive. But other places are worse. When I returned home from Benue State it was like I had returned from a war zone! I had gone to my father's house to repair it, but while I was doing that, enemies were destroying other houses and churches not many kilometres from where I was. Many lost their lives and their farm produce. Some Christians were killed while worshipping in church.

"Thank God with me that I am alive today. I commend certain Christians who, in the midst of danger, travelled to a place for evangelism. I thought they might suspend the activity, but they were determined to go and preach the gospel. Praise God, all came back alive."

Bridgeway

Good news from India

In an encouraging court ruling, an Indian Christian couple arrested for their gospel outreach have been released on bail. The pastor and his wife were arrested in January after a complaint was filed with the police, accusing them of "alluring people from the Scheduled Caste," India's most disadvantaged group. A High Court judge in Uttar Pradesh ruled, "Providing good teachings, distributing Holy Bible books and encouraging children to get an education does not amount to allurements." In recent years anti-conversion laws, imposed in at least ten other Indian states, have been used to promote a Hindu nationalist agenda, making it risky for Christians to share their faith openly.

Open Doors

Christianity in Australia

A recent study showed that Australia's rate of church planting had plunged over the five years to 2021. Only one percent of Australian churches were planting new churches. Seven out of ten churches were in decline, and of the remaining 30% only a few vigorous churches were growing in membership. Although about 5% of churches close each year, about 60% of the population said they believed in God or a 'higher power.' About 20% described themselves as atheists. Australia needs an increase in the number of healthy churches that will take the Good News and the love of Jesus to people who don't know him.

New Life

Kyrgyzstan

'Marat', a Kyrgyz Christian convert from Islam, will not forget the day that his best friend, a Muslim, discovered he had become a follower of Jesus Christ. The friend turned on Marat declaring, 'If I had a gun, I would be the first to shoot you.' Marat and others among the small but growing number of converts in Central Asia endure daily hostility and rejection from the Muslim majority.

Believers can find themselves ostracised by family, neighbours and communities when they leave Islam. Many are unable to get work because Muslims refuse to employ them. Others struggle because of the loss of a parent or breadwinner, and farmers are denied access to water for their cattle and gardens. Food parcels sent in through Christian agencies bring much help to these needy Christians.

Church congregations of Kyrgyz converts are small, typically of 20 to 40 adult Christians. It is impossible for them to meet the requirement to have at least 200 members for church registration. As a result, many regions have no registered church buildings, meaning that congregations must gather illegally in private houses to worship.

Barnabas Aid

From a pastor in Tanzania:

"I and my family are spiritually healthier and more encouraged through reading Bridgeway books. They are full of wisdom for us to understand the purpose of God for us in his kingdom. Bridgeway is a blessing for many people, starting with us, and everybody wants to study the Bible with Bridgeway Bible Commentary and Bible Dictionary. Many who have received these books via my arms asked me to send you email to tell the goodness they meet through these books".

Bridgeway

Brazil's isolated groups

Within Brazil, South America's most populous country, are an estimated 305 tribal groups, comprising nearly one million individuals. More than a hundred of these groups still lack exposure to the gospel. Some of them are on the brink of extinction because of migration to the big cities, but this has not diminished the enthusiasm of local missionaries to evangelise the isolated people-groups. These local missionaries come from a variety of ethnic backgrounds.

SAM

Gaza-Israel war

Church leaders in the Gaza-Israel region say Palestinian Christians often feel like the forgotten church. The Palestinian church is the hands and feet of Jesus Christ in unimaginable tragedy, but they need the support of the global body of Christ. As we pray for the conflict between Israel and Hamas, please remember and pray for the Palestinian church. Arab and Israeli Christians are showing profound unity as church leaders on both sides of the conflict seek to work together for good. Only 1% of Israelis know Jesus as their Saviour and 97% have never even heard the Gospel

Mission Network News

From a pastor in Burundi

"I have been involved in different outreaches with different churches and have used and distributed your Basic Christianity Series of books. Over 200 pastors have been trained and they are in turn reaching their congregations in small groups around the Word of God."

Bridgeway

Rebuilding Iraq

In Qaraqosh, the ancient heartland of Iraqi Christianity, several of the ten church buildings destroyed by Islamic State have now been repaired and rebuilt. When the forces of IS took Qaraqosh ten years ago, the entire 'Christian' population fled, most of them still living 70 km away in Erbil, the central city of Iraqi Kurdistan. Pray that more will be able to return to their hometowns, and that those who have already returned will find employment. Earlier this year more than 900 Iraqi Christians gathered to celebrate their faith at a three-day conference in Erbil.

Barnabas Aid

The battle for Nepal

In September, Hindu nationalists attacked a church in Nepal's south-western region, vandalising the church and assaulting its pastors. This was the seventh attack on a church in two weeks. Hindu nationalists are ramping up their calls for the restoration of the Hindu State. Angered by the rapid growth of Christianity, they are also fuelling sectarian hatred – protesting against religious conversions and beef consumption. The number of Christians in Nepal has risen from virtually zero in 1950 to 1.34 million today, mostly Protestant. This represents about 4.4% of the population, giving Nepal one of the fastest growing churches in the world. The battle for Nepal is heating up! Please pray.

Religious Liberty

The Bible around the world

Last year Bible Societies worldwide saw the number of Scripture translations rise to 106 languages, spoken by over 1.25 billion people. Continued revision of existing translations, including study editions, reached into 36 languages spoken by over 1.15 billion people. The full Bible is now accessible in 743 languages to 5.96 billion people. It is estimated that 220 national Bible Societies and other groups are working on translation projects to produce the Bible in native languages.

UBS

Reaching the teenagers of Rwanda

Every week a nationwide ministry called 'Teens for Christ' reaches 47,000 teenagers aged 13-19 – in schools, streets, churches and sports activities. Its aim is to present the gospel in a way that brings a spiritual and physical influence into the lives of teenagers and so release them from the bondage of sin, ignorance, poverty, loneliness, addiction and lack of opportunities in society. The ministry has 42 workers in ten cities, many of the workers having come to Christ through TFC programs when they were teens.

Last year a training conference for group leaders had 489 in attendance. A separate and wider-ranging event, which started with the graduation of 47 discipleship class students, aimed to attract 4500 young people, but when over 8000 showed up (including youth, school teachers, principals and parents), the gates had to be closed. Over 400 people gave their lives to Christ. TFC has received a certificate of appreciation from the local government for what they have done to change the lives of young people.

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