

PRAYING FOR THE WORLD

WEEK 3, JANUARY 18-24

Week of prayer for Christian unity



This is the week that Christians pause and prayerfully remember the call to Christian unity.


Unity is the Church's destiny. Paul describes God's purpose for all creation in Ephesians 1:9 '[God] made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ, to be put into effect when the times reach their fulfilment – to bring unity to all things in heaven and on earth under Christ.'

Unity is the hallmark of reconciliation and humility. In a proud and divided world, Christ calls his people to reach out to each other across divides of language, culture and prejudice. This is a powerful sign of God at work. As Jesus prayed to his Father, 'I have revealed you to those whom you gave me out of the world ... [may they] be brought to complete

unity. Then the world will know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me' (John 17:6,23).

Unity is vital for fulfilling the Great Commission. A divided Church wastes resources, both human and material. When churches are united and cooperating however, they can achieve many things that none of them could manage on their own.

Unity is easily neglected. Busy with our own church and ministry, we can fail in the work of praying and serving alongside brothers and sisters in different churches and denominations. This is a great loss to ourselves and to the cause of Christ.

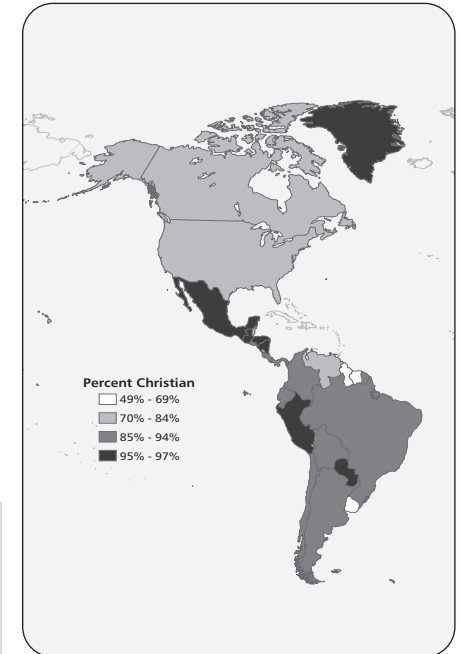
 Pray that each one of us will 'make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace' (Ephesians 4:3).


THE NATIONS

THE AMERICAS

Christianity has been dominant in the Americas since the Europeans arrived.

Today the Americas are home to 825 million Christians, just over a third of all the Christians in the world. North America has a strong evangelical heritage and unique wealth. No country can compare with the United States in its capacity to do both good and harm. Central and South America continue to see strong evangelical growth, even as they struggle with poverty, inequality, high levels of crime and political instability. North and South America each send a large number of missionaries into the world.




 Pray that among peoples of all ethnic backgrounds, and amid the temptations of power and the struggles of inequality, Christ will be glorified across the Americas and in the wider world.

THE CARIBBEAN

Around 44 million people live in the Caribbean, about three quarters of them in Cuba, Haiti and the Dominican Republic. Throughout the Caribbean the same stories are familiar themes: a legacy of colonial rule and slavery; a current story of fragility, inequality, and broken families. Some islands have very high rates of violent crime.

In many countries there is a deep sense of God and evangelical movements are growing.

 The most urgent and strategic need is for greater discipleship of the millions of Christians in the Caribbean. Pray also for church unity, for spiritual formation and discipleship, and for the churches to make an impact in society.

Praying for the World is a free weekly prayer guide to inspire and inform the whole church to pray for the whole world. Visit www.lausanne.org/pray to start any week. Created through the partnership of Operation World and the Lausanne Movement.

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