

PRAYING FOR THE WORLD

WEEK 49, DECEMBER 6-12

Disability

Sickness and disability are two of the greatest burdens laid on the human species. The poor and needy feel them the worst. Poor health and poverty cross-fertilize each other. Some facts:

- 39 million of the world's people are blind and 246 million have low vision. 80% could be cured if resources allowed. Ninety percent of the world's sight-impaired people live in the developing world.

- The world is home to 70 million deaf people. Deaf people are notably unreached by the gospel as well as isolated from the world. By one estimate, fewer than 2 million deaf people have encountered the good news of Jesus. A specific initiative for prayer for them was launched in 2017.

The Lausanne Movement's catalyst for disabilities has said this, 'More than two millennia have passed since Jesus gave his mandate, "Go out quickly... and bring in the poor, the crippled, the blind, and the lame" (Luke 14:21b). After many years of tilling difficult ground, and with early bunches of sweet fruit in our hands, the season of harvest is upon us. Never before have cultural, governmental, and spiritual opportunities come together in such a dynamic way for the evangelism, discipleship, and inclusion of persons with disabilities worldwide. Barriers are tumbling down and people with disabilities are rising to higher roles of influence in societies around the world.'

✎ Jesus came to bring sight to the blind and freedom for the captives. A holistic Christian vision for everyone

CALLS TO ACTION



APPOINT

The Church should seek to appoint people with disabilities to leadership roles.



REFUTE

The Church should refute social and spiritual stigmas placed on the disabled.



HEED

The Church should heed insights from the experience of the disabled.



INCLUDE

The Church should include the disabled in missional efforts to the abled and disabled.

on the planet includes good healthcare, especially for the most vulnerable and needy. Pray for the healing that comes from God to be brought to all who need it.

✎ The vision of the gospel for every person must also welcome and include every sick or disabled person. Often, as in Jesus' time, the sick are the most willing to respond to the good news. Pray for fresh strength for every Christian endeavour that serves with and among the sick and disabled.

THE NATIONS

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES



The United Arab Emirates (UAE) is a federation of seven Arab states with a population of 10 million people. Oil has transformed the UAE from poverty to great wealth within a couple of generations. Approximately half the population are expatriates. Christians can worship in peace in the UAE but it is illegal to proselytize the Arab Muslim population.

Youth unemployment is high and government attempts to buy off the younger generation with welfare or job creation schemes are working less and less well. Many migrant labourers work in terrible conditions for low pay.

Political repression and censorship have increased in recent years. The UAE's vast wealth has led it to both intensive investment overseas as well as becoming entangled, usually by proxy, in regional military conflicts.

✎ Pray that the humble witness of domestic labourers and expatriate professionals might lead many Arabs to Jesus. Pray for justice to spread throughout the UAE.

UNITED KINGDOM



The story of this rich Western European nation of 67 million people is the fading of a white, complacent, traditionally Protestant nation; and the rise of an ethnically diverse, globalized, socially liberal and non-religious new generation. Britain is caught in the crossroads between these two outlooks on the world.

Social isolation and loneliness are major problems for all generations in the UK. Cuts have frayed the welfare safety-net, especially for vulnerable children and the mentally ill.

Traditional Christianity continues its century-long decline. Yet new churches and initiatives are taking shape in what is still Europe's largest evangelical community. In London, the youngest and most ethnically diverse part of the country, there are 2000 more churches today than 20 years ago.

The overseas-born population has jumped from 8% of the population in 2001 to around 15% in 2015. This brings new strengths and fresh opportunities to the UK Church.

✎ Pray that the Christian faith will capture the hearts of the rising generation.
✎ Pray for the growth of inclusive, loving Christian communities.
✎ Pray for a great harvest in every ethnic group in the UK.

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.