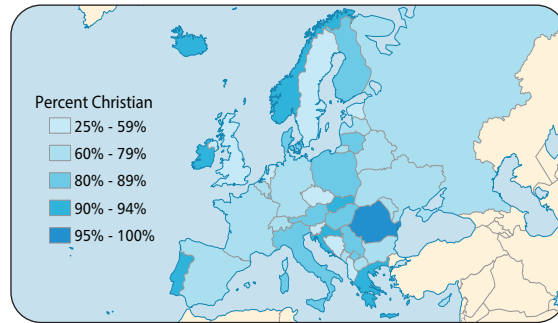


# PRAYING FOR THE WORLD

WEEK 5, JANUARY 31 - FEBRUARY 6

## EUROPE



Europe - stretching from Ireland to parts of Russia, from Greenland to Greece - is seeing the long twilight of traditional Christianity. Most of the peoples of Europe were baptized by 1000AD and have had a Christian background ever since.

Europe's nominal Christians are similar to soccer supporters who follow their team but never go to a match. They treat Christianity as a public utility, something you only call on in times of need. But now, even this nominal Christian identity is fading fast. In the Czech Republic, for example, over 70% of people now say they are 'non-religious.'

## Evangelicals in Europe

1. Evangelicals –who emphasize faith in Christ and commitment to the Bible and conversion– are stronger in European countries with a Protestant heritage, such as Norway, Switzerland, Germany and the Netherlands. But of the world's 15 countries with five million evangelicals or more, only one is European (the UK).
2. The south-east European state of Romania also has many evangelicals. It has a large Roma population, many of whom are Pentecostals, and also an evangelical movement within the Romanian Orthodox Church.
3. Evangelicals make up an active minority of around 1% in Belgium, Bulgaria, France, Ire-

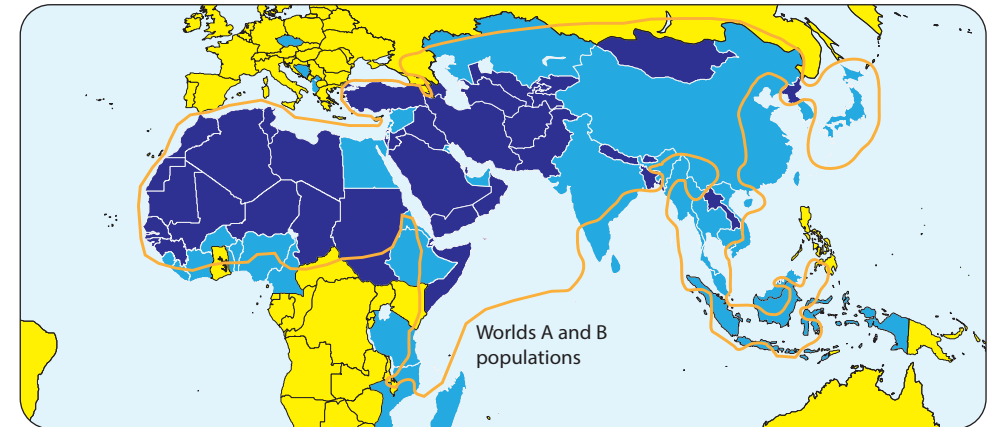
land, Italy, Lithuania, Malta, Monaco, Portugal, Slovakia and Spain. Here, evangelicals are often members of the poorest communities, or might be Roma, former drug users, or migrants.

4. Elsewhere, evangelicals in Europe are a tiny minority, tens of thousands or less in each country.

Pray for deep, wide renewal among the peoples of Europe, and the revival of Christian identity based on encounters with the living Christ!

## THE NATIONS

### Those who have not heard the gospel



- World A = less than 50% of individuals are evangelized.
- World B = at least 50% of all individuals are evangelized but Christians comprise less than 60% of population.
- World C = at least 60% of population claims to be Christian

The Church has a debt to bear witness of Christ to the whole world. How far has it succeeded?

1. Humans today are divided into around 17,000 people groups. They are separated by language, national borders and, especially in the Indian subcontinent, by ingrained ideas of caste. Many people groups are very small: 7,000 peoples have fewer than 10,000 members each, the size of a large village.
2. People groups may be similar to what the Bible calls 'nations'. Jesus' command to 'make disciples of all nations' (Matthew 20:19) implies 'make disciples of all people groups'.
3. Churches grow within people groups. The gospel usually spreads through social networks, and so it tends to stay confined within a people group.
4. It takes a missionary effort for the gospel to move from one people group to another.

5. An 'unreached' group is a people group with very little witness to Christ. A best guess is that around 28% of the world have not been exposed to the good news about Jesus, mostly because they belong to groups with little Christian witness. This is 2.1 billion people.

6. Note that too much precision can be misleading and people are more complicated than their labels. But the Church's duty is clear: to bear witness to Christ today, to every people, tribe and nation.

Pray that God will send people to take the gospel message to every people group on earth.

Pray that every part of the beautiful mosaic that comprises human diversity will take its part in the united worship of Christ!

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](http://www.lausanne.org/pray) to start any week. Created through the partnership of Operation World and the Lausanne Movement.