

PRAYING FOR THE WORLD

Peacemaking and reconciliation initiatives

Jesus taught, 'Blessed are the peacemakers.' However, different situations require different kinds of reconciliation and peacemaking as there are many types of breakdowns of community. Beyond personal conflict, strife can break out along religious, political, ethnic, regional, or even, sadly, denominational lines. Reconciliation of believers one to another is a Scriptural imperative, not a negotiable extra! But in a world where such fault lines exist virtually everywhere, the power of Christian peacemaking is also a profound evangelistic tool.

An example from Egypt

On April 9, 2017, as Egyptian Christians were celebrating Palm Sunday, carrying palm branches and chanting 'Hosanna in the Highest', coordinated bomb attacks on major churches in Alexandria and Tanta in northern Egypt left tens of people dead and hundreds seriously injured. The joyful celebration turned into mourning across the country. The attack was one in a series of attacks on churches and Christians that has left thousands dead and injured.

While many Christians struggle to choose between leaving the country or enduring more suffering, the extraordinary Christian response to the violent attacks that have taken place since 2013 has provided many opportunities for witness to the gospel and a renewed sense of mission to the larger community. Christians did not seek revenge; instead they extended forgiveness to those who murdered



their loved ones.

Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you.
John 14:27 ESV

Such powerful Christian testimonies had a lasting impact on the larger Muslim community that was stunned by the Christian response.

Meanwhile, many Christians have been empowered by the testimonies of those who boldly extended love and forgiveness, leaving them a renewed sense of mission amid suffering.

What is happening in Egypt is not a remote event in church history, but a leaving testimony to the power of the Christian faith.

- Thank God for the service and suffering of the Church in Egypt. Pray for them.
- Pray that persecuted churches everywhere will transform suffering into mission through forgiveness.
- Pray for a zeal for peacemaking and reconciliation to spread through the whole Church.

THE NATIONS

UGANDA



Uganda is poor, but stable and growing. Revival and church growth continue in this East African state of 48 million people. For decades, the proportion of evangelicals in Uganda has been one of the highest in the world. Public prayer is common even in government and judicial buildings. Government and churches worked hard to reduce Uganda's AIDS problem from one of the world's highest. The president recently removed age limits on the presidency so that he could serve a fifth term in office; repression of political opponents is a concern.

- Pray the government will not slide further into autocracy and corruption, but will be a force for good in the nation.
- Pray that the Kingdom of God will make an impact on all areas of Ugandan life.

UKRAINE



Since the collapse of communism, Ukraine's people have been pulled roughly and alternately between Russian and Western influence—a thirty-year story involving political power struggles, pro-democracy protests, and attempts by Russia to seize Ukrainian territory. Russia's invasion shocked the world and led to tens of thousands of deaths, war crimes, and massive destruction and trauma. Millions are displaced, both internally and abroad, and local Christian groups and individuals have been outstanding in opening their doors and offering hospitality and witness to them.

Most Ukrainians are Orthodox. Ukrainian Orthodoxy needs prayers for healing of internal divisions, as well as for providing spiritual guidance to the people during the war. Catholicism has deep roots in Ukraine and has also grown rapidly since 1991. Protestantism is only around 2% of the population, but Ukraine is home to many Biblical seminaries and the headquarters of mission agencies – many now flattened by war.

- Ukraine is a nation that needs healing, but also has fresh purpose, unity and direction. Pray that out of the trauma and loss a stronger nation will be forged, grounded in integrity and justice, becoming again one of the world's breadbaskets, and with Christ as the cornerstone. workers from other nations.

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.