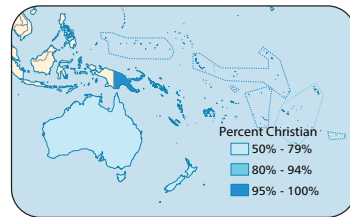


PRAYING FOR THE WORLD

OCEANIA

Oceania (39 million people) consists of 25,000 islands scattered across a third of the globe. The largest populations are in Australia, Papua New Guinea and New Zealand.



Until the mid 20th century, Australia and New Zealand's peoples were mostly of European descent and reflected Western countries economically and spiritually, with rising secularism against a fading Christian background. However, in recent decades, significant migration from China, South and Southeast Asia has seen the demographic profile shift and some Asian churches are now growing. Both nations have significant indigenous populations (Aborigines and Maoris) who suffered significant injustice from European colonists.

The other states of Oceania are typically poor, isolated and largely dependent on foreign aid and remittances from islanders working abroad. Almost all the region's 1300 peoples adopted Christianity, but Biblical literacy is often poor, heresy prevalent, and a Christian veneer masks many problems.

✞ Yet God is still at work: pray that justice might roll like a river and that God's people will humble themselves and pray.

AFGHANISTAN

Afghanistan's 40 million people, nearly all Muslims, are weary of war, poverty and Islamist oppression. The country has known constant bloodshed since the Soviet invasion of 1979. Twenty years of moderate freedom—and some church growth—under American-backed government ended with the return of the Taliban in 2021. Since then, the Taliban's harsh methods have improved security and reduced corruption, but the economy has collapsed and poverty and hunger dominate. Afghanistan has become almost a prison for women. They are banned from secondary education, shut out of many occupations, and viciously policed to be correctly covered up. Thousands of Christians have fled. Others keep their faith deeply hidden for safety.

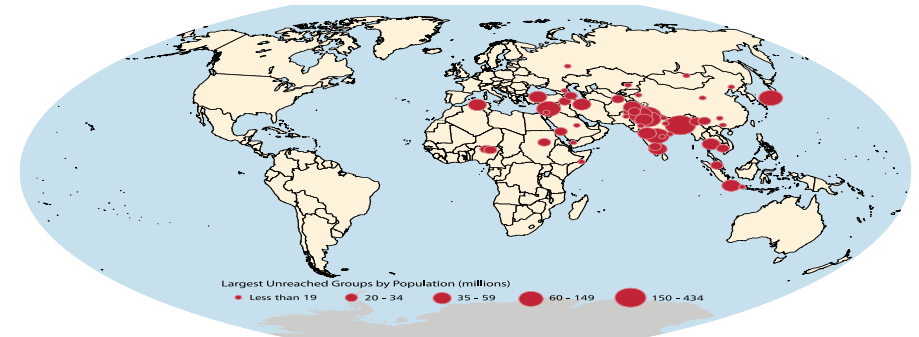


✞ Pray for the gospel to spread. In the harsh conditions, some hearts are softening. Iranian believers, among others, are taking the gospel to Afghan refugees and seeing a response.

✞ Pray for peace, food, education and opportunity for all Afghanistan's people, and especially its women and girls.

THE NATIONS

A Church for every people



Where has the gospel been least preached? Humans can be divided into around 17,000 people groups, defined by language, national borders, or (often in the Indian subcontinent) by old ideas of caste. Each people group needs its own Christian movement, so that all peoples are brought to a wonderful unity and fullness in Christ.

Of these 17,000 people groups:

- 4,800 people groups are the 'least-evangelized peoples'. No more than one person in a thousand in these groups is a Christian.
- Most of these least-evangelized peoples are small, with populations no bigger than a medium-sized city.
- A few of the least-evangelized peoples are very large. The 400 biggest contain 1.6 billion people.
- 250 of these largest groups are in India or Pakistan.

Several hundred groups, which together include about eight million people in total, have no known Christians and no known Christian work. These are known as the UUPGs -- unengaged unreached people groups.



✞ Remember the forgotten. Scattered through the world are thousands of people groups, often migrant communities, with very small populations and very few Christians. Some groups merge with the majority cultures around them, especially as generations pass. But these groups also need thousands of outsiders to enter their cultural world as servants to bring the gospel. Pray it will happen!

✞ Pray for the gospel to spread in the Indian sub-continent - nowhere in the world has such a concentration of least-evangelized people groups and people.

Search for the Joshua Project to see the most comprehensive, freely available database of unevangelized peoples. See also the Finishing the Task network who work to make sure that every one of the least-evangelized peoples has at least one church-planting initiative among them.

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.