PRAYING FOR THE WORLD

World leaders



The world has around 195 countries. That means that just under 200 national leaders (a list that changes constantly) are responsible for decisions that affect everyone on earth. Many of these leaders gather in New York each September for the UN General Assembly.

More important than world leaders themselves are the institutions that surround and outlast them.

• Democratic structures that make leaders and law-making bodies accountable to the people they serve.

• An independent judiciary along with honest and efficient law-enforcers who hold everyone in society, whether high or low, to the same agreed laws.

• A thriving civic society, including journalists, academics, religious figures and non-governmental organizations, which is able to complement and critique the state for the common good, including safeguarding the rights of minorities and the vulnerable.

• A healthy business culture that both rewards hard work and makes employment opportunities available for all who need them.

It is always a danger when leaders try to suppress or control these institutions, especially when backed by military force. The US think-tank Freedom House counts around 2.5 billion people who live in countries that lack healthy institutions.

Pray for the leaders of the world and of its institutions 'that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way. This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Saviour, who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth' (1 Timothy 2:1-4, ESVUK).

Pray for the Church in every country to live up to its call to both make peace and be prophetic; to both pray for the political leaders and confront their injustice whenever it occurs; and to be faithful to its double citizenship (as a community of citizens of heaven and earth) as it bears witness to Christ as Lord and Saviour of the world, and in every sphere of society.

THE NATIONS

NEPAL





Social justice is a huge challenge in this Himalayan mountain kingdom of 30 million people, one of the poorest countries in the world. Much has been achieved, but poverty, political struggles, geography and the caste system still leave many people struggling and oppressed – among them, child labourers, children trafficked into the sex trade, children dying of easily-prevented diseases. Many Christian groups are demonstrating the love of Christ in practical and spiritual ways.

The Nepali Church has grown through many trials. The first church started in 1952 with 29 Christians. By 2010, 850,000 of Nepal's population were followers of Christ, in nearly 10,000 church groups. Growth came - and continues - through prayer and through willingness to suffer for the gospel.

Pray for political stability and the economic transformation of Nepal.

Pray that the Church will continue to grow and mature, despite threats and opposition. Pray for godly leaders for the Church.

THE NETHERLANDS





This prosperous Western European state (population 17 million) has been famous for its tolerance. But this is fraying as cultural and religious tensions multiply. Like many European countries, the Netherlands has seen the rise of far-right, populist parties with an anti-immigrant agenda.

Christianity seems to have reached a low point. The Netherlands' glorious history as a Christian nation includes ministry to refugees and Jews, and a long record of service in foreign missions. Only 16% of the population attends church regularly. Yet, the Netherlands still retains a living and vibrant church, recently buoyed by the arrival of migrant communities with strong Christian populations.

Pray the Church will thrive again after decades of deep pruning. Pray that through Christian influence the Netherlands will continue to be a haven for the oppressed, the luckless and the persecuted.

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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