

Prayer Bulletin June 2022



The power of the Holy Spirit

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth. (Acts 1:8/NIV).

Dear brothers and sisters,

In the forty days between Jesus' resurrection from the dead and Christ's ascension, Jesus met his disciples first in Jerusalem, then on the shores of the Sea of Galilee and on a mountain in Galilee, and finally back in Jerusalem. There on the Mount of Olives he parted from them and was lifted up through a cloud into heaven. This is where he will come again when the time is fulfilled. The disciples were to remain in Jerusalem for the time being, waiting on the coming of the Holy Spirit. On the feast of Pentecost, the feast of the beginning of the barley harvest in Israel, the disciples received the power of the Holy Spirit and began to praise God. The many festival-goers who came to Jerusalem heard them praising God in their own mother tongues, even though the disciples' language betrayed them as Galileans. The festival-goers at that time all knew the lingua franca Greek and maybe even Aramaic. But God wanted each person to encounter Him in their mother tongue. That is still the case today. That is why the Bible is translated into so many languages. God makes himself understood! He also helps us when we pass on his word, even if it is in a language we first had to learn with difficulty. The power of the Holy Spirit makes us able to pass on God's Word in such a way that it is understood and impacts hearts.

Our current concerns:

Switzerland: Pray for our Catch the Vision Weekend as well as for Cultures - Intercultural Leadership Training for MBBs.

Our cooperation partner writes: The "Catch the Vision Weekend" (29. July 2022 - 01 August 2022) will change your life. The weekend is aimed at all MBBs and Christians with a migration background (refugees, migrants & their descendants) in German-speaking Europe who want to be a blessing for their environment and the world. On these days we will fellowship with God, worship Him, enjoy free time together, cultivate friendships and have good fun. You can expect exciting speakers from home and abroad who will motivate and challenge you to take new steps. More here: <https://interculturel.info/veranstaltung/catch-the-vision-weekend/>. **Cultures** is a life-changing discipleship and leadership training for MBBs and Christians with a migration background in **Switzerland**. We offer two different modular courses, each lasting 9 months, from October 2022 to June 2023. The first course focuses on succession, identity, bible knowledge and biblical foundations. The second course focuses on leadership, discipleship, foundation, and mission. More here: <https://andcultures.ch/>

Iran: Pray for the Christian station Mohabba TV, for the staff and all the programmes that are broadcast.

One testimony of a Mohabba TV viewer: Yousef and his sister had a difficult childhood and adolescence in Iran. After his sister got married, Yousef was unable to hold down a job or have meaningful relationships because of his drug addiction. His drug addiction became so expensive that he often had nothing to eat. The only person he could turn to was his sister. One day, depressed, hopeless and hungry, he visited his sister's house. While he was there, the programme on the television caught his attention. The host was talking about how Jesus can bring hope, healing and joy into our lives if we allow him to. This was all new to him, but a longing in his heart urged him to pray with the moderator. Yousef later recalled, "... I just prayed and asked Jesus to free me from drugs and give me joy." The simple prayer with the Iranian Christian anchor completely changed his life. In his last call to our 24/7 Prayer and Counselling Call Centre, Yousef said, "Everyone is surprised at what Jesus has done in my life. A simple prayer with your TV host opened a door for God to bless me! Now I am healed, I have a job, I am married and I have a family.

Turkey: Let us pray especially for Turkey this month and count on God's power of change. Turkey, a country that officially has a secular constitution, refuses to formally recognise the community of Turkish Protestants. The state does not allow

them to run their own churches or share their faith freely with their fellow citizens. Protestant Christians face discrimination, deportations and hate speech. Communio Messianica board member Ali Kalkandelen has made a summary of comprehensive reports available. Here are the main findings from it:

One hundred years ago, one third of Turkey's inhabitants were Greek, Armenian or Assyrian Christians. Today, only 0.1 per cent of Turkey's population is Christian. The decimation of Christian communities in Turkey is the result of decades of persecution, including genocide, expulsions, pogroms and discrimination condoned and practised by public authorities. But there is also a growing Christian population in the country: Turkish converts from Islam to Christianity, many of whom have joined a Protestant church. This community faces many problems, including the lack of official recognition by the government. The "2021 Protestant Community Rights Violation Report" by the Turkish Association of Protestant Churches, of which Kalkandelen is the chairman, lists the challenges facing the community.

According to the report, Protestant Christians in Turkey lack legal recognition as a church or religious community, which severely restricts their freedom of religion and belief. Since they have no official legal status, they cannot build their own places of worship or use existing church buildings for services. Therefore, they resort to other buildings, which causes further problems. They are also not allowed to maintain training centres to educate or train their staff. That is why they are dependent on foreign workers. Whenever foreign workers come to Turkey to serve the Protestant community, they run the risk of being expelled. Protestant Christians are often exposed to hate speech in the press and social media. The secret services try to infiltrate and subvert the communities. Court cases are brought against these congregations and individual Christians. The media is misused to stir up sentiment against Christians.

Despite all the efforts of the congregations, there is not a single building in Turkey that is registered as a Protestant church in the land register and bears the signature of a governor and a district governor, nor is there a church that has gained the status of a legal entity in the last 20 years. At the same time, Turkey has converted many historic churches and monasteries into mosques, stables, warehouses, exhibition halls, ammunition depots or private homes.

Turkey, which has a secular constitution, steadfastly refuses to officially recognize the Protestant community or allow them to run their own churches and share their faith freely with their fellow citizens.

Thank you for supporting us in prayer.
Shalom - Peace be with you -
Yassir Eric and co-workers

