

PRAYING FOR THE MIDDLE EAST

DAILY PRAYER GUIDE

SEPTEMBER 2017



If we claim to have fellowship with him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live out the truth. But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin. 1 John 1:6&7

WALKING IN THE LIGHT Light and dark are among John's favourite and most powerful images. You can see why from these verses. *Claiming to have fellowship* and living in the opposite direction amounts to living a *lie*, and while we may deceive ourselves we can't deceive God.

We're often told we've come out of the world's darkness into the light of Christ. The picture shows how one of the leading churches in the Middle East strikingly reversed it, as they reflected on Jesus' sending out seventy (or seventy two) in Luke 10:1. Jesus sends his disciples *ahead of him* to the places he's going to visit, urging them to pray others will join in and engage. Thus he sends his people from his light into the world's darkness.

Which is John's understanding too. *Walking in the light* is the key to effective witness to Christ. As we go, we're supported by knowing we're not alone, and confident that if and when we stumble and sin, *the blood of Jesus purifies us*.

1 FRIDAY INTERNATIONAL

The feast of Eid al Adha marks the end of the Hajj pilgrimage, and our colleagues will be visiting families and friends to celebrate with them. As people remember Abraham's willingness to sacrifice his son, pray they will come to know God through understanding Christ's complete sacrifice.

2 SATURDAY INTERNATIONAL

A significant partner church has an established team in the Barcelona area. Uphold them as they reach out to people struggling with loss and confusion after the attacks last month; may the Lord give wisdom and grace as they hold out the word of life.

3 SUNDAY MIDDLE EAST

A new 24-hour Arabic TV channel, SAT-7 ACADEMY, launches this week, aiming to give thousands of displaced and refugee children complementary learning opportunities. Pray families who have fled conflict will find this, and for their children to benefit as they recover educationally.

4 MONDAY LEBANON

Ruth's school year starts at the end of the month; she gets ahead by starting to teach Physics A level plus Grade 10 students from today. Pray for a good rapport with her students, and for opportunities to talk about spiritual truths.

5 TUESDAY EGYPT

A key international school in Cairo celebrates its twentieth anniversary today. While they're pleased to have a full staff this year, the board are still looking to appoint a new Principal. Uphold *TJ** as she teaches art to several of the students.

6 WEDNESDAY LEBANON

Mike & Vicky, Luke & Mark are back in Lebanon after a busy home assignment. Pray they will quickly get back into action in the Education Centre, which started up again at the end of August. Pray for *Luke* and *Mark* as they start their school year today, with government exams at the end for *Luke*.

7 THURSDAY EGYPT

The 'Landing Pad' guest house in Cairo is open and booked for most of September. Three different groups will be visiting 17-22: some mobilizers, and some praying about coming to serve. May the visitors and those they meet discern what God has for them, and communicate clearly with supporters around the world.

8 FRIDAY MIDDLE EAST

MikeP and country leaders will be welcoming three people from Canada and the US as they come to meet our teams and see opportunities over the next two weeks. May this be a fruitful trip for our visitors, who will return to help people enquiring about working in the region, and for colleagues and partners in the region.

9 SATURDAY IRAQI KURDISTAN

*S&KR** and *Kameran* are back in the country and preparing to welcome *Robbie*, a new teacher trainer, due to arrive shortly. Pray for joy in all their adjustments, including beginning home-schooling with *Kameran* and *Vivi's* continuing university studies.

10 SUNDAY LEBANON

The Arab Baptist Theological Seminary (ABTS) begins a new academic year tomorrow, with around twenty new residential students as well as returners. Pray for visas for new students; and for the rapidly growing On-Line program to be effective in developing church leaders in the Arab world.

11 MONDAY EGYPT

With *ChrisA* just returned, uphold each of our team as they plunge back in to their service with local believers. *Chris* is moving towards retiring at the end of October, and we're eager to find suitable new people ready to embrace the challenge of the cities and the language.

12 TUESDAY AUSTRALIA

Noel & Ros know an Afghan doctor, his wife and two teenage children in Adelaide. The father describes himself as a free thinker and his wife is not covered. "We visit the family and have given them Christian literature and the Jesus DVD over the years. May they all come to know Jesus as their Lord and Saviour."

13 WEDNESDAY IRAQI KURDISTAN

MikeP is here until Saturday with a group of colleagues learning about realities and opportunities in the region. Pray for good relationships and patterns of communication to be established, and for our national ministry partners to be encouraged.

14 THURSDAY JORDAN

*EM** joins our team today, initially for a year: "Pray for good connections with people, for me to encourage those around me, and for father's provision of a place to live, people to meet with and hone my language skills." She's aiming to find others who will go with her to the new place she visited earlier this year.

15 FRIDAY IRAQI KURDISTAN

The Kurdish Regional Government hold a referendum in ten days' time, voting on independence, despite strong opposition from Baghdad and a request from the US to postpone it. This was planned in 2005, when the new Iraqi Constitution was drawn up. As tensions rise, ask for God's hand to restrain violence.

16 SATURDAY ADVOCACY

Give thanks that a major conference held in Colombia has given good opportunities for contacts and teaching to both *VS** and *Hesus*. May the advocacy contacts made among Colombian government and politicians come to serve the needs of Christians under pressure in the Middle East and North Africa.

17 SUNDAY IRAQI KURDISTAN

Ask for Sorani Bibles held in customs in Basra since the end of May to be cleared without large customs fees so they can be safely transported to the Biblica base in Erbil. Pray for the new translation to be widely accepted, used and taught effectively in the churches.

18 MONDAY MIDDLE EAST

MikeP & Helen are attending a consultation this week, "We need to talk. . .," run by a long-established regional partner network. They believe this is 'A New Day', and are bringing together national leaders and leaders of international agencies like ours to consider challenges and opportunities in the region.

19 TUESDAY JORDAN

*RW** heads up the PTEE e-Learning project, supervising and training three new staff, all part-time. He is very happy with each of them and the progress being made. It is exciting to see this finally happening after several years of waiting for the finance needed to begin.

20 WEDNESDAY UK

*JM** has been using the Bible to teach English to a group of ladies, one of whom commented, 'Now I see a bit more clearly what the Bible is about.' Pray for N, facing a difficult future having been refused asylum; and for *JM* to convey the trust we can have in the LORD for all our life.

21 THURSDAY EGYPT

*TJ** is teaching in a language school and at a local community school. She and *Sanet* have visas to start with, but will have to negotiate the next step next month. Pray for H, who miscarried a few months ago and is thinking deeply about spiritual things.

22 FRIDAY MIDDLE EAST

Islamic New Year is celebrated today, reminding observers of Muhammad's journey from Mecca to Medina in 622. On the midst of family celebrations, it also gives pause to reflect on human mortality. May our friends come to know the new life Christ offers.

23 SATURDAY INTERNATIONAL

*J & H** are taking extended time out to discern where they should serve next. Give thanks for their connections and service, and uphold them and those who are advising them as they explore alternatives for the next stage.

24 SUNDAY INTERNATIONAL

'Jesus through Middle Eastern Eyes' and 'The Good Shepherd' are two of Kenneth Bailey's books, packed with insights into how familiar gospel stories are understood in their first settings. Pray for the Centre for Middle East Christianity at the Presbyterian Seminary in Cairo as they make these perspectives known.

25 MONDAY IRAQI KURDISTAN

People in this autonomous region will be voting today in a referendum called by the Kurdish Regional Government on independence from Iraq. Ask for the vote to go smoothly without violence or intimidation.

26 TUESDAY UK

SIM & CMF host a day to consider mobilising medics to serve migrants and Middle East people. Uphold *Steve Smith and Fi* as they lead and present, with *MikeP* attending. Pray for this to be informative and visionary, especially for nurses and therapists who will attend.

27 WEDNESDAY UK

*JM** gives thanks "for the small group of sisters I'm studying the book of John with. One said, 'I was so proud I was a M, I thought we were the best, until I found out about Jesus'. When the busyness of September comes with lots of things on the go again, pray they will continue to want to meet."

28 THURSDAY LEBANON

As Evangelical schools in Beirut and Tyre begin their new year today, *Ruth* asks "that the Lord will work in the lives of staff and students and bring them closer to himself during the year. Pray for a positive start to the year and good relationships with students."

29 FRIDAY UK

*JM** took some Farsi-speaking ladies to a large Christian event in Northern Ireland. "It was a blessing for them, they'd never experienced worshipping with others in such large numbers. As the speaker shared what we have in Christ, the young girl beside me leant over and whispered, 'I am SO glad I am Christian!'"

30 SATURDAY MIDDLE EAST

Give thanks and pray for people preparing to come to the region, especially as they focus on carefully raising a team who will support them by prayer and giving. Uphold *Andrea* and *Val* and our regional teams as they steer them through personnel and finance.

* Some names are only shown as initials for security.

MECO (Middle East Christian Outreach) Australia is an interdenominational group of evangelical Christians working alongside SIM Middle East, encouraging national churches as they engage in effective witness to Christ. This Praying for the Middle East update comes to you from the MECO Australia office. Please contact us for changes of address, postal address or for further information