

The Easters, West and East, are a week apart this year – a double reminder of the Lord who has done on the cross what we could not do for ourselves, and whose resurrection proves it. Alive and victorious, he is with his people and in charge of the world.

As they face challenges and pressure, may our Middle Eastern friends be encouraged and strengthened in their witness to Christ as we pray with them, and may his name be honoured in their world as in ours.

1 SUNDAY INTERNATIONAL

"The Lord is risen; he is risen indeed!" As Westerners and many churches in the Levant celebrate today, pray for people from majority backgrounds who may encounter the celebrations. May their eyes be opened, and may they encounter the living Christ.

2 MONDAY EGYPT

After last week's Presidential elections, results will be known today or tomorrow. Pray for them to be received in peace, for the Lord's people to continue to be engaged in public life, and ask for God's wisdom for leaders and countries across the region.

3 TUESDAY SYRIA

A Kurdish couple at the Arab Baptist Seminary have family trapped in Afrin as the bombing continues relentlessly, and the whole college community is concerned. Join them in fervent prayer for this region where violence impacts so many, especially this student's family.

4 WEDNESDAY IRAQI KURDISTAN

Kurdish refugees in IK from Syria were planning to return to Afrin, but hopes have faded. Many fear for the lives of relatives and others. Ask God's protection and provision for Kurdish believers in Afrin, and that many will come to hope in Jesus in these dark days.

5 THURSDAY JORDAN

Rebecca & Samer are leading the Amal puppet team's last few Easter shows today and on 12th and 13th; may the message of the cross come over clearly. They've already started writing and recording Daniel 3 for the summer with the help of a local TV actor.

6 FRIDAY UK

As new workers gather today for a six-day orientation course in Suffolk, pray for more people to commit to language learning with a view to long-term ministry in the Middle East. This is not so much preparation as ministry through growth in language and culture.

7 SATURDAY EGYPT

The midnight drama of the resurrection is a dramatic and powerful display of Eastern Easter hope and joy. Many Christians will be nervous as their celebrations have been attacked, yet they continue to meet, rejoice and witness to Christ's power to change people & society.

8 SUNDAY MIDDLE EAST

Easter in the East continues the celebrations: despite everything that was thrown at Jesus, his death has turned the tables on sin and death, and he is raised to new life ahead of us. Pray for our friends in the region to be strengthened and encouraged in their faith today.

9 MONDAY LEBANON

Mike & Vicky give thanks for last month's youth hike, despite a broken laptop and minibus! Members of the Bavarian Baptist Convention are visiting; partners of the Baptist Convention in Lebanon, they'll be meeting with churches of the north.

10 TUESDAY EGYPT

*BK**, *GS** and *MikeP* will be involved as a major church meets with its partners over the next three days. They believe this is a most significant time in the region, and are praying to the Lord of the harvest to help them find suitable workers with servant hearts.

11 WEDNESDAY MIDDLE EAST

This week the Member Care network host a four-day retreat, 'A Feast for the Soul'. Uphold Keith & Bonnie and Dr Nairy as they lead this. Ask for those attending to hear God's voice and find nourishment, refreshment, perspective and fresh vision together.

12 THURSDAY JORDAN

*EM** visits refugee families with disabled children living near her church, showing them Christ's love and sharing more deeply with them. As they come to the kids programme, may trust be built up with the church as a foundation for sharing the gospel.

13 FRIDAY IRAQI KURDISTAN

Praise God for the safe arrival of the Sorani Kurdish Bibles and New Testaments after an expensive customs delay of eight months. Pray this stock will be widely available through several local bookshops willing to stock them; may God give people a hunger for scripture.

14 SATURDAY IRAQI KURDISTAN

With the new Bibles and NT's available, *SR's** colleagues are completing and printing other books including "The Life, Teachings & Miracles of Christ", a harmony of the four Gospels with explanatory notes designed for those who know nothing of the true Christ.

15 SUNDAY LEBANON

As graduating students at the Arab Baptist Seminary are involved in church life today pray for those preparing to return to their countries in June - in particular those returning to Sudan, where persecution of Christians has intensified over the past few years.

16 MONDAY LEBANON

Pray for teachers as they prepare and for students to have open hearts to receive God's word. Ask for clarity and joy for **Ruth** as she's getting ready to present Senior and Intermediate chapels at 5:40am and 6:30am (UK time) tomorrow morning.

17 TUESDAY SYRIA

A Syrian church leader commented: "Our cautious optimism of a few months ago has turned to growing pessimism. The situation has become an intractable impasse. But in the face of death and fear, Christians remain committed to peace, justice and forgiveness."

18 WEDNESDAY IRELAND

Janeen recently returned to Ireland after a trip to Cyprus and Turkey visiting workers. Ask for wisdom and clarity as she and her colleagues there look at the way forward in ministry during this time, balancing the responsibilities of her ageing parents.

19 THURSDAY MIDDLE EAST

This week four 'mobilizers', whose role is to find and prepare people to join with us, start a ten-day visit in three countries with Colin, **MikeP** and our colleagues. May this be a really eye-opening and fruitful time, and encouraging to our colleagues and partners.

20 FRIDAY EGYPT

Our team take this weekend for retreat, moving out of the crowded city to seek the Lord together. Their focus is Romans 8; may they drink deep of Paul's writing, and may they know the Lord's power and presence both this weekend and in all they are and do.

21 SATURDAY IRAQI KURDISTAN

Please pray for Syrian refugees involved in Child Friendly Spaces supported by SIM - for the children and staff to find the centres to be places of hope, joy and comfort, play and learning.

22 SUNDAY IRAQI KURDISTAN

As Kurdish background believers grow into church leadership roles, pray for their discipleship and training and their ability to teach younger believers clearly so the church grows in depth and numbers. Pray especially for their families to grow in Christ and rejoice in His provision of their every need day by day, including security.

23 MONDAY AUSTRALIA

It turns out **Noel & Ros** are still trying to sell and move over to Perth. Meanwhile, they're in touch with a man whose parents are in the Gulf and who is facing an accusation. "As we pray for this family and witness to them, pray the charge will be withdrawn."

24 TUESDAY MIDDLE EAST

As our visitors move over to Egypt to meet with colleagues and partners there, pray for **J & T*** and their family preparing to move to our region. Ask for them to process change, finish and say goodbye well, and for them to walk closely with the Lord as they get ready.

25 WEDNESDAY TURKEY

US Pastor Andrew Brunson, imprisoned since October 2016, is now formally charged with baseless political crimes and could face life imprisonment. Pray for justice, swift release, & strength for Andrew and his wife Norine; may Christians in Turkey not be intimidated.

26 THURSDAY JORDAN

The cost of living has been constantly increasing over the last year and many people are struggling, and there has been an increase in violence and suicide. May the Easter message of justice and resurrection hope continue to spread and bring light.

27 FRIDAY ALGERIA

There's growing pressure as government continues to close churches and crack down on those suspected of proselytism. May church leaders have great wisdom as they respond to these pressures, and may the authorities respect and uphold religious freedom.

28 SATURDAY LEBANON

This evening the Bread of Life Society hold a dinner for all their partner churches. Pray for it to go well so guests are free to concentrate on the message: this is a key chance to encourage the churches to capture the vision and increasingly own this ministry.

29 SUNDAY JORDAN & UK

Rebecca is travelling to UK tomorrow for a month, hoping to connect with many friends and supporters. Uphold **Samer**, remaining, and pray for this to be a fruitful and useful trip for them both as their church and puppet ministries continue to develop.

30 MONDAY INTERNATIONAL

As our guests leave today after a full round of visits to churches and ministries in three countries, may the time lead to the Lord of the Harvest sending new workers to join with our local partners in fellowship, encouragement and ministry together.

**Some names are only shown as initials for security.*

MECO 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 prayer guide comes to you from the MECO Australia office. Please contact us for changes of email or postal address, or for more information.

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