

PRAYING FOR THE WORLD

WEEK 47, NOVEMBER 20-26

Children and young people



One hundred and forty million babies are born each year. The world is home to around 2.3 billion under-18s, and this figure will stay broadly the same for the rest of the century. (Over the same period, the number of over 65s will grow from half a billion now to 2.5 billion in 2100.)

Improvements in children's physical wellbeing have accelerated since the UN adopted its Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1990. Mortality for under-5s has more than halved, and primary education, clean water, vaccinations, nutrition and internet access are now available for around three-quarters of the world's children.

Further challenges for the world's children and adolescents, though, are even more daunting, most obviously child abuse and child mental health. Prosperity itself can be a risk, just as poverty is. As one ministry puts it, 'Many children and young people today have everything to live with, but nothing to live for.'

The mental, physical, social and spiritual wellbeing of children should be core to the ministry of the Church. Behaviours and beliefs are mostly formed during childhood and early adolescence, later affecting all of life and all of culture. And children and teens can be a force for missions.

🙏 Pray that the Church will rise to the challenge of discipling the world's children as a central part of its ministry task.

🙏 Praise God for amazing progress in the well-being of children, through the diligent work of health workers, teachers, engineers, campaigners and politicians.

🙏 Pray for the world's schools. Pray that no child will miss out on her or his schooling.

THE NATIONS

THAILAND

In 2014, the army took over this southeast Asian Buddhist country of 69 million people – the twelfth time they have seized power since 1932. The military stay firmly in power after elections in 2019. Despite turbulent politics, the 'land of smiles' is growing in prosperity and has a free press and freedom of religion.



- 🙏 Pray for the Thai church – still just 1% of the population after 400 years of missionary work.
- 🙏 The sex trade is deeply integrated in Thai society and culture, is a significant employer, and draws many from overseas, both exploiters and exploited. Pray for all who are victimized by this trade, and all who work to end this deeply harmful industry.

TURKEY

Turkey bridges the gap both in culture and geography between Europe and Central Asia: it shares borders (and problems) with Iran, Iraq, Syria and the EU among others. One-man, authoritarian rule, based around Islamic nationalism, is falling like a shadow on a nation that has a proud tradition of secularism and democracy.



Turkey's largest city Istanbul (formerly Constantinople) was the centre of Eastern Christianity for a thousand years. A Christian presence lingered even after the city fell to Muslim invaders in 1453. As late as 1900, Christians made up 1 in 5 of the population. Persecution, massacres and forced deportations, mainly of Greeks and Armenians, have reduced this to around 1 in 500 now. Evangelicals number just a few thousand among Turkey's 83 million population.

- 🙏 Pray for wisdom for Turkey's leaders who have much influence in a volatile region.
- 🙏 Pray for a great, reviving work of the Holy Spirit among the traditional Christians of Turkey. Praise God for the growth of Turkish evangelical Christianity.
- 🙏 Pray for the gospel to flourish among the majority Turkish and the minority (and often oppressed) Kurdish people. Ask God to break down the barriers of prejudice, mistrust and dislike of Christianity in both groups.

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.