



Charis Celebration Sunday

NOVEMBER 5, 2017

Prayer Guide

Give thanks to the Lord,
call on his name;
make known among the nations
what he has done.

—Psalm 105:1 (NIV)



For more information, please visit
CHARISALLIANCE.ORG



Pray for spiritual awakening in the countries
where the Charis Alliance is at work.

A global network of churches united for the cause of Christ

Each year, hundreds of churches around the world join together to learn about how God brought Charis into existence and is using this vibrant alliance to bring the hope of Christ to the corners of the globe.

We come together to celebrate our global movement and seek God's blessing upon our common pursuit of biblical truth, biblical relationship and biblical mission.

Explore the Charis Alliance at **CharisAlliance.org**, and learn more about Charis Celebration Sunday at **CharisAlliance.org/Celebration**.



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Atlanta Church Planting

Someone has observed, "While the world began in a garden, it will end in a city." That prophecy is rapidly becoming a reality. Since 2007, over 50% of the world's population has migrated to major cities, and that number is only expected to grow exponentially in the future.

Cities present unique challenges for the Gospel and the Church. In an effort to lead by example, in 2012 Encompass World Partners relocated its headquarters from a small town in northern Indiana to the growing metropolis of Atlanta, Georgia. With an ethnic minority or immigrant population of over 1,000,000, Atlanta presents us with great opportunities to better understand cities, to more effectively train new staff and even to plant new churches.

Today we ask you to include in your prayers our efforts to reach Atlanta!

Argentina

Behind Argentina's sophistication and postmodern facade lies an intense spiritual struggle for souls. The low-key but widespread influence of the occult, one of the world's highest Mormon populations, and the growing Muslim population all vie for souls with postmodern agnosticism, hedonistic lifestyles, and Christianity. Spiritism's hidden currents strongly influence far more people than will openly identify with such groups. Religious sects that emphasize materialism and consumerism are on the rise. Past battles were won through intercession; **pray for protection and continued spiritual health for all in the forefront of the battle.**

(OW, 111)

Bahamas

Materialism, stimulated mostly by tourism, deeply affects all aspects of society. Lowering standards of morality see a rise in births out of wedlock, drug use and violent crime... Christian commitment is low and nominalism is widespread, despite nearly all Bahamians claiming to be Christian.

Pray that the people of the Bahamas would see past their material possessions to realize that matters of faith are much more important.

(OW, 130)

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Brazil

Brazil is a spiritually open country, and is probably more Spiritist than Catholic in underlying worldview. Although “non-religion” is actually the fastest-growing faith group, few in that category would be hardcore atheists. Most follow Afro-Brazilian cults derived from African animism and witchcraft. Many quite happily practice Catholicism and Spiritism together. The ecstatic experiences, flexible practices, and emotional mysticism give it great appeal to the Brazilian mindset. Pray for all spiritual falsehoods to be exposed as such and for Christ alone to be exalted as Lord in Brazil; **pray for those in actual spiritual bondage to be delivered through Jesus.**

(OW, 164–165)

Cambodia

Spiritual darkness persists in Cambodia as seen in the ubiquitous spirit shrines, Buddhism’s opposition to any ideological rival, and a general moral collapse. Structures of sin are prevalent throughout, and the people of Cambodia are made to suffer by the enemy of souls. Pray for the light of the Gospel to so shine that the structures of society as well as of individuals may be decisively changed. Mature leadership in churches is a great need. The loss of so many educated people in the Khmer Rouge slaughter pushed many Christians into leadership before they were ready. **Pray for the effective preparation of a new generation of mature leaders.**

(OW, 186–187)

Cameroon

Nominal Christianity is a bigger problem in Cameroon than in most of Africa. The early pioneer work of Catholics, Presbyterians, Lutherans, and Baptists was damaged by compromise and the arrival of liberation theology. Tribalism, pagan practices, alcoholism, and low moral standards are endemic. Most in these churches (Council of Protestant Churches of Cameroon) have little concern for the unreached of the north, and they are only now starting to have a prophetic voice to address the major ills of society. **Pray for deep repentance, lasting deliverance, and true revival, and pray for a restoration of Bible reading, preaching, and holiness among Christians.**

(OW, 191)

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Canada

The influence of Christianity has seen a long, sustained decline, not just in numbers but also in public presence. The non-religious population has made the greatest gains in recent years, but other religions are also growing rapidly through immigration and high birth rates. As with several other Western nations, biblical Christianity faces significant antipathy from the media and popular culture. A failure of relevance, morals, and theological and spiritual dynamism exists in many churches. On the positive side, this fading of Christendom has trimmed the “deadwood” from churches, but it still reflects a sad decline in the influence of the gospel in Canada. **Pray for much-needed revival, starting in the Church and radiating outward.**

(OW, 195)

Central African Republic

The physical human needs of CAR are immense. The seemingly endless series of coups and counter-coups devastated the economy and infrastructure. Widespread evangelism, especially in the 1960s and 1970s, yielded massive numbers of converts but a shortage of disciples. This has slowed the momentum of growth. Within many churches there is little depth of commitment and limited grasp and application of the truths of Scripture. Animistic religions may be decreasing on the surface, but their influence is still strong. Leadership development is increasingly important. **Pray for unity among churches, the development of a new generation of effective leaders, and for fruitful ministries among children and youth.**

(OW, 202–203)

Chad

The complex patchwork of tribes, and the ethnic and religious fault lines between north and south, make stability hard to attain. The constant threat from bandits and rebel groups further destabilizes the situation and hinders both socio-economic progress and Christian ministry. Freedom of religion is a precious reality, but it faces rebel threats that are often strongly Islamist and sponsored by foreign, hardline, Islamist groups. The south is increasingly courted as a counterbalance to this threat. **Pray for a government that is representative of both north and south, honest, and committed to the betterment of all of its citizens. Pray that, while current freedoms still exist, Christians might fully utilize the opportunities.**

(OW, 206–207)



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Chile

Social changes reflect shifts in life and belief in this traditionally conservative nation. Liberalization yields both positive and negative effects. Many are disaffiliating themselves from traditional religious structures, with large numbers leaving both Catholicism and Pentecostalism. Evangelicals are poised to exercise a pivotal role in Chilean society. **Pray that the positive aspects of traditional social structures would be affirmed and strengthened, and that the true Gospel will be faithfully preached.**

(OW, 211–212)

Czech Republic

Protestants have suffered in one way or another since the defeat of the Bohemians by Catholic forces in 1620. There is now freedom but also spiritual decline; the remarkable legacy of both John Hus and then the Moravians is under threat. **Pray for evangelicals, the traditional but shrinking Protestant denominations and the smaller, younger groups such as Baptists, Pentecostals, and others.** Determined, deliberate, and loving outreach and evangelism are necessities, as is the prayer that must precede them.

(OW, 299)

Democratic Republic of Congo

The powerful spiritual evil that presides over much of the land manifests in many ways, beyond mere civil wars, killing, tribalism, greed, and corruption. Systematic rape, unspeakable mutilation and brutality, cannibalism, witchcraft, and occult practices are commonplace. That these horrors are so endemic in a land with over 90% professing Christians is baffling, heart-rending and a call to spiritual warfare. **Cry out for God to deliver this land, binding the spirits that exercise such wicked control over the suffering people.**

(OW, 271)





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France

The accelerating decline of religious faith has seen France's Catholic and mainline Protestant legacies plummet in recent years, even as atheism grew. Hostility toward organized religion and the privatization of spirituality contribute to this decline. Some surveys show that over 30% of French people are non-religious. Most French have a profound ignorance of, or indifference to, the gospel, many having never meaningfully encountered it. Yet, the relativism of postmodernity has generated an acute emptiness and existential angst. This is creating a spiritual hunger that has grown rapidly in recent years. **Pray that Christians would be prepared to patiently and relationally share Jesus with those who seek.**

(OW, 342)

Germany

Germany's wealth, influence, and strategic location could be of inestimable value for the Kingdom of God, but the nation's spiritual health is failing. Humanism and destructive criticism of the Bible enfeebled churches and opened the way to compromise and to pagan Nazi tyranny. Post-war dynamics accelerated the secularization and de-Christianization of society. Symptoms of the sickness are the marginalization of Christianity, the rise of false religious teachings, and mental illnesses occurring in record numbers, including clinical depression. **Pray for a rebirth of spiritual interest and vitality in this region, which was once the epicenter of a great spiritual awakening.**

(OW, 360–361)

Guatemala

Sins of the past must be recognized, repented of, and reparations made, including the terrible mistreatment of the indigenous population and a generation of war with atrocities on both sides. The part played by the USA in arming the oppressors and turning a blind eye to human rights abuses has only been partially acknowledged. There must also be recognition of the multicultural character of the country. Progress is being made in these areas. **Pray especially for evangelical leaders from both Mayan and Spanish-speaking communities as they work toward the healing of the nation.**

(OW, 382)



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Haiti

Haiti needs godly leaders who will prioritize the good of the nation and address its massive problems. Two centuries of misrule, tyranny and recent flawed democratic attempts have brought hopelessness and despair. Corruption is rampant, and robberies and kidnappings are commonplace. **Pray that God would raise up men and women after his own heart to lead the people of this war-torn country out of despair and into his arms.**

(OW, 394)

Ireland

Ireland's ancient Celtic Church strongly shaped society through its dynamic and holistic spirituality. Then followed centuries of suffering, oppression, and violence at the hands of the Vikings and British. More recently, transformation has rapidly overtaken Ireland, led by EU membership, heavy foreign investment in a well-educated, English-speaking workforce, and increased contact with the world. But this new affluence has benefitted only some, and many are left downcast with the effects of recession. This shift has also radically affected immigration/demographics, spirituality, and culture. **Pray that Irish society might be made whole and that Christians might work toward shared Kingdom-goals.**

(OW, 475)

Japan

The powers associated with idolatry in temples and ancestor worship in homes prevail, even in modernistic, "non-religious" Japan. Japanese Christians face notable social and family pressures to conform to Shinto practices, particularly at the New Year and during funerals. The Bible is alien to the worldview of the Japanese, and the concept of a Creator God is foreign to most. Strong pressure to conform to the norm causes many new believers to compromise or eventually fall away. The shame/honor mentality held by many Japanese is a different paradigm and will require missionaries to reexamine how they evangelize and disciple. **Pray for a fresh wave of creative workers who will invest the time and energy required to see fruit among this resistant population.**

(OW, 490)

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Kyrgyzstan

Political regimes subsequent to Communism have thus far only brought about greater corruption, crime, and poverty. Frequent demonstrations point to widespread disillusionment, and the 2010 protests and coup were a most poignant illustration of this. The swiftness and intensity with which such fierce violence broke out points to deeper-lying ethnic, political, and communal tensions in the country. Hope and optimism for the future are scant, even though some positive foundations have been laid. **Pray for a just and righteous government that will oversee the genuine transformation of the Kyrgyz nation. Pray that the harvest may continue and increase.**

(OW, 518)

Mexico

Mexico is a growing nation still discovering its own identity. Meso-American origins, Hispanic history, and a dynamic but turbulent relationship with its neighbors all shape it profoundly. This search often manifests itself through religious identity (both animist and Catholic) and the inevitable accompanying anti-Protestant sentiment. Many socioeconomic challenges face Mexico. The state recognizes the difficulty of traditional solutions and increasingly invites Christians and churches to show initiative and partnership in meeting the many human needs. **Pray that Mexicans, both indigenous and mestizo, might find their ultimate identity and destiny in the love of Christ and the purposes of God.**

(OW, 580–581)

Nigeria

In Nigeria, the cumulative effect of ancient tribal rivalries, Muslim conquests, and British colonial policy left deep scars, but national unity has survived. However, the impact of corruption is devastating and crippling. It pulls many into its grasping free-for-all, undermines good governance, inspires the imposition of sharia law, and leaves the nation's reputation in tatters. This tends to generate such disillusionment that violent and extreme reactions appear to be the only ones that work. Pray that the church will rise to challenge the ills of society by godly example and effectively teaching. **Pray for effective evangelism and discipleship among a rapidly growing population of children and youth.**

(OW, 643–644)

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Philippines

Great economic and political potential is not yet realized despite a wealth of natural resources, deeply democratic sentiment, and a well-educated population. Failures by successive governments to deal with serious economic and social issues hold back development, accelerate unsustainable urbanization, and keep half the population in poverty. Many express religion via sects and cults that blend Christian ideas with all manner of false teaching, often featuring highly controlling and manipulative leadership and teachings. **Pray for all lies to be exposed, and pray for effective Christian apologetics and ministry to the millions caught within these groups.**

(OW, 684–685)

Poland

The materialist dream of wealth is proving elusive and hollow for most. Violence, immorality, and the loss of a moral compass haunt the younger generation. Much of the rural population remains mired in unemployment and poverty. Most are resistant to the gospel due to either cultural Catholicism or spiritual apathy. Almost 90% of municipalities have no evangelical church. **Pray that the Polish quest for material advancement might be subordinated to their search for God. And pray for evangelicals to rise to this great challenge and catch a vision for the salvation of their countrymen as well as of their European neighbors.**

(OW, 690–691)

Portugal

Religion and political freedoms gained in 1975 have transformed the nation, but high religious affiliation and freedom does not translate into genuine faith. This is reflected in the challenges of materialism, individualism and increasing substance abuse. The north is more loyal to Catholicism, but in the center and south, religion is becoming irrelevant to the secularized majority. In some southern areas, less than 3% attend mass, despite efforts of several congregations to reach young people and young families. **Pray for the Holy Spirit to work so that many are freed from traditionalism and encounter the Scriptures and the Savior in a meaningful way.**

(OW, 693)



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Republic of Congo

The Church needs revival and restoration. Congo has been Christianized—superficially, at least—but never truly converted. The majority of the population is Christian, but some sources claim that up to 50% are actually animists. What is undeniable is that for a vast number, Christianity is a thin veneer over traditional African religion. **Pray for a new movement of the Spirit, greater than the revival that blazed through the region more than 50 years ago.** Churches need to be swept clear of flawed worldviews and false beliefs, filled with the Spirit's power, and led by biblical truth.

(OW, 276)

Sudan

Sudan has been known only war for its entire history. Violence is rife throughout Sudan, which is regarded as one of the world's least stable nations. The belligerent government/military waged war against restive populations in the south, west, and east at massive human and economic cost to its own citizens. With religious, ethnic, and linguistic diversity added to civil conflicts and hostile relations with neighbors, peace is nearly impossible. **Pray for sweeping change at the highest levels and throughout the land, for repentance, restitution, and rebuilding of communal life.**

(OW, 785)

Thailand

Thailand has been an island of stability and freedom in a troubled region, but "The Land of Smiles" is also awash with difficulties. Structures of sin and vice continue to prosper, despite increasing efforts to combat them. Corruption allows unscrupulous men—in business, politics, the military and police—to enrich themselves while oppressing others. The moral blights of the sex trade, drug networks, crime syndicates and ecological degradation will remain as long as they are profitable and tolerated. Pray for the breaking of these structures of sin by God's power. Churches are small and often "feel foreign." **Pray for strong Thai leadership to emerge and lead a renewed thrust in evangelism and church planting.**

(OW, 813–814)



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Trinidad

Christianity is professed by nearly two-thirds of the population, but true disciples faithful to God's word are not so common. Many Christians are nominal; many others are polluted by witchcraft, Afro-Spiritist beliefs and Hinduism-influenced worldviews. Family life and morals within the Christian sphere often do not demonstrate the lordship of Christ. **Pray that Christ followers in Trinidad would read the Bible and learn what it means to truly be in the world and not of it.**

(OW, 826)

Turkey

For over 1,000 years, this region was a bastion of Christendom, but later became a strong propagator of Islam. Today, only 0.008% of people in Turkey are evangelical, many of whom are ethnic Turks and Kurds, expatriates, or from historically Christian minorities. Few of the 73 million Muslims have ever heard the gospel. Turkey's location along the ancient Silk Road routes connected it deeply to Islam for centuries, and could become a bridge between Europe and Asia for the transmission of a revitalized Christianity. **Pray for the Good News to once again penetrate this region, leading to the formation of many healthy churches.**

(OW, 832)

United Kingdom

A sense that all is not well pervades the country. Many are discouraged about the future and cynical about the seeming impotence of politicians to deal with the malaise. Violent crime, alcohol and drug abuse, sexually transmitted diseases, immorality, prostitution, illegitimacy and abortion rates, gambling addiction, and personal debt levels are not just alarmingly high, but in some cases are tacitly encouraged by misled government policies. The simultaneous decline of Christian values in society over the same period is hardly a coincidence. Without a radical change, disaster looms. **Pray for national repentance and restoration to the spiritual vigor that once made Britain's Christians a blessing to the world.**

(OW, 852-853)

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United States

America's massive cultural and social influence makes it the world's greatest force for good and greatest purveyor of evil. Commitments to generosity, the defense of human rights, breakthroughs in technology and media, and education, have tended to make the world a better place. But insensitive cultural imperialism, selfish individualism, unbridled corporate greed, and the exportation of immorality are counteracting forces. America's appetite for illicit drugs and massive consumption of fossil fuels cause wars abroad, prop up corrupt regimes, and inflict suffering on indigenous peoples of other lands.

Pray that God might lead this nation to revival and reshape it to be a greater force for good.

(OW, 864)

Uruguay

Uruguayan society has been characterized by secularism and hope in man for over 100 years. The Catholic church espoused liberation theology and failed to attend to spiritual needs, so today only 2.3% of the population attends Mass. Godlessness has led to some of the highest rates of depression, suicide, abortion and divorce in Latin America. Afro-Brazilian Spiritism is the fastest growing religion. While 81% say they believe in God, most adhere to a "do-it-yourself" spirituality influenced by New Age thinking. **Pray for all religious deceptions to be exposed and for the demonic powers behind them to be defeated.**

(OW, 871)

Vietnam

The deepest spiritual allegiance is not Communism, nor to the amalgam of Buddhism, Taoism, and Confucianism traditionally practiced by Vietnamese. It is the veneration and worship of ancestors that runs deepest and across most religious practices. Its impact is usually underestimated. Repression of all types of freedom continues, but at the same time, social ills are on the rise. Drug addiction, AIDS, prostitution, and exploitation of children are all too common. Christians face hard questions in dealing with these issues biblically.

Pray for the gospel to be wisely contextualized and for generational bonds that run counter to Christ to be broken.

(OW, 883–884)

CONTENT ATTRIBUTION:

Information on the spiritual soil for the countries listed in this guide is either quoted or paraphrased from *Operation World: The Definitive Prayer Guide to Every Nation* (7th edition), by Jason Mandrake (Biblical Publishing, 2010). Used by permission. For more complete information on the spiritual status, needs, and opportunities of each country of the world, we encourage you to obtain your own copy.



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