



PRAYER POINTS

NOVEMBER 2022

CENTRAL ASIA

How does the gospel advance in Istanbul, Turkey, a global city of 40 large districts with over 60 different language groups, 936 neighborhoods, 3,446 mosques, and 18 million people who are mostly unreached and unengaged? One local church at a time.

THE GOSPEL SPREADS IN ISTANBUL THROUGH LOCAL CHURCHES

Istanbul, Turkey enchants visitors with its East-meets-West beauty, history, and culture. But challenges abound for the gospel to spread in this Muslim country. Family, culture, and materialism among both religious and secular Muslims contribute to the challenges of gospel growth. Even so, the Lord is building His church one local fellowship at a time.

A young pastor-in-training spends his 90-minute commute studying the Scriptures and listening to lectures on hermeneutics. "The Bible is a treasure chest!" he wrote to a church member. He works at a secular job but studies the Word and reads books about the church at night. On weekends, he faithfully serves his small church.

In some Istanbul neighborhoods, refugees, students, millionaires, and trash pickers cross paths daily. One church gathers in an international part of town. They teach the Word and disciple those who attend, regardless of their background. "I left last Sunday



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extremely tired," said one of the pastors. "But praise God, we are slowly growing!"

Several Istanbul districts with populations over 1 million people have no church. A network of churches planted a church in one of these districts. The pastor models clear and bold evangelism. Twice a week, church members, including new believers, open their building to meet with those interested in the gospel. Working together as a church body in evangelism has led to six people being baptized and even more confessing faith in Jesus. How does the gospel reach the nations for the glory of God? One local church at a time.

"And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved."

Acts 2:46-47 ESV

ANSWER TO YOUR PRAYER

In August 2022, you prayed for an IMB team in England who engages the lost by writing questions on a whiteboard. God answered your prayers! "It has been super successful in getting people to stop and engage in spiritual conversations," a team member said. "The gospel has been shared many times."



1 ISTANBUL, TURKEY. A “big” evangelical church in Istanbul might have 50 or 60 members. Please pray for church members in Istanbul. Many are the only believers in their Muslim families. Pray for whole families to come to faith. Pray for healthy marriages and families.

2 YOKOHAMA, JAPAN. Pray for Ira-San, a retired Japanese teacher who is studying the Gospel of John with missionaries and is also reading through the Bible on her own. Ask the Lord to open Ira-San’s heart to understand the gospel so that she will trust in Jesus.

3 NORTHERN COASTAL PEOPLES OF MOZAMBIQUE. Shortly after believers started a Bible study in a refugee camp, a nearby area was attacked and the people fled once again. Pray for peace, strength, and protection for believing refugees. May they boldly spread the gospel wherever they go.

4 ISTANBUL, TURKEY. Pray that pastors of churches in Istanbul will shepherd their flocks well and live as examples in their humility, holiness, and faith. Ask that they will exposit the Scriptures faithfully. Pray that they will respond with wisdom to difficult situations among the members.

5 NORTHERN AFRICAN AND MIDDLE EASTERN PEOPLES. Many young men wander around cities, hoping to find employment. Suicide is too common among them. Pray for young men to trust in God, acknowledge Him, turn from evil, and walk in the fear of the Lord. Ask God to provide for their every need and make their paths straight (Proverbs 3:5-7).

6 ISTANBUL, TURKEY. Pray for church outreach efforts in Istanbul, including a men’s sports ministry at one church and a women’s crafts ministry at another. Ask God to draw seekers to these events. Pray that church members will have wisdom and boldness in inviting others and sharing truth.

7 ITALIANS OF ITALY. Pray that the Lord will open people’s eyes in Ferrara, Italy. They live as if they don’t need God or His Word. Pray that the Lord will show them their spiritual need and that they will turn to Him in repentance.

8 DEAF PEOPLES. Workers in Central Asia met Connie, a hearing child of Deaf adults, and shared the gospel with her. She wanted to learn more Bible stories and attend Deaf church. Pray for Connie to continue friendship with the workers, and for her interest in Jesus to grow into faith.

9 ISTANBUL, TURKEY. No one in Istanbul is untouched by Turkey’s economic crisis. The rich are desperate to get out of the country, and the poor simply need daily bread. Pray that these souls will have a true spiritual hunger that is satisfied in the gospel of Christ.

10 URBAN INDIGENOUS PEOPLES OF MANAUS, BRAZIL. Pray for Venezuelan refugees in Manaus, Brazil as they struggle to make ends meet as inflation increase. Pray that they will depend on the Lord. Ask God to give them strength and opportunities to earn more income. Pray that they will find ways to share their faith in Jesus.

11 ISTANBUL, TURKEY. Many districts in Istanbul are without an evangelical church witness. Pray for these areas. Pray that God will save men and women to walk in obedience and gather together for worship and fellowship. Ask God to establish His church in each district of Istanbul.

12 UNREACHED PEOPLES OF EAST INDONESIA. Ask God to open the hearts and minds of unreached peoples in Indonesia. May they welcome outsiders who come bearing good news and receive the gospel. Pray for effective discipleship with new believers.

13 ISTANBUL, TURKEY. Pray that the Lord will direct people to outreach efforts online. Ask that many will request Bibles and follow up with a believer in person. Pray for churches in Istanbul who are committed to help with follow up. Pray for safety, salvation, and lasting fruit.

14 SOUTH ASIAN UNENGAGED PEOPLES. The Hijra, a hermaphrodite/eunuch community in India, are an unengaged, unreached people group (UUPG). Many believers are afraid of or disinterested in reaching them. Pray for local believers to see and love the Hijra as God does.

15 ISTANBUL, TURKEY. Some of Istanbul's estimated 1.6 million refugees move on quickly to Europe, and others stay in Istanbul for a long time. Most bear psychological wounds of trauma. Pray that they will hear and believe the gospel that brings hope and peace.

16 PEOPLES OF N GUINEA-BISSAU, SW SENEGAL, W GAMBIA. Each year, a new group of people prepare for a circumcision ceremony. The ceremony includes 40 days in the wilderness where they bind themselves to their spirits. Pray that God will protect people participating in these practices and that He will reveal Himself to them.

17 ISTANBUL, TURKEY. Pray for the unengaged, unreached people groups (UUPGs) in Istanbul. In a city of 18 million people, it's difficult to know which UUPGs are in Istanbul and where they live. Pray that God will use the local church to find these groups and share the gospel with them.

18 DEAF PEOPLES. Some Deaf believers in Central Asia attend a hearing church with an interpreter, but they struggle to understand the message and desire teaching intended for the Deaf. Pray for a sign language interpretation of God's Word and teaching that's appropriate for the Deaf.

19 NORTHERN AFRICAN AND MIDDLE EASTERN UNENGAGED PEOPLES. Pray for the Rizeiqat people in Sudan to turn from evil and do good in the sight of the Lord. Fighting between them and neighboring peoples is common. Ask that the gospel will be explained to this nomadic people in their language, Sudanese Arabic.

20 ISTANBUL, TURKEY. As young people in Istanbul

grow frustrated with Islam and the traditions of their parents, many turn to secularism and deism to find hope. Pray that the Lord will bring believers into their lives who will share the source of true hope.

21 MUSLIMS OF NORTHEAST PAKISTAN. Pray for the Baltistani Bhotia in Pakistan and India. Only a handful are believers, and one of those brothers recently fell away from the faith. Pray that God will move mightily among this people group.

22 NORTHERN AFRICAN AND MIDDLE EASTERN UNENGAGED PEOPLES. Jordanian Arabs in Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates are educated Muslims. They can read the Bible in their language, but they have likely never seen one. Pray that they will want to know what the Bible says about Jesus and meet a believer who will help them learn.

23 ISTANBUL, TURKEY. Even in an economic crisis, the elite class of Istanbul continues to seek money, pleasure, and power. Pray that the Lord will open their eyes to the vanity of riches and to the realities of a soul that never dies.

24 REFUGEES IN SOUTH KOREA. Many refugees experience post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and depression. Christian professionals recently started a trauma healing project to minister to refugees in South Korea. Pray for God's emotional, physical, and spiritual healing for these refugees.

25 ISTANBUL, TURKEY. Many migrant workers suffer exploitation. Their employers withhold wages or confiscate passports. Women get tricked

and trapped in sex work. Pray for the vulnerable populations of Istanbul. Ask God to deliver them into safety.

26 PEOPLES OF RHINE, RÜHR, MAIN RIVER AREAS, GERMANY. An IMB team in Cologne, Germany is working with local believers to share the gospel online. Pray that God will break down the strongholds of human philosophies and religious traditions. May people in Cologne understand and accept the gospel.

27 ISTANBUL, TURKEY. Most Central Asian believers are former Muslims. Their communities oppose their faith in Jesus and try to thwart their participation in church life. Pray for church members to support and love each other well. Pray for godly discipleship within the church.

28 PEOPLES OF NORTH-WESTERN PROVINCE ZAMBIA. An IMB team and their African partners are gathering information on the Seba people of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). Pray that they will gather accurate information so that they can know how to start reaching the Seba people of the DRC for Christ.

29 PEOPLES OF THE SOUTHWEST AMAZON BASIN. Pray for the Tahnee people and the Yopera people to hear the gospel regularly and in their heart language. Ask God to build up and send out leaders to share stories about Jesus and His church with these people groups living along the Amazon River system.

30 ISTANBUL, TURKEY. Pray for the thousands of Central Asian migrant workers in Istanbul. Most work long hours and have little free time. Ask God to bring bold believers into their paths - on the bus, sidewalk, or in the shops where they work. Pray that they will hear the gospel and believe.

CHURCH MEMBERS USE SPORTS TO REACH THE LOST



One church in Istanbul combines a popular sport with gospel ministry. Twice a week, men from the church play sports together as an outreach. This effort provides many opportunities to share with those who've never heard the truth about Jesus. After a game one day, a believer with a car offered several men, including an unbelieving visitor, a ride to the bus. On the way, the church members shared the gospel with the visitor. When the driver noticed the bus stop approaching, he slowed down until the group shared the full gospel. The other church members continued to answer the unbelieving man's questions even as they climbed out of the car and walked to the bus stop. Pray for this man.

MINORITY PEOPLES OF CENTRAL ASIA MEET IN ISTANBUL

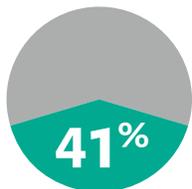
Most Central Asian minority people groups in Istanbul are there to work and send money back home to their families. They often work over 60 hours a week in jobs that pay below minimum wage without benefits. Most of these men and women are focused on making money, not on their need for God and the gospel. They rarely have free time, and when they do, meeting their spiritual needs is not a priority. Among these minority groups are Turkmen, Uzbek, Azeri, Kyrgyz, Kazakh, and Afghan people of various ethnicities, including Tajik and Pashtun. Many smaller, little-known ethnic groups also live in Istanbul. Lost in a sea of people, they think money is their greatest need. In reality, the gospel is their greatest need. Pray that they will hear and respond to the gospel.



CENTRAL ASIA

386 PEOPLE GROUPS TOTAL

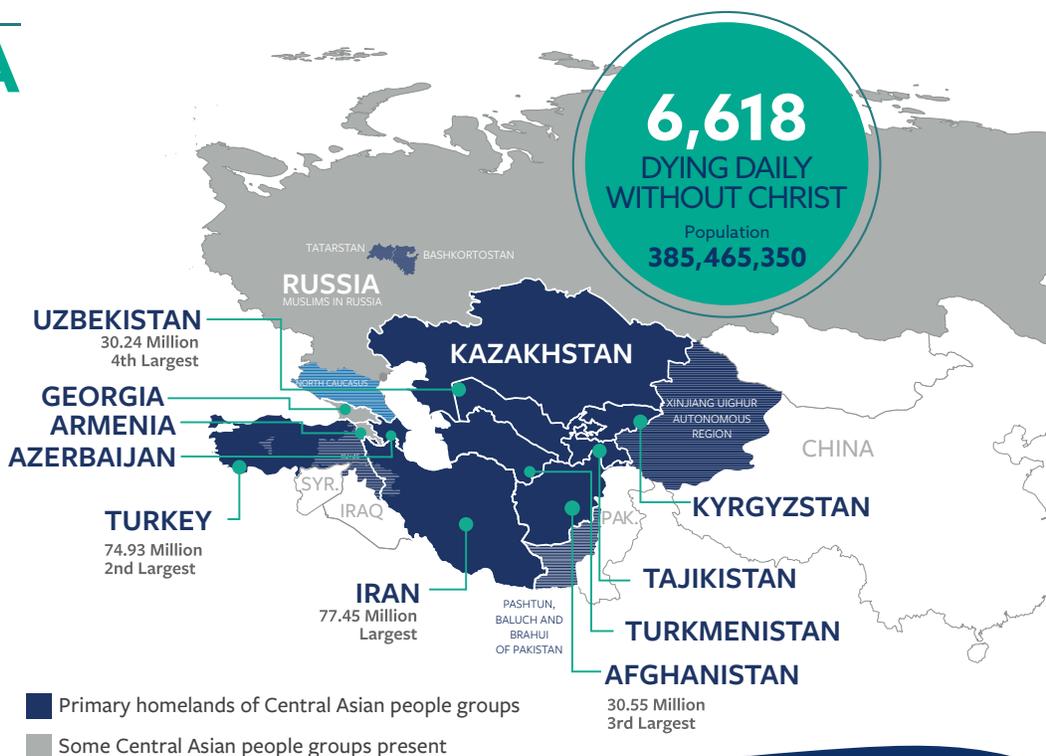
379 UNREACHED PEOPLE GROUPS



OF CENTRAL ASIA PEOPLE GROUPS DO NOT HAVE CHURCH PLANTING EFFORTS.



MAJOR RELIGION AMONG CENTRAL ASIAN PEOPLES:
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