

Pray for the Persecuted Church: Egypt

Palm Sunday Bombings Lead to Prayer Vigils

Sources: World Evangelical Alliance, Christian Today, BBC

On April 9th, explosions targeting Palm Sunday services at two churches in Egypt killed at least 44 people and injured over a hundred others. According to reports, the first bomb exploded during the morning service of St. George's Church in Tanta, a city less than 96 kilometres north of Cairo, killing 27 people and wounding 78 others. Just hours later, the second explosion -- a suicide bomb attack -- killed a further 17 Christians and injured 48 at St. Mark's Cathedral in Alexandria.

Palm Sunday's bombings are the latest in a series of attacks targeting Christians in the country. In December 2016, ISIS claimed responsibility for a Cairo church bombing that killed almost 30 innocent people. At least seven more individuals have been murdered by militants in northern Egypt since January 30th -- with victims being burned alive, stabbed in their sleep, or shot in the street. In February, the jihadist group released a video inciting violence against the "infidel" Christian faith community.

Due to the increasing number of threats and attacks, hundreds of Christians fled the coastal city of El-Arish, Sinai, in late February. Egypt's president Abdel Fattah al-Sisi declared a three-month nationwide state of emergency following the attacks, and established a Supreme Council to Combat Terrorism and Fanaticism.

While mourning the Christians killed during the two Palm Sunday bomb attacks, several churches in various parts of Egypt will not be conducting their usual Easter celebration festivities but rather will be focusing on the importance of prayer.

May God's presence be tangibly experienced by these brokenhearted brothers and sisters in Christ -- providing greatly needed comfort to the grieving, healing to the injured, and strength and hope to all who've been traumatized by the bombings. Ask that His wisdom will be granted to the Egyptian government as attempts are made to bring those who are responsible to justice and ensure protection of the remaining members of the Christian community. Despite the upheaval and attacks in recent months, pray that the church in Egypt will remain unified and strong; not only fully equipped with the armour of God for this heightened spiritual battle but also filled with His Spirit so they can respond in ways that testify of His compassion, mercy and saving grace.

Missions update from Dr. Brandon Steger:

We wanted to update you on our recent developments. The Lord has seemed to open a door for us to stay in Athens, Greece August - mid November. After this, we are planning on moving to Lebanon where we will likely serve in a Christian clinic among refugees for about 4 1/2 months. I wanted to give you an update and we expect to make a support letter soon. We do not plan on asking for money for us per-se but do hope that people will contribute to the ministries we plan to work with - our hope is to be very generous with the refugees and that American Christians will sense a call on their hearts to donate to the work we plan on doing with the refugees. The Lord has allowed us to save up enough for our expenses and we hope to give anything people donate directly to the refugee ministries. So, if your church has a heart for supporting refugee ministry, we would be happy to have you come along beside us. Of course, we deeply covet your prayer covering as Greece is a fairly dark environment and the enemy will be opposing any work among those bound with his chains. An interesting read for anyone who would like is "A wind in the House of Islam" by David Garrison. It tells of how God has been moving among Muslims in our times. VERY exciting!!

Take care,
Brandon

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Sunday, April 23, 2017

Accompanist: Jan Questad and Jackie Kramer

Greeters: Erica & Aaron Skogen Usher: Terry Kramer

Scripture Reader: Pat Lacey Nursery: Theresa Friesen and Cade Fox

Children's Church: Barbara Young and Kyle Skogen

9:30 am

Worship Service

Welcome, Announcements, & Christian Greetings

Praise Affirmation.....Isaiah 40:28-29

Hymn #410....."My Faith Looks Up to Thee"

Prayer of Praise

Offering/Offertory

Doxology (*Hymn #625*) – please stand

Ministry of Music.....Chet and Rachel Hsiao

Gideon Report

Scripture Reading.....John 20:24-29

Children may be excused for Children's Church (3 yrs-2nd grade)

Sermon... JESUS' LAST JOURNEY AND ENCOUNTERS:

"Thomas the Hesitant Believer".....Pastor Merv Kramer

Prayer Response

Love Offering for Gideons

Closing Hymn #420....."Only Believe"

Benediction

Postlude

***Nursery care is available for children infant thru 3 years old

(Please contact an usher for information and/or direction)

***Hearing Amplifier Available – Please contact an usher

Please join us after the worship service for coffee and treats in the fellowship room.

Sunday School for All Ages

Combined Preschool-1st Grade with Aaron Skogen or Jan Questad in Nursery

Combined 2nd-5th Grade with 2D Gerdes in Cubbies Room

6th-8th Grade with Erica Skogen or Judy Preston in Pastor's Office

9th-12th Grade "Truth Project" with Mike & Stacy Frost in Youth Room

Adult Classes:

- "Grace" Bible Study with Mike Benson in Fellowship Room
- Video study with Pastor Kramer in Sanctuary. Today's topic is Neil Anderson's "Freedom in Christ" session 1 "The Good News"

For Your Information and Prayer

-Tuesday: -11:30 a.m. B.V. Ministerium

-Thursday: -7:00 p.m. Women's Bible Study (location TBD)

-Friday: -6:30 p.m. Awana Staff Thank You Dinner

Next Sunday: April 30, 2017

-Greeters: Gene and Judy Preston

-Usher: Doyle Young

-Nursery: Ginger Nelson and Katrina Nelson

-Scripture Reader: Gene Preston

-Children's Church: Scott & Nora Sittig and Trevor Skogen

Upcoming Events:

May 7 – A representative from **Crystal Springs Camp** will give a mission moment, and a Love Offering for the camp will be collected

June – We will again be **servicing at the St. Francis House**. We need four people to sign up to serve at 6pm. We also need people to sign up to make: barbecue sandwiches, chips, seven layer salad, beans, and vanilla ice cream and pop (two treats they usually do not get).

We need you to sign your name with the amount of food you're providing or indicate if you wish to be a server. Also mark your first and second choices for serving dates from the list of eight options in June. The signup is on the kitchen counter.

Our Prayer Partnership

- Blessed Redeemer Lutheran Church, Brandon

- Association Church Planting Opportunities

*** Praise & Prayer***

Kevin Van Malsen, resting in hospice care at The Cottage in Luverne

Maxine Savage, for healing and strengthening

Elmer Gerdes, healing from hip fracture surgery, now at Garretson nursing home

Ruth Hansum, recovering at home from back surgery

Lajeane Wright, wife of Jim Wright, thankful for her increasing physical strength, continue to pray for increasing mental clarity; also encouragement and endurance for Jim

Lorrayne Montecucollo, for healing from broken hip, now home recovering

Ron Benson, brother of Mike Benson, for heart health issues

Amanda Benson, as her sending church, Amanda has asked that we lift her up in prayer as she is in the mission field.

Serving Our Country: Josh Onnen, Air Guard; Chad Carlson, Air Guard (Son-in-law of Carl & Lindy Johnson); Devon Lee, Army, and Kristina Lee, Air Force (Grandchildren of Ray & Dee Olson)

Our Missionary/Church Planter of the Week: April 23



Paul and Melissa Ewing, NAB Missionaries, Japan.

Paul serves as the NAB field director for the mission field of Japan and works closely with the Japan Baptist Conference. They have less than three months left on their year-long home assignment. Pray for this upcoming transition, especially with their oldest son, Noah, staying

behind so he can start college in the fall. Also pray for Komyo Christian Church, the church the Ewings helped plant in Japan; ask God to help the members of the church work out their faith and grow as a family of God. Visit nabonmission.org/missionaries/paul-melissa-ewing to find out more.

OUR GIVING:

Sunday, April 16, 2016

General Giving \$ 1,948.00

Building Fund \$ 25.00

Total \$ 1,973.00

(Approximately \$2,500 is needed each week to meet expenses)