

CALL TO PRAYER

SEPTEMBER 2020



PRAY FOR THE ALLIANCE FAMILY IN BEIRUT

Our Alliance family in Lebanon is reeling from catastrophe. Last month's explosion at the Port of Beirut has devastated the Evangelical Christian Alliance Church and the Christian Alliance Institute of Theology (CAIT), which are located one mile from the blast site. The CAIT campus, Alliance churches, and many church members' and workers' homes were significantly damaged.

Many people in Lebanon, including Alliance church members, already have traumatic memories of past violent explosions. The feeling of hopelessness that had previously pervaded the country was significantly worsened by this disaster.

"There are many Christians here, and there is much physical work to do—and [untold opportunities] to share God's words of comfort," notes one Alliance ministry leader. "Pray for churches to work together. People are shaken, and we remind them that there is greater security to be found in God."

Pray for Milad Dagher, director of CAIT and a prominent leader of the Alliance church in Lebanon, as he and his family assess the damage and reach out to those impacted by this overwhelming tragedy. One church is also raising funds to help people

rebuild and find medical support if necessary; they serve many in their community, including about 800 refugee families. CAMA will be working with the churches in Beirut to coordinate relief efforts for those affected by the explosion.

Please also pray:

- For an outpouring of God's comfort and peace on those who mourn the loss of the 200 known dead
- For healing and peace for the more than 5,000 who have been injured and the 300,000 who are suddenly homeless
- For recovery from Lebanon's extreme economic fallout, which has caused the price of food and other daily needs to skyrocket. This crisis will only worsen these realities.
- For medical and relief workers as they try to reach and care for victims. The explosion left a high level of toxicity in the area, which puts these workers and those they are attempting to rescue at even greater risk.
- For strength and wisdom from God for Alliance workers as they prioritize their time and energy

May this catastrophe be a catalyst for change in this land. May God have mercy, and may His will be done in Lebanon.

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BECAUSE YOU PRAYED . . .

In mid-summer we requested prayer for our Alliance hospitals in Africa. It seemed only a matter of time before the first case of COVID-19 would present itself. Sure enough, Bongolo Hospital in Gabon saw its first coronavirus patient around July 1. Although great care and planning were followed, several international workers, resident doctors, nurses, and additional patients became infected within a couple of weeks.

Prayer requests went out to Alliance family members, asking them to pray against the spread of the virus and for healing of those infected. Thanks to your prayers, the spread has slowed. At this writing, the hospital is still receiving COVID patients, but the spread among the staff and our international workers remains under control. And we rejoice in hearing that those who were infected did not have severe cases and are doing much better.

We also praise God that Bongolo received a critical delivery of medications, masks, gloves, and more. Thanks to all who prayed for this need as resources are being stretched thin during this pandemic.

Please continue to pray for those caring for our COVID-19 patients and for God's ongoing provision. Also, in some African countries, 10,000 children a month have been dying of coronavirus-linked hunger since the pandemic began. Pray for those who were already hungry before the crisis to receive the aid they need.

| by Stan Walker, an Alliance international worker serving in West Africa

U.S. ALLIANCE CHURCHES SIGNIFICANTLY DAMAGED BY STORM AND FIRE

On August 10, 100 mph straight-line winds ripped through the state of Iowa, part of the Alliance MidAmerica District, leaving more than 1 million people without power. The ferocious derecho storm also swept across Nebraska, Illinois, Indiana, Wisconsin, and Michigan.

"There isn't any property in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, that did not sustain damage," the District Office reported. Cedar Rapids Alliance lost its roof, and many trees on the property were downed. (The congregation shares their building with the Alliance Hispanic church.)

One-third of the crops grown in Iowa were destroyed. "Undoubtedly, there are Alliance church members who have experienced this loss as well," district staff said. Intercede for Todd Hart, pastor of Cedar Rapids Alliance Church, and many others affected by the storm.

Pray also for Hidden Creek Community Church (Olympia, Washington), which was significantly damaged by arson on the morning of August 10. No injuries were reported, but "our entire food distribution section has been gutted by flames," said Pastor Tim Heffer. Every Wednesday, the church serves meals to 100 needy people who rely on this assistance; at this writing, the church plans to continue this outreach in the parking lot. "We can be generous whether we have a functioning building or not," Tim said. Pray for God's provision as they repair the building.

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