



YOUR MONTHLY MEMBER'S REPORT **JUNE 2024**

SERBIA

In the 9th century, Christianity was brought to Serbia by Clement of Ohrid and Saint Naum who converted the local population. It quickly became established as the state religion. However, between the 15th – 18th centuries, Serbia was absorbed into the Ottoman Empire. Under this regime, Christians were allowed to retain their faith in exchange for the payment of a tax.

In 1945, Serbia became a part of the new Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia under the rule of President Tito. Under his rule, the official state policy was “state atheism”, and the church was suppressed. During WWII, Yugoslavia was occupied by the Axis Powers and Christians suffered persecution.

However, with the demise of communism in the 1990s there came a religious revival. Today, 90 per cent of Serbians identify as Christian with 85 per cent adhering to the Serbian Orthodox Church.

Since the 1990s poverty has been

impacting many particularly in southern Serbia where around one million people live. Here, there is high unemployment and families are struggling to afford necessities. It is in this region that the Bible Society of Serbia is implementing its Bible Engagement in the Orthodox Church project.

Partnering with the Orthodox Church, it is encouraging priests to run small Bible study groups. In keeping with modern times there are also opportunities to connect via social media.

Your gift to Bible a Month Regular Giving this month will help to support this project in Serbia.

To watch a video on this project, please scan this QR code.



Photo Credit © Clare Kendall



Pray for a resolution to the many issues still facing Serbia in the wake of the Balkan Wars, including a devastated economy, and a fragile democracy.

Pray for new life within the Serbian Orthodox Church, that it may turn its back on its totalitarian instincts and support true religious freedom.

Pray that Serbian Christians will move away from nominalism and come to know Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour.

Pray for healing from centuries-long ethnic and religious hatred, that communal hatreds might be resolved, and lasting peace established in the Balkans.



Scan to get a look at our latest Prayer Booklet!

FURTHER BIBLE MISSION PROJECTS



MONGOLIA

In the 7th century, representatives of the Church of the East brought Christianity to Mongolia. In the 14th century, after the collapse of the Mongol Empire, Christianity all but disappeared, only reappearing after the Second Opium War in the mid-19th century.

During the 20th century the number of Christians was extremely low. In 1989, there were as few as four Mongolian Christians! In 1990, the Democratic Revolution took place which was a peaceful revolution which led the country to becoming a multi-party-political system. After this, the number of Christians began to increase. Today, there are an estimated 40,000 believers.

The Mongolian Union Bible Society is working to revise a Mongolian Standard Version translation. It is also working to provide the Bible in Braille and Mongolian Sign language.

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TURKEY

Many early Christians came to Asia Minor to escape persecution. In 380 A D, Christianity was declared the official religion during the reign of Theodosius I. During the Ottoman period, the "Dhimmi" tax was introduced meaning Christians had to pay 50 per cent of their earnings to the rulers.

In modern times, the percentage of Christians in Turkey declined from 20 to 25 percent in 1914 to 3–5.5 percent in 1927. Today, Christians make up less than 0.2 per cent of the population, somewhere between 200,000–320,000 believers. In 1924, Turkey became a secular state with no official religion.

The Bible Society of Turkey is reaching out to Turkish people through its Bible bookshop hubs in Istanbul and Izmir, and through bookfairs.

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CANADA

The first people to reach Canada crossed the Bering Straits from Asia. In the 17th century, the French founded Quebec and Montreal. During the Seven Years War (1756-1763) Britain and France fought for control of Canada. In 1763, the French signed the Treaty of Paris surrendering its Canadian territories to Britain. In 1867, it became the Dominion of Canada. In 1982, it gained full constitutional independence under the Canada Act.

In the 20th century, there has been an exodus of people from the rural areas to the cities. Canada also accepts more immigrants every year than any other G20 country and many of its cities now have large immigrant populations. The Canadian Bible Society is working to translate the Bible into four indigenous languages.

Photo Credit © Canadian Bible Society



EL SALVADOR

The name El Salvador means "the Saviour" in English. Unfortunately, the reality of life for most people in El Salvador is very different because it is one of the most violent countries in the world with a very high murder rate. In recent years there has been a proliferation of gangs, which often control neighbourhoods.

In a society such as this one many people, including children, suffer from fear or anxiety. The Bible Society of El Salvador is reaching out to children with children's comics entitled, 'Fear Not'. It has introduced a conflict-resolution model into schools for teachers to help students learn peer-to-peer resolution. It is also using social media to reach out to children with its message of peace and reconciliation.

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