

# CALL TO *Prayer*

DECEMBER 2018

## Great Loss and Suffering in Wake of California's Camp Fire



At approximately 6:30 a.m. Thursday, November 8, the Camp Fire was sparked outside of Paradise, California. By evening, due to extremely low humidity and high winds, the fire was spreading at the rate of “80 football fields per minute,” according to media outlets—leaving little or no time for residents to flee their homes.

At this writing, the blaze has killed at least 88 people, 196 are still missing, and more than 13,000 homes and 400 commercial buildings were destroyed. Miraculously, the Paradise Alliance Church (PAC) is still standing, though “almost no one in the church has a home or job to go back to,” Central Pacific District Superintendent Ray Van Gilst reported.

Nearby, Neighborhood Church of Chico (NC Chico) has been caring for PAC members and serving as an evacuation center—housing, feeding, and providing medical care for nearly 400 evacuees at one point. The Sunday after the fire started, 2,000 people gathered at NC Chico for a combined service with PAC. Josh Gallagher, PAC’s lead pastor, spoke, acknowledging his own grief and

encouraging others to allow themselves to grieve as well. “As I walked through the main NC Chico sanctuary, seeing people sitting in their seats weeping told me this was exactly what [they] needed,” Ray said.

Others in the Alliance family have stepped up to care for these devastated communities. Bayside Church of Granite Bay (Sacramento) has partnered with the Central Pacific District and PAC to meet the great needs. Bayside Church leaders met with PAC staff to pray for them and give them gift cards. They also took a special offering for Paradise Alliance Church, raising \$112,000 in one day.

“Our friends in Paradise and Chico need your prayers,” Ray said. Pray for those who have lost loved ones, homes, and possessions, as well as for area pastors and district leaders as they seek God for wisdom toward the restoration of fire-stricken communities. Ask God to pour out His Holy Spirit “like nothing we have ever seen,” Ray added. “We know how God uses events for His glory and His purposes, and where there is great loss and suffering, there is also much room for Him to work.”

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## Is Germany Worth It?

BY S. W., AN ALLIANCE  
INTERNATIONAL WORKER

My family served for nearly a decade in the Middle East, where the need for the gospel is readily understood. Among the people group we served, only .02 percent follow Christ. Yet we repeatedly saw that God works mightily behind the scenes to rescue people and build His Church.

We are now moving on from the Middle East to join our Alliance team in Berlin. Why Germany? Surely those who live in the land of the Reformation and Bonhoeffer and the Gutenberg Bible must already have solid access to the gospel. The country is dotted with magnificent church buildings, most of which were filled with people in centuries past.

Digging through church statistics, we discovered that today just 1 percent of Germans follow Christ—even less in and around Berlin. Our assumptions were shattered and our hearts broken. Germany's Christian legacy has not created genuine faith in people that compels them to reach out to their communities with the good news.

The absence of true Christ followers means that 99 percent of the people have not heard a clear presentation of the gospel or had the opportunity to embrace Him as Savior. Please pray for the people of Berlin. Pray that God will open the hearts of those we meet to His Word and start a revival in this spiritually dead nation.

## Kingdom Praying

Adapted from *The Life of Prayer*, by  
A. B. Simpson

The Lord's Prayer teaches us that true prayer recognizes the establishment of God's Kingdom as the chief purpose of the divine will and the supreme desire of every true Christian. It implies that the real remedy for all that needs prayer is the restoration of the Kingdom of God. The true cause of all human trouble is that the world is in rebellion against its rightful Sovereign. Not until that Kingdom is reestablished in every heart can the blessings which prayer desires be realized. The Lord's Prayer begins with this lofty theme and teaches us that it should ever be the first concern and petition of every loyal subject of the Redeemer's Kingdom.

There is no joy so pure as that of taking the burden of our Master's cause on our hearts every day and bearing it with Him in ceaseless prayer, as though its interests wholly depended upon the uplifting of our hands and the remembrance of our faith. There is no ministry which will bring more power and blessing upon the world than the habit of believing, definite, and persistent prayer for the progress of Christ's Kingdom, for the needs of His church and work, for His ministers and servants—and especially for the evangelization of the world and the vast neglected myriads who know not how to pray for themselves. Oh, let us learn the meaning of the petition, "Thy Kingdom come!"

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Thank you for praying for Alliance workers and for the people with whom they share the gospel. To receive The Alliance Call to Prayer and weekly Alliance Prayer Requests via e-mail, subscribe at [www.cmalliance.org/pray](http://www.cmalliance.org/pray). Alliance Ministries are supported by gifts to the Great Commission Fund and the CAMA Advance Fund.



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