

PRAYER MENU
2007, No. 8

The *Banner* reports that 21,000 people crowded into a stadium in the Republic of Congo (Africa) to hear Rev. Paul Mpindi, The Back to God Hour's French-ministry minister. Since 1999 the number of people who contact the BTGH as a result of the French-language ministry has grown to 20,000 per month. Continue to prayer for the Back to God Hour ministry wherever it bears witness.

- **ARSON.** Three young people have been arrested for setting a fire that gutted a large house that the Cambodian Christian Reformed Church in West Valley, Utah, was transforming into offices and classrooms. The three, ages 12, 14 and 15, were taken into custody on the night of the Oct. 24 blaze. A few days before the fire, someone had defaced the church property with graffiti and broken all of the windows. However, fire officials and Charlie Phim, pastor of the Cambodian congregation, said they do not believe that the incidents were racially motivated. (*CRC News Service 11-6-07*). Pray for those affected by this act of arson, and for the youth involved.
- **ELEPHANTS RETURN.** There is evidence that peace is coming to south Sudan: the elephants are returning now that the gunfire has stopped—after the violent deaths of some two million people during the past 22 years of civil war. The civil war has been between the south (mainly Christian) and the north (Muslims). (*SCJ 11-3-07*) Thank God for answering prayers on behalf of the Sudanese people—and indirectly for the wildlife of the Sudan.
- **AMENDMENT IN IOWA.** Iowa's Catholic dioceses are calling for a constitutional amendment to ban same-sex "marriage." The Catholic Conference board offered the amendment to publicly oppose a Polk County judge's ruling that struck down a state law banning gay marriage. (*SCJ 10-28-07*) Thank God for those who take a stand for biblical marriage.
- **VOUCHERS LOSE.** The voters of Utah recently turned down a school voucher plan that would have benefited both private/parochial and public schools. The proposition provided a way for vouchers of \$2000 (on average) to go to private and parochial schools for each student attending, AND over \$5,000 to the school district in which each student lived. (*World 11-24-07*) Continue to pray for OUR schools.
- **DEATH PENALTY.** The U.S. Supreme Court will for the first time consider "how to administer the ultimate punishment [the death penalty]" within the requirements of the constitution. Specifically, the court will decide if death by lethal injection constitutes "cruel and unusual punishment." The case of *Baze vs. Rees* will be heard in January. Currently, 37 states use lethal injections to administer the death penalty. Iowa does not allow punishment by death. (*U.S. News 11-12-07*) Pray that the supreme court may be just and wise in its upcoming deliberations.
- **VIOLENCE DROPS.** The number of deaths, both of U.S. soldiers and civilians, continues to decline in Iraq, and thousands of Iraqis are returning to their homes and

businesses. Prayers are being answered. (*U.S. News 11-12-07*) Continue to pray fervently for peace in the Middle East, and thank God for evidence that our prayers are being answered.

- JUDGE SIDES WITH PHARMACISTS. A judge in Washington State suspended a state law that forced pharmacists to sell the “morning-after” pill. As the editor of the *N’West Iowa Review* noted: “this is only a tiny victory” for unborn babies, but it is heartening “to know that pharmacists who oppose abortion will no longer have to sell a product they oppose.” (*NWI Review 11-10-07*). Continue to pray for mothers in pregnancy crisis, and for adoption agencies, such as Bethany Christian Services, that stand ready to help.
- STEM CELL BREAKTHROUGH. A headline in the *Sioux City Journal* announced that scientists have found a way to create stem cells from human skin. No human embryos are needed. This is great news for all who believe in the sanctity of life and for those who may benefit, eventually, from treatment for crippling diseases. (*SCJ 11-21-07*) Thank God for scientists whose efforts relieve pain and suffering.
- WORK. In spite of a shaky economy, the jobless rate in Iowa remains stable at 3-4 percent. Most of the unemployed are in transition between seasonal jobs. Remember to give thanks for our jobs and opportunities to work.
- CHINA. We hear of lead-tainted toys made in China, China’s hunger for oil and other raw materials, China’s poor human rights record, China’s pollution of the atmosphere, and their disregard for world opinion. Now China has a reason to change its ways: the Olympics. With China planning to host the Olympics, the government doesn’t want to look bad in the eyes of the world. Evidence of this is their turnabout in the U.N. Security Council, where, until recently, they have blocked efforts to put peacekeepers in Sudan to stop the genocide in Darfur. The Chinese government has now backed down. Shaming Communist China seems to be the only way to get their attention. (*PBS 11-19-07*) Pray that world leaders, including the Chinese government, may seek solutions to global problems, especially human rights problems.
- BANGLADESH CYCLONE. Aid in the form of food, water and other items are flowing from the Christian Reformed Church and its agencies to Bangladesh in the wake of a cyclone that ravaged the country’s coastline and may have taken up to 10,000 lives. A CRWRC team traveled to affected areas to assess damage soon after the storm, one of the worst in the country’s history. “Traveling through the Patuakhali area, our team found many villages that were totally destroyed,” reported Jacob Kramer, CRWRC International Relief Director. (*CRC News Service 11-20-07*) The CRC asks for our prayers for the people of Bangladesh.
- LAST MENU IN 2007. The Social Concerns Committee wishes you and your families well over the holidays. Remember I Timothy 2:1: “I urge...that requests, prayers, intercession, and thanksgiving be made for everyone.” Amen.

We urge you to include items from the PRAYER MENU in family and personal devotions. You may contribute to the menu by giving a news clip of concern to one of our committee members: Diana Gonzalez, Jerry & Shirley Isakson, Jim

Koldenhoven, Jason & Tammy Lief, Jim & Thea Mouw, Lauren & Barb Ochsner, Jo
Vander Werf, John Wesselius.