PRAYER GUIDE  JANUARY 2018

Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful.
—Colossians 4:2

1  MONDAY (World Renew) Disaster Response Services—Hurricane Maria devastated Puerto Rico in Sept. 2017. Due to ongoing power outages and a lack of resources, organizations struggle to host guests and volunteers from outside locations. Please keep asking God to help all who need assistance in Puerto Rico.

2  TUESDAY (Resonate Global Mission) Latin America—Justin Bordogna will begin a new assignment January 3 toward improving the English-language skills of Latin American missionaries. Pray that through this training, Latino missionaries can become more effective in cross-cultural assignments around the world.

3  WEDNESDAY (Our Journey 2020) Church and community—Many Christian Reformed churches are being challenged by changes in their communities. Pray that congregations will seek opportunities to meet their neighbors and to listen, learn from, and serve them so that—in the words of the CRC’s ministry plan—“by our presence we will become channels for the love of Christ and the Holy Spirit’s life-giving transformation.”

4  THURSDAY (Calvin Theological Seminary) January term—Pray for students and faculty during their January term courses, including a travel course to Israel/Palestine. Pray also for new students coming in for the next semester, starting January 29.

5  FRIDAY (Back to God Ministries International) Middle East—Praise God for his faithfulness! We recently signed a partnership agreement with Words of Hope and the Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Egypt to forward our mission of gospel proclamation to the Arabic-speaking world. Pray that this new partnership will bear much fruit in the years to come.

6  SATURDAY (Resonate) Campus ministry—Campus ministry leaders across North America and around the world are gearing up for a second semester of ministry and discipleship. Pray that students’ new schedules will bring new opportunities to get involved and learn more about the Christian faith.

7  SUNDAY (Disability Concerns) Mental health—For many people in North America, the short days and long nights of winter parallel and even deepen an inner darkness of depression and other mental health challenges. Ask God to give grace, peace, and strength to people for whom this season is especially difficult.

8  MONDAY (Centre for Public Dialogue) Newness—As snow blankets the countryside amid the short days of winter, we remember God’s promises that he is making all things new. Creator God, in your wisdom you have set a time for death and a time for birth. With trees and plants resting under the snow, we trust in the hope of new life—for all of creation.
TUESDAY (World Renew) South Africa—World Renew’s Village Savings and Loans Association (VSLA) works with individuals who aim to better manage, save, and invest their cash flow. VSLA members report, “I’ve been able to start a business,” and, “Before, if I had money, I would spend it; now I save it.” We thank God for blessing impoverished South African communities with financial resources and education.

WEDNESDAY (Resonate) Nigeria—Mark Wiersma, a Resonate missionary serving in Nigeria, led three groups of teachers in Educational Care training over the Christmas school break. Give thanks for the collaboration among teachers from various backgrounds and their willingness to learn. Ask God to use this training to improve their ability to share the gospel in the classroom.

THURSDAY (Back to God Ministries) Dominican Republic—Juan listens to our Spanish broadcasts and says, “I am learning about Christian values, and this has had a profound impact in my life. Your series on ‘Family Principles’ has taught me a lot about how to improve my own family life.” Pray for Juan as he navigates the joys and challenges of family relationships.

FRIDAY (Safe Church) Growth—Pray for expansion of the Safe Church classis coordinator position in 2018. May this new strategy lead to better-functioning safe church teams and more fruitful and effective ministry. Pray that our congregations will be safer places for everyone and better equipped to stand against abuse.

SATURDAY (Chaplaincy and Care) Chaplains—Over 148 CRC chaplains bring the presence of God into institutions and places where it is often least felt or recognized, providing pastoral care through times of crisis, illness, and life questions. To do this with respect and skill requires grace and wisdom. Thousands of lives are influenced weekly by these interactions. Ask God’s Spirit to guide these chaplains with wisdom and to motivate them with the love of Christ.

SUNDAY (Resonate) Discovery Church, Bowmanville, Ont.—Resonate is partnering with Discovery Church as it transitions into a multisite congregation. Pray for a smooth transition and for wisdom for Pastor Martin Spoelstra and other members of the leadership team in their decision-making. Ask God to work through this new site to develop a mission-minded congregation of believers.

MONDAY (Leadership Development) Orientation/training—Pray for women’s and ethnic ministry leadership development as orientation for eight regional advisory team members and administrative support begins. Ask for God’s help as we serve our denomination in this new capacity, and pray for trusting relationships, strategic connections, and discernment of the Spirit’s path forward in developing leaders to serve in God’s kingdom.

TUESDAY (World Renew) Bangladesh—Throughout the past few months, Bangladesh has been a host nation for hundreds of thousands Rohingya people fleeing violence in Myanmar. Many of these are living in makeshift homes within refugee camps. World Renew is responding alongside the Canadian Foodgrains Bank by providing food to families. Please ask God to bring healing to all who are suffering in this crisis.
17 **Wednesday** (Back to God Ministries) Japan—Ms. Masayo lives in Japan and recently started a new job. At times she says she feels nervous in her new role, but after listening to our Japanese radio program, *Let’s Open the Bible*, she shared, “It encouraged and comforted me so much.” Thank God for these Bible-based programs that minister to people like Ms. Masayo where they are.

18 **Thursday** (Urban Aboriginal Ministries) Reconciliation—As a new year begins, we celebrate what the CRC has done to reconcile broken relationships with Indigenous peoples. Synod 2015 recommended that each church and classis participate in the Blanket Exercise, an interactive event to help people understand the history of North America—and many have done so. As people learn, pray that healing and reconciliation will take place.

19 **Friday** (Resonate) Worship Symposium—Nine pastors and worship leaders from Ukraine and Hungary hosted by Resonate missionary George de Vuyst are among those taking part in the annual Worship Symposium at Calvin College. Pray that this opportunity to learn more about church and worship from different perspectives will be a blessing for all God’s servants.

20 **Saturday** (Trinity Christian College) Christian community—A new semester has begun at Trinity Christian College. The faith-full quest of growing into the joy of our vocations occurs in classrooms, residence halls, and internships in and around Chicago, as well as through digital and global connections. Please pray with thanksgiving and petition for the Christian community of Trinity students, faculty, and staff as they pursue creative insight, integral understanding, and Christlike service.

21 **Sunday** (World Renew) Malawi—Our Church in Community programs help church leaders and congregations make positive changes in their local communities by addressing challenges and goals. As Bible study and other aspects of the program develop in Malawi, ask God to guide church leaders and students in listening, learning, and understanding what it means to love one another.

22 **Monday** (Resonate) West Africa—Pray for the Fulani believers’ *kawrital* (meeting) and discipleship event planned for the end of this month. Pray also that the security situation in the region will not impede participants’ travels from across the country for this event.

23 **Tuesday** (Back to God Ministries) Brazil—Praise God for the many volunteers who work on behalf of BTGMI throughout the world, spreading the gospel. Pray especially for Edione, a longtime volunteer with our Portuguese ministry in Brazil. She recently suffered a stroke. Our ministry team in Brazil asks for prayers for her healing.

24 **Wednesday** (GEMS Girls’ Clubs) Worldwide—Please pray for GEMS clubs meeting in churches, home schools, African huts, and rural schools everywhere, that girls may continuously experience God’s love through the women who mentor them. Pray also for GEMS staff as they explore and implement new ways to mentor and train the 4,400 women who serve girls globally through GEMS Girls’ Clubs.
25 **THURSDAY** (Resonate) *Nicaragua*—Resonate partners with Nicaragua Christian Academy and Tesoros de Dios to serve children with disabilities. Andrew and Ruth Ippel ask for prayers for peace, energy, and endurance as parents of children with disabilities seek to love their children well in a country without many needed services. Pray for a strengthened community among parents experiencing similar joys and struggles in life.

26 **FRIDAY** (Pastor Church Resources) *New resource impact*—The *Pastors’ Spiritual Vitality Toolkit* is a new resource available for pastors seeking to enrich their faith and relationship with God. A recent study shows that such practices are key to a pastor’s well-being. Please pray that this resource will help nurture pastors as they develop life-enriching rhythms and practices.

27 **SATURDAY** (Coffee Break) *Spanish resources*—Spanish speakers in New Jersey, Florida, and Mexico ask for Discover Your Bible studies in Spanish. Pray for Coffee Break Ministry leaders as they work to support global small group leaders in many languages with quality Bible study materials for evangelism and discipleship.

28 **SUNDAY** (ServiceLink) *Volunteers*—Being a servant does not come easy. But the ultimate example of how God calls us to serve him and others has been provided: the more we become like Christ, the more we become true servants. Pray that we may all follow God’s servant heart in this new year.

29 **MONDAY** (Back to God Ministries) *North America*—Rita regularly reads *Today* devotions as she serves her sentence in jail. She writes, “I sit in a cell with a story to tell. I’ve been living of the world, and most of my life is a blur. Today I finally see what Jesus has done for me. I trust and believe Christ Jesus has set me free!” Praise be to God!

30 **TUESDAY** (Resonate) *Lithuania*—Benjamin and Tricia Gronewold Van Dyk host students from LCC International University at their home to discuss philosophical questions they might have. Ask God to work through this hospitality to help students develop a biblical understanding of the world.

31 **WEDNESDAY** (World Renew) *Mozambique*—World Renew and the Diocese of Niassa have completed a successful five-year sustainable livelihood program funded by Global Affairs Canada. Lead farmer Tereza Jose reports enthusiasm for the new, improved crop varieties and learned farming techniques. We thank God for bringing education and sustainability to communities in Mozambique.

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