

Pray for Eritrea

3 - 9 January 2021



Despite becoming a member of the UN Human Rights Council last year, Eritrea's own human rights record has in no way improved and the right to freedom of religion or belief continues to be systematically violated. In May 2002, the country effectively outlawed all religious practices except those associated with the state-approved practices: Catholicism, Evangelical Lutheranism, Orthodox Christianity and Sunni Islam. Other religious groups must register before practising their faith, but the registration process is indefinite and inconclusive. Moreover, state-sanctioned religious groups also face repression. Thousands of people flee the country every month to escape the grave human rights situation. Find out more about Eritrea at csw.org.uk/eritrea

Sunday 3 January

Thousands of Eritreans are held without charge or trial on account of their faith. Christians, Jehovah's Witnesses, Muslims and others are confined in highly dangerous conditions, and many experience torture. In 2019 alone over 200 individuals were imprisoned on account of their faith. Pray today for the immediate release of all prisoners of conscience.

Monday 4 January

In July, the UN Human Rights Council voted to renew the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on the human rights situation in Eritrea. Thank God for the successful interventions by CSW's advocacy staff, who had to lobby remotely due to the COVID-19 lockdown, and for the countries which supported this decision and made this possible. Pray also for the new Special Rapporteur to settle in speedily and compile an effective report for the Council session in March.

Tuesday 5 January

Those known to have been detained for over a decade include many church leaders – Dr Futsum Gebrenegus, Dr Tekleab Menghisteb, Dr Kuflu Gebremeskel, Reverend Kidane Weldou, Reverend Haile Naizge, Reverend Gebremedhin Gebregiorgis, Reverend Million Gebreselassie – and church member Twen Theodros. Pray that God would sustain each of these individuals and fill them with renewed hope.

Wednesday 6 January

Today marks 14 years since Patriarch Antonios was illegally removed from office. The 93-year-old, who is the legitimate patriarch of the Eritrean Orthodox Church, has been under house arrest since January 2007. He is severely diabetic and suffers from high blood pressure, which is worsened by the lack of medical care. Pray that God would strengthen him physically and spiritually.

Thursday 7 January

'Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful.' (Hebrews 10:23) Pray this verse over all Christians currently denied freedom in Eritrea.

Friday 8 January

In 1994 the government stripped Jehovah's Witnesses of their citizenship rights, after they requested to be exempt from military service on religious grounds. Pray that the group's rights would be restored to them, and for Paulos Eyasu, Isaac Mogos and Negede Teklemariam, who have been imprisoned for over 25 years for conscientiously objecting to active national service.

Saturday 9 January

Loving heavenly Father, we lift to you all those denied freedom in Eritrea because of the faith they profess. We ask you to transform the hearts of Eritrea's leaders, to bring about true and lasting change in the nation, and the restoration of human dignity, human rights and fundamental freedoms. Amen.

CSW everyone
free to believe

CSW is a human rights organisation advocating for freedom of religion or belief, and as Christians we stand with everyone facing injustice because of their religion or belief.