

# World's Christian Endeavor Prayer Week 2017

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## **Foreword from Dr. David Coryell, WCEU General Secretary**

Christian Endeavor began one hundred and thirty-six years ago. CE has always existed so the unreached of the world could know Jesus. Every Christian organization has its method or angle it uses to accomplish the Great Commission provided in Matthew 28:19-20.

CE' s method, as you know, involves young people committing to the CE pledge, and gaining opportunities to lead their church youth ministry for God's glory. You are about to begin the CE prayer week.

Stop and consider the countless people you know in your town that do not know Jesus Christ as their Lord, Savior and Leader of their lives. Pray that God could use you to reach these people for Him.

Next, think about people involved in CE across your country. They just prayed that same prayer. You are not alone.

There is more good news. Consider the people from forty countries where Christian Endeavor exists today. CE's committed are praying for people to know Jesus in cultures and languages across the globe.

Fervently pray throughout this week for God's Kingdom to grow. Pray for people to come to Christ. Pray for your friends in CE around the world to boldly proclaim Christ's good news.

Finally, Pray for God's church to unleash young people so the Holy Spirit's power infuses our cultures with the message, "Jesus Saves!"

## **Introduction to the WCEU prayer week**

Francis E. Clark, the founder of the CE movement said: The prayer week of the Evangelical Alliance is the most important week of the year. He understood that prayer is not only something what Christians sometimes do, but it is the home turf for a Christian life. Through prayer we approach our God, we listen to his voice, share all our joy, concerns and doubts. Doing this we receive his comfort, love and guidance.

We are praying individually and we are praying together. Our fellowship and unity is rooted in prayer especially in common but also in individual prayer. There are so many different opinions, experiences and desires challenging the unity of the church that there is only one way to become really one in Christ: We gather at the throne of God, bow down, surrender ourselves and listen to him. That is again and again the starting point of unity among us as Christian Endeavorers and among the Christian community all over the world.

This guideline for the CE prayer week 2017 comes from CE Germany. This is the year when Christians celebrate the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the reformation, which had its starting point in that country. Martin Luther and all his friends and coworkers were led back to the gospel of the bible that had been trapped by dead traditions and superstition for a long time in midst of the church.

May this jubilee as well as the WCEU prayer week 2017 help to rediscover the reality of god, his overwhelming grace and the world changing faith that he gives his disciples.

### **A glance at the GYFCE (German Youth Federation for Christian Endeavor)**

Today CE in Germany is made up of 16 regional unions. All together 40.000 kids, teens and young adults are gathering every week in 650 places and 3.000 groups. GYFCE and the regional unions are offering a broad variety of training in matters like arts, law, leadership, spiritual live and theology. Material for weekly bible studies in different age groups are prepared and distributed.

CE Germany also runs several social projects and clinics in the country as well as 150 projects in India where children of low casts get food, housing and schooling.

At the same time CE in Germany suffers under the pressure of a post christian society with all its postmodern thinking. The sisters and brothers in Germany are most thankful for your prayer support. They are longing for more fruit of evangelistic outreaches, growth of the CE members in faith and their willingness to be God's servants in this world.

Rev. Rudolf Westerheide, National director of GYFCE

## JANUARY 29

### Ready to witness

*The good man brings good things out of the good stored up in his heart, and the evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in his heart. For out of the overflow of his heart his mouth speaks.*

(Luke 6:45)

### Impulse

Recently I was on holiday with my family. It was a great time. Back home, I grabbed the phone and called my parents to tell them about the time. Also the children enthusiastically painted their impressions before the eyes of grandma and grandpa.

I remembered this enthusiasm when I returned from an evangelistic youth rally several weeks back. It was an exhausting but also a great week, because young people got to know Jesus.

But sharing this with others; how much enthusiasm and joy make my words vibrant?

Did I tell my wife in the morning, just because my heart was overflowing? Did I let her participate in the work of the Holy Spirit during this week? I am afraid, not really. Jesus - to say it with Luke 6:45 – has put a real treasure in my heart. Should not then my mouth bubble over? Am I silent because what Jesus has done for me is not anymore special to me but normality?

I would like to rediscover the treasures of forgiveness, salvation, and the daily company of Jesus and want to be inspired by them again. And this inspiration will express itself in what I speak and what I do. It will impact my fellow human beings. My enthusiasm will invite them to look for this treasure and to be found by God. Do you want to rediscover this treasure too?

### For prayer

We want to say thank you, Lord, for the many possibilities to tell people about you.

We want you, Jesus, to give us enthusiastic joy again and again for what you have done for us.

We want to pray for the work of the WCEU that Jesus uses our movement for people getting to know him as Lord and Savior in different countries and situations.

We pray for the CE unions in Africa: Gambia, Malawi, Sierra Leone, South Africa, and the CE friends in Benin, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Ivory Coast, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal and Togo. Pray for a new drive in the CE unions and that the friends in the other places start with local CE groups.

Thank God for the many mission-minded African sisters and brothers, who frankly share the gospel despite many difficulties.

Pray for peaceful solutions in the ongoing conflicts with Muslims.

Pray for the necessary rain in the planting season and for sufficient relief goods where people starve.

Pray for the African governments that they care for their nation and not their own pockets.

### Suggestions

Write down the names of people for whom you want to pray in the next time with the concern that they get to know Jesus.

**Andreas Müller**, Secretary of GYFCE Department for Youth Evangelization

**JANUARY 30**

## **Seeking Peace**

*Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God* (Matthew 5:9).

## **Impulse**

Jesus asked his disciples to act as peacemakers in this world. A great job – easy to understand but difficult to practice. Jesus wanted his people to be different. Love God and love your neighbor as yourself he taught. Living this way is a great challenge every day. How can we achieve that?

The first step: Being a peacemaker starts with my own attitude and behavior. Do I seek in a conflict to enforce my own convictions or do I long for God's mercy and forgiveness? Before I challenge others in this area I should reflect my own feelings and needs.

The next step: If I learn about a conflict, will I help to find a solution? Or will I look the other way and stay away? What is my typical behavior? Today is a good day to change my habits in the right direction!

What's your response to the questions that have been raised? When I love somebody, I will do my best to help him. I will support him whatever happens. I will try to calm him down, if he is angry. But what about other people in my neighborhood, at work or in my CE group. Will I encounter them in the same way? God himself gives us a great promise: peacemakers will be called children of God. We will act as visible member of God's family. When we bring God's peace to our people, they can see God's great love and mercy in our actions. We can make a difference in this loveless and merciless world. The challenge starts now. Will you be part of it?

## **For prayer**

We pray that endeavorers all over the world will be peacemakers in their families, at university, at school, at work, etc.. May God give us a clear view for the needs of the people around us.

Pray for the right words to speak to people in conflicts.

We pray for people living in war affected areas of our world.

We pray for the CE unions in North America and the Caribbean: U.S.A., Cayman Islands, Guyana, Jamaica, and for the few remaining Canadian endeavorers.

Thank God for the steady growth of CE U.S.A. and for the programs and material produced by endeavor (CEI). Also thank God for the massive support of mission and relief-organizations through American Christians.

Pray for the endeavorers in Jamaica, Guyana and Cayman Islands that they take effective measures to get youth involved in CE again.

Pray that especially wealthy Christians do not trust more in money than in the Lord God.

Pray that the American churches find true and convincing answers to the questions cropping up because of an increasing influence of liberal, non-religious positions in the public opinion.

## **Suggestions**

Visit the World Watch List at Open Door's website: <https://www.opendoorsusa.org/christian-persecution/world-watch-list/>. Choose one country and pray for the Christians there. Learn more about Christian persecution in this land and keep praying for them for one week.

**Christian Petersen**, Secretary of GYFCE-department of voluntary year for social service,

**JANUARY 31**

## **Living with the bible**

*Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path.* (Psalm 119:105)

### **Impulse**

“I will make it the rule of my life to pray and to read the Bible every day” says the original CE-pledge. Endeavorers are people of the bible. We live with the bible and search for guidance in the word of God every day.

“Only the bible – sola scriptura” stated Martin Luther as one of four “Onlys” that have been highlighted in the reformation - expressing that there is no other source from where to learn Christian living and understanding God’s will. However, isn’t there also the word of sisters and brothers to correct us? Yes it is. Don’t we have helpful Christian books and sermons? Yes, we do have. Doesn’t God speak through dreams and revelations? Yes, he does! But all that must be rooted in the word of God. All the wonderful worship songs have to be proved by God's revelation in his word. Is it really true that Jesus always wants us to feel good and to be happy as we sing sometimes? Let us study what Jesus said about walking in his footprints and the cost of discipleship.

Reading the bible is sometimes exciting, refreshing and inspiring. But sometimes it is boring and the devotion in the morning leaves us helpless and once a while frustrated. That is normal! Do not give up! Carry on. Turn your perplexity into prayer.

### **For prayer**

Praise God and thank him for his word. Thank Jesus if you have your own copy of the bible. Pray for those who don’t have access to the bible in their language.

Become an intercessor for bible translators all over the world.

Pray that the bible may be and remain the guiding source for the CE movement in all national unions.

We pray for the CE unions in Latin America: Guatemala, Mexico, Peru and for friends of CE in Brazil, Argentina and Belize.

Thank God for the big numbers and the effective work of the Latin American CE unions.

Pray that the churches realize the treasure they have with the youth organized in CE and abstain from turning CE into a church department. Pray also for willing and suitable young persons who are ready to serve in leading functions of their CE and their church.

Pray that the local CE groups and the leadership of the union develop strategies how to reach out better to areas and people who need the gospel so that the Glory of God be multiplied.

### **Suggestions**

Take your bible and lift it up to the Lord while you are joining in this prayer. In your youth group you can share your best experiences with the bible and turn that into worship. Also, share your listlessness to read the bible regularly and turn that into prayer.

**Rev. Rudolf Westerheide**, National Director of GYFCE

# FEBRUARY 1

## Resting in God

*"Only in returning to me and resting in me will you be saved. In quietness and confidence is your strength"* (Isaiah 30:15)

## Input

In this crazy world, it seems strange to come to a halt; apparently doing nothing. We're always on the go and rarely we do turn off. Standby seems to be the mode of choice, to not miss out anything. We're prepared for everything – but are we prepared to take some quiet time out for God, right here and now?

It is far too tempting to push the quiet time to the side and say: "I'll get around to that when I have some spare time." This causes our souls, although kept running, not getting proper nourishment.

In the quiet time with God we can lay down the heavy load which is burdening our souls and enjoy a place of peace. Above all, in this place of quietness we can hear God's voice. There is no place where we get more strengthened and better guided than in a quiet time before God.

Take time for God, just you and Him. You may better understand your feelings. You will be amazed at the words that you can speak. Take time to listen to God, listen for his heart beat, see yourself and the world through his eyes. In God's presence rediscover your identity and your place in this world.

Augustine, a man of the early Church, said this in a prayer using the following words: "You, oh Lord, have brought us into your dwelling place, and my heart is in turmoil, until it finds peace in you. Our hearts are restless till they find their rest in thee."

## For prayer

Thank the Lord for the opportunity to take your troubles to him, and that you can be open and honest and let yourself be encouraged.

Request help in finding time in the course of the day for God, just you and God. Also, that you don't do everything in your own strength, rather that you do it in the presence and in unity with the Lord.

We pray for the CE unions in Asia: India, Japan, Korea, Nepal, the KBCDYW of Myanmar and for the Christian Endeavor friends in Pakistan and the Philippines.

Thank God for the Asian Christians who despite persecution (sometimes severe) share the gospel and show God's mercy through their charity. Thank God for the Korean churches, who send missionaries everywhere. Remember the severely persecuted Christians in North-Korea.

Pray for more active groups in the Korean CE Union. Also pray for ways of better communication with and stronger support for the WCEU. Pray for understanding each other in the worldwide CE family.

Pray for CE in Japan, which seems to be a small group fading away, since there is hardly youth.

Thank God for the Nepalese CE union, which is growing steadily and is a blessing for their church and the society at large. Remember the earthquake and the impact on these anyway poor people.

Pray for CE in India, for ways to involve youth in the leadership, for sufficient funds, for unity in this multicultural country. Thank God for many devoted sisters and brothers.

## Suggestions

Sit up straight, in a comfy place, ready to be in God's presence and ask Him to speak to you. Now hold on through the silence and try to just focus on your own breath. After some time, start to pray straight from your heart. Speak these words almost in a whispering tone; breathing in and say "Lord Jesus Christ", and then, breathing out, say "Have mercy on my soul".

**Bernd Pfalzer**, Secretary of GYFCE youth-ministry

## FEBRUARY 2

### Willing to serve

*“Pure and genuine religion in the sight of God the Father means caring for orphans and widows in their distress and refusing to let the world corrupt you”.* (James 1:27)

### Impulse

During my service as missionary in Cambodia my language teacher, who was not a Christian himself, explained to me, why Christian communities experienced extensive growth during the last 10 years: 'Christian faith became so attractive to people, because of the sacrificial service of the believers to the poor and the marginalized.' He saw true, genuine faith at work in their care and love for others. As a Non-Christian he summarized his perception of a true religion like James in 1:27. Widows and orphans during the time of James belonged to the most vulnerable people in the society. Without a father or a husband they got easily abused and exploited having no legal protection. Who would take up their case and protect them? Interestingly James does not take bible reading or prayer the true indicator of genuine faith but the case of vulnerable widows and orphans. Serving people in their distress is faith at work. By doing this, we reflect and mirror God the father to people who most desperately need a father for their care and protection. Taking up the case of vulnerable people means serving them and serving God at the same time.

How does your faith visibly express the love of God for the poor? Are you willing to serve people in need and grow in faith at the same time?

### For prayer

Thank God for calling Christians around the world to care for and serve people in need.

Pray for the GYFCE- sponsored “INDIENHILFE” projects for needy children and youth in India and Nepal, supported by German CE-Groups. (More information at [www.ec-indienhilfe.de](http://www.ec-indienhilfe.de))

Pray for willingness and openness of CE-groups worldwide to serve others by taking up the case of people in need and thus reflect God's character into the world.

We pray for the CE unions in the Pacific region: American Samoa, Australia, Hawaii, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, and the CE friends in New Zealand, Marshall Islands, Micronesia and Tonga.

Thank God for the faithfulness and generosity of the endeavorers in this part of the world.

Pray that the overwhelming cultural traditions are not obstructing a life in obedience to the scriptures primarily. Also pray that they realize that there may be tasks for them beyond their islands.

Pray that a sound theology helps the believers not to fall prey to the Mormon's teaching.

Pray for a better understanding between the generations. For respect and love for each other and for ways to involve youth better in decisions about CE activities.

### Suggestions

Group discussion

- How does genuine faith look like for you? How is God's indicator for genuine faith according to James 1:27 expressed in our CE-activities?
- Who are the “widows and orphans” in our neighborhood?
- How could we as a CE-group serve those people in need?

**Gerhard Wiebe**, Secretary of the GYFCE Social-Missionary-Service

## FEBRUARY 3

### Standing in prayer

*Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.* (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18)

### Impulse

Based on those 3 short verses, I'll ask 3 questions: A) What did you rejoice about, like most, last week?  
B) When did you pray last time? C) What for have you been thankful today?

Easy questions? We notice that they cause difficulties. Here are three helpful thoughts:

These verses remind us on what should be self evident for a Christian. Being in constant connection with Jesus his disciples rejoices out of a grateful heart. Rejoice! Pray further! Be thankful! Paul gives a reason for this commands: "Because this is the will of God in Jesus Christ for you". The Lord wants us to be happy and to be in touch and to be thankful. And he empowers us for such a life. Thirdly this scripture is an encouragement from a brother. In difficult situations helpful words like these strengthen us, because the other person can make me aware of what makes me happy. Also she/he can pray with me and for me, and she/he can look together with me at incidences in the past that I can be thankful for.

### For prayer

Today let us be happy and thankful for the CE- movement and all the CE- ministries all over of the world. Be thankful that people come to Christ.

Be thankful for the churches and fellowships where we are involved in.

We pray for the CE unions in Europe: Austria, Germany, Great Britain, Hungary, Ireland, Romania, The Netherlands, Russia, Ukraine and the friends of Christian Endeavor in Croatia, Czech Republic, Bulgaria, Poland, Scotland and Slovakia.

Thank God for the big number of pastors, missionaries and lay-leaders who emerged from CE.

Pray for trust between young and old endeavorers and for handing over responsibility to the younger generation.

Pray for the big number of paid staff in the German CE that they do not violate the learning by doing principle but encourage and teach the young endeavorers to take up the responsibilities of a leader.

Pray for the new beginnings of CE in Russia, that Dominick and friends find the way for CE to grow.

Pray that the Irish endeavorers may be successful in planting YP-groups following their many Junior groups.

Pray that the youth in the European affluent society does not get distracted and deceived by all the material choices and offers to spend time

Pray for an awakening of the Churches in Europe, that they may learn to lead the society towards accepting and obeying the word of God as the base for the European cultures. Pray also that the institutions teaching theology do this in due respect of God Almighty

### Suggestions

Divide the room into 3 areas: The first area is called *thankfulness*; there you can say thanks to God. The second area is called *joy*: Here you can share with others your personal story, how you have experienced God.

In the third area of prayer, *plea*, you can bring all requests before God.

**Thomas Kretschmar**, Secretary of GYFCE children-ministry

## FEBRUARY 4

### Building the church

*For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the faith God has distributed to each of you.* (Romans 12:3)

### Impulse

Usually old books are outdated. As a youth organization we tend to read brand new stuff; studies that reflect today's life of teenagers, thoughts of how decisions are made in order to invite young people to Christ, Christian lifestyle magazines, etc. But there is one old book that attracts my attention: "World Wide Endeavor – from the beginning and in all lands" (published in 1895). It is signed by Francis E. Clark, the founder of Christian Endeavor. This old and fat book gives an inside view of the CE-principles and the development of the CE-movement in the very first years. Browsing through the book I felt the CE-spirit of the early days. Christian Endeavor as a lifestyle penetrated more and more individuals, changed structures and the dimension of youth work. CE-members went to the mission fields, founded new profession based CE-groups, always asking the Lord Jesus Christ where he wants them to serve. The typical CE-approach from the beginning is: Christ calls everybody in his service, witness shall be done everywhere and at every time, there is a focus on the local church and on worldwide prospective. Please read Romans 12, 3-8. What gift is given to you as an individual? How can you serve your CE-society and the worldwide church? What gift from God is given to your CE-group?

### For Prayer

We give thanks to our Lord for: growing churches despite of persecution / the worldwide CE-movement / the new WCEU general secretary Dr. Dave Coryell, / thousands of CE-societies in 29 countries

We pray our Lord for: the youth in war zones, especially for the CE-societies affected by war / wisdom for politicians and leaders in church and society

We pray for the CE unions in the Middle East: Lebanon and Syria and for the friends of Christian Endeavor in Egypt and Iraq.

Thank God for the Christians in the Middle East who remind their fellow-citizens on Jesus

Pray for all the victims of the terrible war in Syria and Iraq. (also in other zones of conflict)

Pray for wisdom and patience for all those negotiating for peace

Pray for the Christian communities who survived for centuries there but are now decreasing dramatically because of growing pressure and hostility by the majority of the population.

Thank God for the lively CE union in Syria and Lebanon and pray that they find again and again ways to reach out to young people of their church and beyond and win them for Jesus.

### Suggestions

Share the word of God

Write your prayer requests on paper slips and fix it all over whole room: red =Jesus, we ask you...; green=Thank you Jesus for ...

Go round 2 by 2 and pray together for the requests on the paper slips

**Simon Schuh**, Director of Administration, GYFCE