

## PRAYER MENU

2008 No. 4

### ***Thanks for Voting Freedom Involves Civic Duty!***

- **ELECTIONS.** The primary elections are over with and the campaign for the general elections in November begins. As much as we may dislike all the clamoring, selecting government leaders is a freedom we should not take lightly. A democratic political process is messy, but it is still the best in the world. Thank God for freedoms that we may enjoy and must exercise wisely.
- **GAMBLING IN OUR BACKYARD?** A group in Lyon County hopes to pass a referendum in August that will allow construction of a casino near Larchwood. Driving the initiative is money, greed, and jobs. The \$90 million campus would include a casino, resort, and golf course. (SCJ 5-28-08) Pray that wisdom may prevail in making this life style choices and entertainment decision.
- **RELIEF STALLED.** U.S. Navy ships are leaving Burma (Myanmar) after failing to get the Burmese government's permission to unload aid to "ease the suffering of hundreds of thousands" of cyclone survivors. Myanmar's state media has said that it feared a U.S. invasion aimed at seizing the country's oil deposits. But the junta has also forbidden use of military helicopters from friendly neighboring nations. (SCJ 6-4-08) Pray for the cyclone survivors in Burma and conditions that may relax their military leaders' rule to let relief come into Burma.
- **TORNADOS.** A devastating tornado destroyed a third of Parkersburg and left seven people dead. Eight families in the CRC congregation lost their homes and belongings. Most of those who died in Parkersburg were in their basements when their homes collapsed, including a couple in their 80s who were Christian Reformed Church members. (CRC News Service 5-28-08). Since this report, an eighth person in Parkersburg has died because of the storm. Continue to pray for communities affected by tornadoes, cyclones, and earthquakes.
- **THE CHURCH IN CHINA.** Christians in China are coming out of hiding, as "underground" home churches expand, divide, and require more space to worship. One Chinese church leader put it this way: "Urban church buildings are rising up like bamboo shoots." One estimate is that there are now 130 million Christians in China, and the numbers continue to rise. The government seems to be backing off of its atheistic policy. (CT May-08) Pray for the church in China.
- **PRISON NUMBERS.** In the 1970s there were 500,000 adult men and women in American prisons. Currently there are 2,319,258 incarcerated. Mandatory sentencing, the war on drugs, and rapid prison construction all contribute to the increase. At this rate, "1 in every 100 American adults is in prison." Never before have we had better reason to support prison ministries. (CNN Spring 08) Pray for reformation in American life, just and humane treatment of prisoners, and for prison ministries such as Crossroads.

- **BACK TO GOD HOUR IN BRAZIL.** The pilings are in and the walls are starting to take shape at a new, more than \$1 million ministry center that will serve the outreach efforts of BTGH in Brazil. The BTGH continues to be a powerful voice around the world. *(CRC News Service 5-21-08)* Continue to pray for the Back to God Hour.
- **GAYS IN THE MILITARY.** A Federal appeals court in the state of Washington sided with a gay flight nurse who was discharged when it became known that she was in a homosexual relationship with a civilian. The court said the military did not “prove that having this particular gay person in the unit hurt morale.” The ACLU filed the case on behalf of Major Margaret Witt who had been honorably discharged in 2007. *(SCJ 5-22-08)* Pray for just and workable policies for our nation.
- **LATE-TERM ABORTIONS IN VIRGINIA.** In a 2-1 decision a panel of the 4th Circuit Court ruled that Virginia’s ban on partial birth abortion did not protect doctors who “accidentally” perform such abortions. On the basis of this technicality, two judges thwarted the intent of the U.S. Supreme Court. *(SCJ 5-21-08)* Pray for good and righteous laws, and for judges to act in accord with these laws.
- **PORNOGRAPHY LAW UPHELD.** In a 7-2 ruling, the U.S. Supreme Court upheld a 2003 law that makes it a crime to possess or sell child pornography. Justices Souter and Ginsburg dissented. *(SCJ 5-20-08)* Thank God for judges who rule on the side of morality and the law.
- **WHAT MUSLIMS THINK?** After six years of face-to-face interviews in 40 nations, Gallup has published its findings. Here are some sample results: a) Muslims dislike the West’s “promiscuity.” b) They envy the West’s “technology,” “hard work,” “rule of law,” and its “fair political systems with respect for human rights, democracy, and gender equality.” c) They admire least about Muslim societies: a lack of unity, economic corruption, and extremism.” d) Most Muslims reject theocracy and secular democracy and want governments to balance basic “religious principles” and “democratic values.” They put a high value on “freedom of speech” and equal rights for both men and women. *(CC 5-26-08)* Pray for peaceful co-existence of Muslims and the West.

We urge you to include items from the PRAYER MENU in family and personal prayers. You may contribute to the menu by giving a news item of concern to one of our committee members: Abe Bos, Diana Gonzalez, Jim & Sally Koldenhoven, Jason & Tammy Lief, Jim & Thea Mouw, Lauren & Barb Ochsner, Andrew Sybesma, Jo Vander Werf, or Lisa Vander Plaats.