

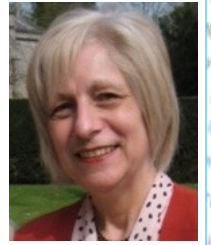
# Canopy of Prayer

October #95-2020

Author

Jill Jeal

Canopy of Prayer



## Dear Prayer Partners in Europe

When we read the history of the kings of Israel in the books of Kings and Chronicles, there is a recurring judgement of each king's reign; either "He did what was right in the eyes of the Lord" or "He did evil in the eyes of the Lord". It seems very black and white. The kings of Judah are measured against the model of the great King David who, God said, was "a man after my own heart". (Acts 13:22) And yet, we know that David committed some serious sins. How then can he be held up as a great example of a leader? David exhibited both leadership and humility; he knew both the favour of the Lord and his forgiveness. In 1 Sam.16:7 we read "People look at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart." Let us not be tempted to put ourselves in the role of judge too quickly.

## Christians in politics

How many Christian politicians do you know? How can we know if our leaders are believers?

Do we scrutinise their words as they speak, either at a local, national or European level, looking for clues as to what their underlying values are? If they claim to be Christian, do their actions bear out this claim?

We are encouraged if a leader appears to be open to God, as has been said of Ursula von der Leyen (Head of the European Commission), David Sassoli (President of the European Parliament) or when a politician has been brought up in a Christian environment like Angela Merkel (German Chancellor).

Politicians are often in the spotlight and it is understandable if they are wary about openly declaring what they believe. Those who do so are often mocked, such as a UK member of parliament who gave a biblical view in a debate about homosexuality, or they are passed over for promotion to an important role, as was Rocco Buttiglione, denied a place in the European Commission because, it was said, his catholic views would prevent him from doing the job fairly.

It has often been said that religion and politics don't mix, and there are many who hold this view. Some believe that there are no Christians in politics at all because they are the most distrusted profession of all! But these views ignore the fact that our western political and legal systems are built on Christian values. The onslaught on these values over recent years has been immense and we can see the results in laws passed both nationally and at the European level. So it has never been more vital for Christian voices to be heard in the political arena.

Often, from the outside, the choices seem clear to us on the issues which are important to us as Christians. But in reality, it is often harder for the politicians, who have to look into all the details of the legislation under debate, to make a firm stand of faith.

I was called to pray for politicians in the European institutions of Strasbourg and then the Lord opened the door for me to work with some of them, all Christians but from different political parties. I have seen the struggles and heart searching that they go through in trying to balance work and faith; in deciding whether to vote one way or the other on important issues.

Sometimes these issues were raised at the monthly Members' prayer breakfast, where MEPs are united in their fellowship in Christ, but differ in their political persuasions, seeing any particular topic from different standpoints. One MEP (president of the prayer breakfast at the time) was told by a Christian lobby group that, if he did not agree with their point of view, he could not possibly be a Christian! Let us be careful not to write off those who do not agree with us on a particular subject, however important it is to us. It may well be that God is working out His purposes in ways that are different from ours.

Let us, for our part, faithfully pray as we are encouraged to do in 1 Tim 2:2 "for kings and all those in authority", at whatever level that might be, for their good as well as the good of our society.

## How can we pray for those in authority?

- Remember that politicians are men and women just like us; pray for their health, safety in travel, good family relationships, especially as their work often takes them away from home.
- Pray for Godly wisdom; that Christian politicians would make time in their busy schedules to read God's word, pray, and find light to guide them on their path.
- Pray for courage for those who God would use to make a difference by publicly making a stand for issues of faith.



## EU - UK Trade negotiations

After 11 months of negotiations and a common desire to find a trade deal acceptable to both sides, it is important over the next few days for both parties to find an acceptable compromise. Let us continue to pray for these negotiations which will affect all the nations involved.

## Additional Prayer Points:-

1. Pray that meaningful dialogue could begin in Belarus in the light of the threatened general strike and also the permission for armed forces to use live ammunition on protesters.
2. As the pandemic is once again taking hold in the nations of Europe, pray for wisdom for governments and adherence to the guidelines being introduced.

**CONTACT** Canopy of Prayer,  
Ortwin Schweitzer, Ian Jeal,  
Corrie Oosterhuis  
info@canopyofprayer.eu  
www.canopyofprayer.eu

**DONATION** Waechterruf e.V.,  
IBAN DE73 6129 0120 0464 0500 06  
BIC GENODES1NUE  
Use "Project 2100", Name and  
Address