



Uniting our hearts in *prayer*



Courageous

The following is the amazing story of a woman called Alina,* a listener of the *Women of Hope* program.



to renounce her newfound faith would be great, and she would face persecution if she did not.

Alina was kidnapped and forced to marry a man who practiced the dominant religion in the region where they lived. She felt bound to stay with him because of tradition and because his family threatened to place curses on her if she left.

Unexpectedly, Alina's husband allowed her to visit her mother, who was a Christian. After Alina's mom witnessed to her, she accepted Christ as savior. They knew Alina would face staunch opposition from her husband when she returned to him and his family, so her whole family prayed for her before she left. Pressure

The village elders did try to force her to renounce her faith, but she said that Jesus put in her heart, "Just be silent." They took her silence as obedience and gave her several conditions she had to meet to avoid persecution. The first two, to cover her head and to always dress modestly, she already did. Promising to pray five times a day was the third condition, and she gladly complied as she now had specific times to pray to the true God while being seen as practicing her husband's religion.

Throughout it all, Alina clung to the promise of God: "I'm holding you in

my right hand." This gave her great hope during her trials. Alina shared, "I'm so grateful to God who allowed this to happen in my life. Hard times teach us humility, patience and love no matter what they do against us."

Alina continues to walk in faith and is grateful for the *Women of Hope* program. They are the only source of her spiritual growth, and they remind her to persist in her faith. She uses content of the program, including poems and other ideas, as witnessing tools, despite being surrounded by people who are in opposition to her beliefs.

– Maribeth Stevens,
volunteer writer

SEPT-OCT 2024

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Lifting up women of Central Asia, the Middle East and North Africa in prayer

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from Director Susie Pek

The body of Christ united
Abide, Unite and Go
PART TWO

**Hope & healing
in Jesus for women**

* Name changed for privacy

September

1. Lord, you sent Jesus so that we may be set free. Sustain all the work on behalf of all those ensnared in human trafficking that they may be set free physically and spiritually. (Luke 4:18-19)
2. Father, help men in Turkmenistan to treat their wives with love, kindness and fidelity. Give encouragement to women who are lacking these from their spouses. (Eph. 5:25)
3. Lord, we ask that church leaders in Kazakhstan would be united in you. Enable them to cooperate with each other and solve their disagreements with grace. (1 Cor. 1:10)
4. God grant safety and dignity to Moroccan women facing societal and cultural challenges. May they have opportunities to receive educational and vocational training. (Isa. 41:10)
5. Father, please protect those in Uzbekistan who are victims of sexual and physical abuse within their families. Grant them resilience to overcome this evil. (2 Sam. 22:3-4)
6. Father, may our Middle East teams have a positive impact through their digital platforms in empowering Arab women with wisdom and strength through the Word of God. (Prov. 31:25)
7. Lord, ease the suffering and give hope to families in Kyrgyzstan that are separated

due to immigration. May the women and children be cared and provided for. (Rom. 12:12)

8. Father, bring salvation to women in Tajikistan. May they seek love, hope, faith and help from Jesus Christ. (Ps. 121:1)
9. Lord, we pray for marriages affected by separation, divorce and alcoholism in Karakalpakstan. Please heal these marriages and restore these couples. (Matt. 19:6)
10. God, may Turkish churches shine in these difficult times during which many people have turned away from you. May Turkish Christians reflect God in their relationships so that their communities are touched by you. (Dan. 12:3)
11. Lord, may women in Northern Cyprus look to you for the provision of good jobs and sufficient income. (Phil. 4:19)
12. God, many women in Turkmenistan perform black magic for healing or on their husband's behalf. May they learn the truth and be free from the powers of darkness. (Deut. 18:10-12)
13. Father, we pray that the faith of new believers in Kazakhstan would be strengthened and that they would trust the Lord with all their hearts. (1 Cor. 16:13)
14. Merciful God, please provide protection, justice and healing for women in Oman who face gender-based violence. (Prov. 18:10)
15. Lord, we pray that the women of Uzbekistan would recognize their true

identity and value in you despite the negative attitudes of some of their husbands and others. (Gen. 1:27)

16. God, bring salvation to the younger generations in Kyrgyzstan. May they desire to follow you wholeheartedly not because of tradition but out of relationship with you. (Matt. 3:8-10)
17. God, we pray for Tajik girls and women who, because of cultural and religious traditions, have no access to education and no voice in family or society. (Ps. 32:8)
18. Father, we ask that women in Karakalpakstan would be free from the feelings of guilt they suffer in belief that they are not good enough as wives or mothers. (Ps. 31:1)
19. God, we pray for spiritual awakening and growth among Tunisian women in the church and for Egyptian female church leaders to be strengthened and encouraged. (2 Pet. 3:18)
20. Father, we pray for bonds of trust within Christian families in Türkiye. May your Spirit unite them in love. (Col. 3:14)

21. God, bring hope, healing and provision to Lebanese women affected by the ongoing economic crisis. May the gospel reach those who do not know you and bring them true peace. (Ps. 34:18)

22. Lord, we ask that you help the women of Karakalpakstan to make you a priority in their lives and to attend worship regularly despite other commitments. (Heb. 10:25)
23. Praise God for a law passed in Kazakhstan to stop domestic violence. If a wife reports abuse to the authorities today, the abuser likely will be punished. (Col. 3:19)
24. Lord, grant protection and courage to women in the Middle East who are advocating for their basic human rights. May our teams reach them with the gospel so they may find true freedom in you. (Josh. 1:9)
25. Heavenly Father, please give wisdom and courage to believers in Uzbekistan in sharing the gospel. Lead them to those who are open to you. (James 1:5)



26. Lord, give wisdom to the leaders of Kyrgyzstan so they may transform the educational and medical systems to help the needy. (1 Kings 3:9)

27. We pray for spiritual growth and fellowship among Jordanian women believers. Lord, may they be filled with your Word and share its truths with women in their communities. (Col. 1:10)

28. God, please keep safe and make provision for widows and single mothers in the war-torn areas of Yemen. May Christians there find their strength and hope in you. (Ps. 91:1-2)

29. Father, strengthen the Tajik women who live in villages and are persecuted by their families because of their faith in Christ. (Matt. 5:11)

30. We pray that those suffering physically and spiritually in Türkiye will find healing and life in you, Lord. May the hurting be set free from all that ensnares them. (Rom. 8:2)

October

1. God, we ask that the women who practice the occult in Karakalpakstan will find their salvation and deliverance in Christ and turn to you as their source of strength. (Lev. 19:31)

2. Bring hope and strength, Lord, to young Tajik girls who are forced to marry against their will and to women who must become second or third wives of polygamists in order to survive. (1 Pet. 3:7)

3. Thank you, Father, that people who belong to other

religions are listening to our programs in Kyrgyzstan. May your truth set them free and bring blessing to their families. (John 8:32)

4. Lord, help single moms in Kazakhstan find opportunities to work to provide for themselves and their families through honest labor. (Col. 3:23)

5. We pray for your protection and support, Father, over refugee women in Jordan. Lead them to your hope, peace and stability as they settle into their new communities. (Matt. 11:28)

6. Lord, we ask that you provide a way for believers in Turkmenistan to attend home groups and continue in the faith even when they face opposition from unbelievers. (Acts 2:42)

7. God, we ask that parents in Uzbekistan would seek you for wisdom as they raise and discipline their children according to your Word. (Prov. 22:6)

8. Lord, we pray for protection and support for women in Egypt and Tunisia experiencing gender-based violence, domestic violence or other abuse. (Ps. 9:9)

9. Father, we ask that you prepare the church to be a place of refuge and hope for brokenhearted women in Northern Cyprus. (Ps. 147:3)

10. We pray for Christians in Türkiye who are being targeted for their faith. Lord, please give our brothers and sisters courage and peace like Daniel and protect them from whatever lions they encounter. (Dan. 6:22)

God is in control

There are many paradoxes in the Christian life. One of them is that persecution and difficulty often cause the Church of Jesus Christ to grow.

That's what our TWR Women of Hope teams in Central Asia are expecting as they see increased opposition to Christianity and limits being placed on gatherings of believers in some areas. But one of our leaders courageously shares, "We believe that everything is under God's control, and we hope that it will motivate the gatherings [of believers] to grow, unite and spread the gospel even more!"

Through radio, social media platforms, SD cards and flash drives, the *Women of Hope* and *Precious and Beloved* programs are reaching the people of Central Asia with biblical content and practical advice. Ministering to listeners' common needs, program topics have included raising children, domestic violence, infertility, miscarriage and cultural hardships while others address emotional distress such as distrust, shame, guilt and rejection.

The biblical lessons they share are also making an impact as listeners express their gratitude for the encouragement and spiritual nourishment they receive from the programs.

"I felt worthless, unloved and unneeded and

thought nobody could help me change my life," one listener shared. "However, my life was radically changed after I received a radio and flash stick with *Women of Hope* programs. These told me that God loves me, that Jesus died for me, is alive and can transform my life. After accepting Jesus as my Lord and Savior, I now know that I am his precious daughter, and that he is good and loves me."

Another listener said, "I live in a village, and we don't have a church there, which is why I feel so blessed to have radio programs to listen to every day and grow spiritually."

Not only are our teams impacting Central Asia through programming, but they also lead a vibrant prayer ministry as people gather both in person and pray together through text. They also reach out to local churches and travel to remote villages, encouraging believers in their faith and to read the Bible and pray.

Can we pray for our courageous TWR Women of Hope leaders as they look to our sovereign God who is in control of all things? They ask us to pray for their spiritual and physical strength, for laws that would protect the religious freedom of churches and for stability in their countries. Together, let's bring them before the Lord.



By Lisa Hall

International Prayer Coordinator

JOIN US FOR
OUR VIRTUAL
prayer.
gathering

SEPTEMBER

Global Director
Susie Pek

OCTOBER

Unity in the body
of Christ

Sign up at twrwomenofhope.org/events

11. God, we pray for the continuity and sustainability of our Middle East teams' digital platforms. Grant our teams wisdom and favor as they establish relationships with their audiences. (Ps. 90:17)

12. Lord, break the spiritual strongholds of the people of Uzbekistan and help them discern and resist Satan's tactics with courage and resolve. (James 4:7)

13. Father, please strengthen and protect women in Bahrain who face societal pressures and discrimination because of their Christian faith. (Ps. 27:1)

14. God, we pray that you would restore relationships between mothers-in-law and daughters-in-law in Karakalpakstan. May they accept and love each other. (2 Cor. 13:11)

15. Father, may Syrian women come to experience the love and peace of Christ amid the turmoil of their nation's conflict. Comfort those who mourn, and provide for and protect the displaced. (Ps. 23:4)

16. Lord, guide and give wisdom to leaders in Türkiye during this difficult economic time. A doctor shortage is occurring as physicians are moving abroad for financial reasons. (Isa. 30:21)

17. God, please equip believers in Kyrgyzstan to share your love and truth with unbelievers around them. May people hunger and thirst for you and your Word. (Acts 1:8)

18. Lord, bring safety to Tajik women who suffer domestic violence from their husbands and in-laws. May men who don't respect women have a change of heart. (Isa. 60:18)

19. Father, bless, protect and unite Christian families in Kyrgyzstan, and empower them to be strong against adversity. Help wives learn to pray and fast for their families. (Prov. 31:10)

20. God, help us to reach women in conservative communities in Qatar with the gospel. May they come to know you and see the true value you have given them. (Eph. 2:10)

21. Father, may those considering divorce in Turkmenistan have a change of heart and seek restoration in their marriage relationships. (Heb. 13:4)

22. God, may the unemployed in Turkmenistan gain the skills needed to secure jobs and provide for their families. (Prov. 16:3)

23. Father, grant wisdom to our TWR Women of Hope



teams in Central Asia to help post-abortive women find healing and to bring the good news of Christ to their people. (Prov. 2:6)

24. Lord God, may believers in Uzbekistan serve God with a dedicated heart and remain firm in their faith despite opposition from their families. (1 Cor. 15:58)

25. Lord, give Karakalpakstan leaders wisdom to improve and provide free medical services. Grant women discernment for when to seek medical help rather than self-treatment. (Prov. 3:13)

26. God, may single women in Türkiye find hope and encouragement in you as they provide for their families with limited resources. Multiply the little they have. (1 Kings 17:13-16)

27. Lord, raise up and strengthen believers in the United Arab Emirates to faithfully bring the gospel message to the people of this nation. (Rom. 1:16)

28. Heavenly Father, please provide godly husbands for single Christian women in Kazakhstan who want to be married and create godly families. (2 Cor. 6:14)

29. Father, keep the women in fellowship and Bible studies in Morocco safe as you grow them spiritually and in number. (Ps. 32:7)

30. Lord, protect and empower Algerian women who face societal pressure and discrimination. May they find strength and courage in their faith despite persecution. (Ps. 46:1)

31. God, may the TWR Women of Hope digital ministry called *Bridge of Hope* in Northern Cyprus grow to be fruitful and help those in need. (Col. 1:28)



Keep raising your voice to the Lord

“In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans. And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for God’s people in accordance with the will of God.”

– ROM. 8:26-27



Have you ever wondered how you’d react if you were persecuted because of your faith? I vividly remember the first time the thought crossed my mind.

I was reading the book *Tortured for Christ*, by Richard Wurmbbrand, and besides not being able to hold back the tears, I could not stop thinking how I’d react if I were he. Richard was arrested for the crimes of leading Christian worship and witnessing – both of which were illegal under the atheistic communist regime of Romania. He endured 14 years of prison and torture. His wife, Sabina, suffered three years of forced labor.

Each part of the story was inspiring, challenging and clearly pointing to God’s grace. It was his grace that carried them through, enabling them to stay true to Christ. When I was a young believer, Wurmbbrand’s life story shaped my prayer life as it opened my eyes to the reality of persecution and the silencing of our brothers and sisters.

Many years have gone by since that book was written; however, persecution continues to be a reality all over the world. Our brothers and sisters go through unspeakable things and are silenced in many ways. It’s hard for me to imagine that people in some countries can’t even pray out loud! That does not mean they are silent. They continue to speak, as one of our leaders shared: “We believe that everything is under God’s control, and we hope that it will motivate the gatherings of believers to grow, unite and spread the gospel even more!” They continue to raise their voices to Christ asking not only on their own behalf but also on behalf of others.

It’s evident that they appropriate God’s grace just like Paul described in 2 Cor. 12:9, “But he said to me, ‘My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.’ Therefore, I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ’s power

may rest on me. That is why, for Christ’s sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.”

While most of us may not have been persecuted, we may have felt silenced by the pressures and the many loud voices around us. We may have lost our voices due to past traumas and abuse. Or maybe we just never felt significant enough to be heard! The God of the universe hears our brothers and sisters even in the midst of persecution.

This assurance brings great joy and comfort. The Lord hears us! He is attentive to our intercessory prayers. He listens closely to the most anguished and desperate cries of our hearts. He hears us even when our words fail.

May I encourage you to talk to the Lord about all your concerns? Before a word is on your tongue, he knows it completely. He listens to your voice.



It's one of the most powerful forces in this world but oh so difficult to attain: unity. This cherished characteristic of **unity** in the body of Christ is the next step in God's path once we have embraced a life of **abiding** in him. What we experience in our intimate relationship with God, we are now to live out with other believers. Then, together we are to **go** into the world with God's message of salvation.

As we look at unity in the body of Christ, let's answer three questions regarding why, what and how.

WHY are we to be united as a body of Christ? What is God's purpose for our unity?

First, through unity in the body, God is glorified. People will know that Jesus is the Messiah and will see that the Father's desire is to have relationship with them. As Jesus prays to the Father about his disciples, he shares, *"I have given them the **glory** that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one - I in them and you in me - so that they may be brought to complete unity. Then the **world will know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me**"* (John 17:22-23).

Next, the unity of the body of Christ represents God to the world. God placed us **together** as a body so we can show the world who God is and that he lives in united community within the Godhead as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. When we are living in unified relationship in our marriages, families and churches as the global body of Christ, we are representing God.

Last, through unity the body of Christ grows and matures. Paul tells the church in Ephesus, *"So **Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers ... so that the body of Christ may be built up until we reach unity in the***

faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature" (Ephesians 4:11-13a).

God gave spiritual gifts to be used within the body to mature us, and he divided the gifts so that we need each other to do his work. But growth and maturity do not just happen.

It takes intentionality to grow our relationships within the body. Sacrifice and the commitment of our time, energy and resources are needed to knit our lives together. We must choose to be vulnerable and honest with one another and, above all, to love and show grace to one another.

WHAT unites us as a body of Christ? The Holy Spirit.

The Spirit of God comes to dwell in every believer the moment he or she believes and receives Jesus Christ as Savior. The Holy Spirit within us enables us to abide in God and to be united and abide with members of the body of Christ. As we individually continue to surrender to God's work of purification and holiness in us, the Spirit of God shines in and through us and unites us.

HOW are we to live united as one body?

*They devoted themselves to the **apostles' teaching and to fellowship,** to the*

breaking of bread and to prayer. ... All the believers were together and had everything in common. They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need (Acts 2:42-45).

The early church was devoted to one another and to living life together. Not only did they share all things, but they had a joint purpose of living for God. Their love for God even affected how they treated one another. As a result, this community now experienced authentic biblical fellowship, or *koinonia*. Because this fellowship was for all believers, it held them together in genuine community and met their needs. And the result? *"And each day the Lord added to their fellowship those who were being saved"* (Acts 2:47b).

The challenge for us comes from the biblical principle found in Acts Chapter 2: The impact that we will have on a watching world is dependent on both our **UNITY** and our **AUTHENTIC** fellowship as believers.

And that leads to another question for each of us to answer: **"How is God calling you to be more authentic and unified with the body of Christ?"**