

Prayer stations

Walk with the world — Europe



This resource contains creative prayer ideas to help you lift issues and situations in Europe to God. You can use some or all of it:

- *In personal or small group prayer by working through the prayer points provided in 'Europe: the headlines'*
- *To set up prayer stations in intercessions, a prayer meeting, or as an installation for a day of prayer.*
- *As part of the wider family of 'Walk with the world' to create a prayer room for a day of global prayer.*

Europe: the headlines — the main areas of focus for our current prayers are:

- **Economic recovery and radical re-thinking** of banking systems, financial institutions and an end to materialism, excess and a wrong self-sufficiency being the driving forces of European culture. We long to see business and industry flourish again, but in an ethical way.
- **The Euro zone** particularly, in reference to financial recovery, and recession.
- **Spiritual re-awakening**, renewal and Christian revival. We long for Europe to return to God, and his principles – both for the sake of his glory, and its future health.
- **The forgotten poor in Eastern Europe** many of whom are living with crushing poverty and injustice, bad governance, and in conditions as bad as in many developing countries, despite admission of some states, such as Romania, into the European Union.
- **Reconciliation between old enemies** and the healing of scars and enmities from last century, and even further back.
- **Unity in the church** and in particular, healing, for divisions between Catholics and Protestants.
- **Civil and youth unrest** as disaffected people protest, riot or simply suffer under increasing economic pressure and loss of faith in leaders and politicians.
- **Europe to take its role on the global stage seriously**, leading the way in meaningful reform on carbon emissions, trade practices, and other policies – particularly where they effect poorer nations.

Setting the scene

Help people connect with Europe visually:

Use the continent outline of Europe to project on to a screen, or to help you draw a chalk outline on the floor or on a large sheet – if using the latter, you could lay the stations around the outside of the map so people literally walk around Europe.

Also consider gathering together photos, pictures and artefacts from around the continent to create a sense of the heritage, culture and diversity of Europe's nations and people.

Help set the tone for people's prayers:

Ask your worship band to cover the prayer with intercessory and declarational worship, or create a CD or playlist of songs which have a focus on praying for the nations, revival, and justice issues. (If you're stuck for ideas, check out our *Outward focussed song index* at www.thesanctuarycentre.org/whereworldandworshipmeet-songs)

You might like to include some European music in this mix too and/or some worship music in different European languages.

Help keep people going with foreign fancies:

If you are setting up prayer stations for a prayer room, installation, or extended period of prayer, why not have a refreshments table with tea, coffee, and biscuits, cakes or sweets from a number of different European nations.

Intercessory prayer stations

1. La vie d'Europe

Equipment needed: A flip chart and marker pens, coloured pens or pencils and large-ish print outs of the continent outline and the sign you create using the 'For display' text below.

Instructions for setting up:

In advance: Enlarge and print out the continent outline and a sign using the text in the 'For display' section.

On the day: Lay out everything required, write 'countries we have visited' at the top of the flip chart, and display the continent outline and sign you have made using the text below.

For display:

La vie d'Europe

- Europe has 47 sovereign states – take a moment to call to mind the ones you have visited. How many cultural sites, languages and foods have you experienced?
- Write up any countries in Europe that you have visited onto the flip chart, and thank God for the people of each one as you do so. (If a country you have visited has already been written up, put a tick next to it.)

- Think of all the art, music and literature that has been written in Europe, and the many ideas and inventions that have been discovered by its people. Thank God for the creativity, ingenuity and originality of many people who have lived on this continent.
- Thank God for the many good things about living in Europe today, and the material blessings and opportunities available to the majority of its citizens in contrast to other areas of the world.
- Colour in one or two of the nations on the map as a symbol of the plenty, influence, and positive impact that Europe has had in the past as well as what it experiences in the present.

2. Money Markets

Equipment needed: A number of notes and coins from different currencies across Europe, including the Euro and a print out of the sign you create using the 'For display' text below.

Instructions for setting up:

In advance: Enlarge and print out a sign using the text in the 'For display' section. Then get together some small amounts of currency from a number of different nations, including the Euro. (You might like to ask a number of people from the congregation where they have been on holiday recently and whether they have any currency left over.)

On the day: Lay out everything and display the sign you have made using the text below.

For display:

Money markets

- Pick up some of the currency and think about how much money means to Europe's culture.
- Since 2008's Credit Crunch, and the economic down-turns that have followed, most of Europe has entered serious recession.
- For the past few decades, many countries in Europe have had extraordinarily good welfare systems and public services, ensuring provision of healthcare and benefits for those most vulnerable in society. Much of this provision is now under threat as governments make cuts to reduce deficits – pray for leaders to have wisdom and to work hard to avoid cuts which will affect the poorest people.
- Pick up some Euro currency and pray particularly for those in the Euro zone who have been affected, and particularly for nations such as Greece and the Republic of Ireland. Pray for restoration of economic stability.
- Now kneel down, still holding the currency – pray that God would help Europe rebuild in a different way. Ask that this shaking would lead them to worship him, and to build on solid foundations of righteousness and justice, rather than continuing to worship money and be motivated by greed.
- Before moving on, pray especially for Europe's youth, particularly those who are disaffected, dissatisfied, or simply feel betrayed by politicians. Offer particularly to God young people in the UK and France who are struggling to find work, or have recently been involved in rioting.

3. Post Christendom?

Equipment needed: A long piece of rope divided into three sections – each one labelled by a print out of a single word as follows – ‘the past’, ‘the present’, ‘the future’, and a print out of the sign you create using the ‘For display’ text below.

Instructions for setting up:

In advance: Enlarge and print out the single word labels and a sign using the text in the ‘For display’ section.

On the day: Lay the rope down on the floor (securing it with tape if necessary) and divide it into three sections – lay or fix down the single word label sheets one per section, and then display the image and sign you have made using the text below.

For display:

Post Christendom?

“I am the Alpha and the Omega,” says the Lord God, “who **is**, and who was, and who **is to come**, the Almighty.”
(Revelation 1:8)

- For nearly a thousand years, Europe was the primary stronghold of Christendom, but for the last 250 years the church here has been declining, despite huge progress for the gospel globally. It still holds massive influence over Christendom internationally, and many worldwide denominations are led from within it.
- But Europe is now largely post-Christian. Secularism and atheism are strong forces, and the church is in a much weaker position. Nominal Christianity muddies the water of Christian witness, resulting in people perceiving Christians as acting no differently to their own everyday life, and large proportions of the population now simply being unaware of the gospel.
- God is sovereign over Europe – he is the Lord of its past, its present, and its future.
- Start at ‘the past’ section of Europe’s timeline – spend some time thanking God for Europe’s past, and particular breakthroughs that you are thankful for. Thank God that you experienced Christian witness, and that you benefit from the Christian past of Europe by having the Bible in English, and experiencing laws largely based on Christian morality.
- Move to ‘the present’ – offer your concerns, fears and intercessions to God. Ask for him to have mercy on Europe, and to reveal himself again to those who do not know him.
- Move forward to ‘the future’ – spend a few minutes allowing God to stir up old dreams and new visions in you – what do you want to see in Europe’s future. Pray into this, and ask God to give you more of a heart for your continent, and the many nations and peoples who live in it.

4. Torn in two

Equipment needed: Print outs of the image below and the sign you create using the ‘For display’ text below.



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Instructions for setting up:

In advance: Enlarge and print out the photo and a sign using the text in the 'For display section'.

On the day: Tear the photo in half (ideally with a zig zag edge) and place it down next to the sign you have made using the text below.

For display:

Torn in two

"Therefore if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind. Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others."

(Philippians 2:1-4)

- Read this scripture several times, and allow its truth to sink into your heart and mind.
- Think about Christ's heart – broken and torn in two – over the division in his church.
- Pray for the divisions in the church to be healed, and for unity to be built. Offer up all the denominations and networks you can think of, and pray that they would love each other, and work together, to better point to Christ.
- Thank God for diversity, and for the specific and deep revelations revealed to different parts of church – but pray that this would be used to reflect his fullness, rather than to fragment the witness of who he is. Pray for an increase in openness to learn from different parts of the church.

5. Poverty shocker

Equipment needed: Print outs of one or two recent images showing poverty in Eastern European countries (see Google images), two or three compasses, and the sign you create using the 'For display' text below.

Instructions for setting up:

In advance: Enlarge and print out the photos and a sign using the text in the 'For display' section.

On the day: Lay out the compass and photos, and display the sign you have made using the text below.

For display:**Poverty shocker**

- Look at the images – are you shocked that they show situations in European countries? Did you imagine they were from ‘the West’?
- In the nineteen nineties, following the 1989 revolution, poverty in post-communist Romania and other former Russian bloc countries dominated the news as the level of poverty, particularly that affecting orphans and abandoned children, was revealed.
- The news has moved on and since countries like Romania have been admitted into the EU, people assume that poverty is no longer an issue. But it is still a big issue – particularly now in nations such as Romania, where international grant money is no longer forthcoming given its new EU status.
- Romania is the best known, but extreme poverty is also experienced by large proportions of the population in nations such as Albania, Bosnia, Bulgaria, Moldova, and the Ukraine. In 2005, Romania had 25 per cent of its population still living below the poverty line*, and Moldova is ranked 99 out of 169 on the UNDP’s 2010 human development index**.
- A number of these nations suffer as a result of bad governance and corruption as well as poor infrastructure following communist oppression.
- Use a compass to find what direction East is in and turn to face it. Thank God for the liberation of Eastern Europe and the fact people are now free to practice Christianity.
- Pray for communities living in poverty, the growth of income generation, and the work of governments, relief organisations and developing public sectors – that these nations might see an end to poverty.

(* 2010 www.nationmaster.com, ** 2010 UNDP)

6. Peace at last?

Equipment needed: Enough tea lights for everyone, and (if you can get hold of them) poppies, and print outs of the image below and the sign you create using the ‘For display’ text below.



© bigfoto.com

Instructions for setting up:

In advance: Enlarge and print out a sign using the text in the 'For display' section. Then gather together the other items that you need.

On the day: Lay out all the equipment needed and display the sign you have made using the text below.

For display:**Peace at last?**

- Europe's history has been dominated by wars, and this reached a peak in the twentieth century.
- However, the last two decades have been relatively peaceful, with most nations on the continent enjoying peace, liberty and the right to decide who governs them.
- Light a candle, and place a poppy at the foot of the cross image. Take some time to remember those who have given their lives, particularly in the world wars, and recent conflicts in Eastern Europe.
- Thank the prince of peace for the relative stability of Europe at present, and pray for protection against further conflict.
- Offer up areas in Europe which have only recently achieved peace, are still experiencing conflict, or lingering sectarian threats – particularly Northern Ireland, and Kosovo.

7. In the news today...

Equipment needed: Newspaper articles relating to European countries, or the continent as a whole, from the last week or two, and a print out of the sign you create using the 'For display' text below.

Instructions for setting up:

In advance: Enlarge and print out a sign using the text in the 'For display' section. Then gather together newspaper articles, or print outs from online news sites, from the last couple of weeks.

On the day: Lay out the various articles, and display the sign you have made using the text below.

For display:**In the news today...**

- Read one or two of the stories displayed, and cast your mind back to any other news stories you have heard recently about the continent, its institutions, or specific European countries.
- Offer up these situations to God. Remember that he is still sovereign. Ask for his mercy, guidance, peace, comfort and forgiveness for all who are affected. Offer his thanks for all who are standing up for truth, or providing comfort, especially any who are doing so in his name.
- Take a moment to consider how many stories get overlooked by the news. Thank God that he sees everything that is happening across the continent – thank him for all the good news, and surrender all the bad to his love and power.
- Ask God to prompt your heart if there is anything you should be doing in response to news stories, or specific issues, in Europe that he has laid on your heart – perhaps writing to you MP or MEP?

8. Social circle

Equipment needed: Print outs of the images below, the relevant single word or phrase label for each one, and the sign you create using the 'For display' text below.



Drug and alcohol addiction

© aarinfreephoto.com



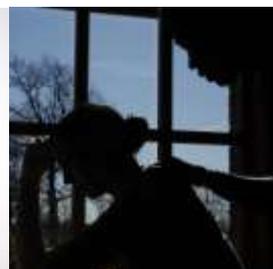
Workaholism and RSI

© aarinfreephoto.com



Busyness and stress

© ernestvanrosenamgmedia.com



Depression and anxiety

© geekphilospher.com



Family break-down

© geekphilospher.com



Obsession with relationships

© pictyle.de



Violence and abuse

© imageafter.com



Constantly wanting more

© imageafter.com

Instructions for setting up:

In advance: Enlarge and print out the images, word or phrase labels, and a sign using the text in the 'For display' section.

On the day: Lay out the images (and their labels) in a large circle, so that when you are standing in the middle of it you can turn round and face different ones – they should all have their bottom edge pointing into the circle. The display the sign you have made using the text below. (For this station, you might like to have a number of copies of it that people can pick up and take into the circle with them.)

For display:

Social circle

- Step inside the circle with this piece of paper...
- Whilst Europe contains many of the world's materially richest nations, it also contains some of its most socially fragmented.
- We have turned to many other gods to satisfy us, putting our wants and desires as the top priority. And our focus on instant gratification, and personal fulfilment at all costs has led to a society with many broken lives, disintegrated families. Much of our sense of community has been lost.

- Turn to each picture in turn, and offer up these issues to God. Pray for his comfort, peace and restoration for individuals, families and communities affected – and for his guidance and wisdom for social workers, governments and community leaders working to address these issues.
- Now take a moment to come back to the centre – where you are standing. Pray that Jesus, and his life-giving teaching, would once again be at the centre of Europe’s focus – healing, restoring and rebuilding her society.

9. Global players

Equipment needed: A globe, a dice (or several depending on the number of people who will be using the station at once) and a print out of the sign you create using the ‘For display’ text below.

Instructions for setting up:

In advance: Enlarge and print out a sign using the text in the ‘For display’ section.

On the day: Lay out everything needed, and display the sign you have made using the text below.

For display

Global players

- Europe contains some of the world’s most powerful and influential nations.
- Take a moment to think about Europe’s impact on the globe – good and bad – throughout history, and its current day influence...
- Pick up a dice. Throw it as many times as you like, and use the number guide below to guide your prayers for different issues depending on where it lands each time:
 1. Pray for global institutions in which European nations have a key voice (i.e. the UN, the G8, the World Bank etc).
 2. Pray for European institutions whose policies have global effects (i.e. the EU, and the European court of human rights).
 3. Pray for forgiveness for one or two specific European nations’ past oppression of other countries through colonialism and imperialism. And pray for conviction against any continuing of this attitude in modern incarnations.
 4. Pray for positive and effective leadership from influential European politicians and officials in relation to issues which affect poorer nations today – particularly in relation to trade, aid, and debt relief.
 5. Pray for positive and effective leadership from influential European politicians and officials to secure a fair and binding plan for global reductions in carbon emissions, while there is still time to allay the worst affects of our changing climate.
 6. Pray for ordinary European citizens to realise what the impact of their lifestyle choices on poorer communities, and the planet, are. Pray for them to lead the way for a grassroots movement for change.

10. Adopt a country

Equipment needed: A reasonably sized fold out map of Europe, tracing paper, card, HB pencils, scissors and a print out of the sign you create using the ‘For display’ text below.

Instructions for setting up:

In advance: Enlarge and print out a sign using the text in the 'For display' section. Then get together the other items you need.

On the day: Lay out the map on the floor (perhaps fixed to some cardboard, so that when people trace it, their pencils don't go through it), put out the other equipment, and display the sign you have made using the text below.

For display:**Adopt a country**

- Take a moment to prayerfully consider all the nations and situations that you have been thinking about, and offering to God, during this time.
- Stand on the map and commit to God every nation, situation, and issue you have prayed about for Europe today.
- Step off the map and consider which issues from this time have stayed with you particularly?
- Choose one or two countries that you want to remember in prayer in the coming week.
- Use the tracing paper and pencils provided, to trace the outline of your chosen country, and then to transfer this onto a piece of card. Cut the shape out (if it is a larger nation) and write on, or around it, bullet point reminders of what you want to pray for.
- Take your adopted nation away with you and keep it in your Bible, or somewhere else where you will see it often this week. Use it as a stimulus to pray for that nation, and the continent of Europe.