



Supporting persecuted Christians across the Turkic Belt Countries.

Dear Jim,

He is risen – Alleluia!

We bring you greetings in the name of our resurrected Saviour and Lord Jesus Christ, in whose resurrected life we also have the life which goes beyond the grave. This is the assurance that keeps us going, in spite of the challenges that life throw at us. The present life is not all that is to it – there is a better one beyond, when we shall see Jesus as He is (1 Cor. 15:19; Rom. 5:10). We do hope you have had a great resurrection celebration with your loved ones.

Our focus in this issue is to give updates on our recent conference which was held in Georgia. At the same to report on the items which are listed below:

- The arrest in Iran of Pastor Yusif with the other two Azeri and one Iranian pastors.
- The ban imposed in 2016 on Christians from holding meetings.

Georgia Conference

This was held mid March 2018. Quite a number of partners attended from within the different parts of our coverage. We are so grateful to Senior Minister of New Malden Baptist Church Rev Johnny Pozzo and a dear friend and TBM supporter Ingar Nicolaisen from Norway who joined us to be part of the Conference. They have made a huge impact in the life of the people though their teachings and prayer intercessions at the conference.



Pastor Yusif including some members and leaders of the fellowship that was banned in November 2016 from holding meetings were able to attend the conference also. You may recall, we reported in our previous Newsletter, that Pastor Yusif, two Azerbaijani pastors and Iranian pastor were arrested a year ago during a home group meeting in Iran. These individuals are:

- 1: Bahram Nasibov Alkan Oglu, aged 38, married, from Baku, Azerbaijan
- 2: Eldar Gurbanov, aged 49, married, from Baku, Azerbaijan

3: Yusif Farhadov Talt Oglu, aged 53, married, from Baku, Azerbaijan
4: Naser Navard Goltapeh, aged 46, a new converted Christian in Iran



They were detained without bringing any charges against them for a prolonged period of time. Eventually, they were released on bail after a payment of a huge sum. A Court proceedings followed afterwards when they were sentenced in absentia to ten years imprisonment last December.

The Iranian pastor escaped to Turkey but was arrested and returned to Iran and is currently in prison. The three Azerbaijani pastors are still in Azerbaijan, but they and their families are having to go through each day of torment knowing they could be arrested at any time and be sent to Iran to serve a ten-year prison sentence. Pastor Yusif shared with us his anxiety about even crossing the border to Georgia for the conference. During the Conference, we devoted time to encouraging and praying with pastor Yusif and one of the other pastors. Pastor Yusif and his wife have a Down's syndrome son. His wife shared with us the challenges of having to cope alone with this situation, despite the support they receive from family and friends.

All three pastors and their families have been advised to leave Azerbaijan for their safety. After much prayer for Yusif at the conference, we have also felt this advice is reasonable. But we are also fully aware of the possible challenges that confront this initiative, in terms of the processes involved.

The other side to the Conference experience was that we were also very encouraged to know that our labour is not in vain. We witnessed a lot of people being healed. We had a lot of prophetic words, though the Conference was not intended for prophetic ministration. We spent time praying together and for individuals that had various needs – spiritual, emotional and others.

Christians attended from different parts of Azerbaijan including two of the pastors Mehman and Hamid with their families who were fined, following the arrest in November 2016 and some of their church leaders. Their group are continuing to meet in secrecy in small house groups but with constant fear of being arrested again.



All of our Azeri brothers and sisters who came to the conference appear to have a particular challenge in common, which is to confront the constant pressure of living in a country where the government and the majority of the population are hostile to the Christian faith. There is other challenge, which is providing for their families even when they are denied the opportunities to jobs. There was a particular case of a brother who we found was not going to attend the Conference because he could not afford to leave his wife and children with no food. When we heard of this case, we supported him financially, which he meant he was able to provide for his family and at the same time come the Conference. We heard so many accounts of the experience of this brother and they all asked that we pray for God's miraculous provision. As we have experienced in the past, most attendees came with so much burdens on their shoulders. The good news, we witnessed God's Spirit at work in them during time of counselling, sharing the Scriptures and praying together. Despite all the challenges that confront them daily, we were so thrilled to hear them shared with us of their vision of planting home groups across the country, in the urban and rural areas! We were so encouraged by the testimonies of the Muslims that have accepted Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord! In fact, we were told, this has become a daily occurrence!



We are pleased to share with you that the Conference was very effective. We have always found Conference as an effective avenue for supporting and equipping our persecuted brothers and sisters. Quite a lot of the attendees expressed the blessings they have experienced from attending conferences and pleaded that we hold them more often.

None of what we did would have been made possible without your prayers and giving. "And my God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 4:19 NASB).

Pray Points

- The three Azerbaijani pastors that are currently living in the fear of possible arrest and being sent to Iran to serve ten years imprisonment will know the comfort of Jesus Christ.
- That Pastor Yusif and his family would continue to experience God's peace in the midst of their challenges. Ask that God will make way where there seems to be no way, especially in their desire to exit the country.
- For Azerbaijani Christians that God will sustain their motivation and supply their needs
- For the church who has been forbidden to meet, that God will protect them as they continue to come together in secret
- That our folks would not go weary in the face of the opposition to their Christian faith
- For God's provision for every need as people are denied access to jobs.
- The vision to plant home groups across the country

Giving

We are pleased to inform you that three people have now responded to our appeal to support Azeri pastors on a regular basis by giving £30 per month, for which we give the LORD heartfelt thanks. We continue to pray for seven more generous givers. Please let us know if God is leading you support these pastors option of committing to £30 a month or in any other ways. You can reach us through <http://turkicbeltministries.co.uk/giving/>

TURKIC BELT MINISTRIES bank details for direct bank transfers.

Sort code: 60-14-30

Account number: 57130965

Our work is constantly in need of resources to function effectively. We continue to appreciate your generous support and partnership of our work through your prayers and giving.

- **Invitations to Speak**

We're eager to share with churches around the country – about our ministry and how to pray and support our persecuted Christian brothers and sisters.

Please email us to discuss this at info@turkicbeltministries.co.uk

May God continue to bless you in all you do
Love in Him,

Elnur

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