December 13, 2018 – The Invitation
Topic: Moscow

Join YWAMers around the globe in praying and hearing from God. He is inviting you!

Left to right: Moscow River and Kremlin, Opening Day 2018 Soccer World Cup in Moscow

Photo credit (left to right): Trip Saavy, Felipe Trueba (EPA)

This month, please join the YWAM family as we pray for Moscow. With an estimated population of 12 million in 2016, it is the sixth largest city in the world and northernmost megacity. The primary religion is Christianity with the Russian Orthodox Church being the most popular and Muslims accounting for 14% of the city’s population. Moscow is a major political, economic, cultural and scientific center in Russia and in Europe.

Some say that Moscow is a city of contradictions. On one hand, Moscow has provided economic stability for many migrants coming from other parts of Russia and former Soviet republics in recent years. Moscow also received worldwide praise for its hosting of the 2018 World Cup for soccer last summer. Historically, Moscow has attempted to leave behind the communistic days of Lenin and Stalin.

But on the other hand, Moscow has been involved in recent disputes with both some neighboring nations and the West. In recent years Moscow lawmakers have targeted evangelistic efforts and media boundaries limiting freedom of religion and freedom of the press. It is also a city with significant drug and alcohol problems, a high prison rate and much human trafficking.
According to Blair Carlson, formerly with the Billy Graham Evangelical Association, “The challenges of Moscow speak to the enormity and complexity of large European cities. We need to pray for the unity, vibrancy, and muscularity of the church in the great cities of Europe.”

Please join with YWAM’s global prayer day, called The Invitation, during the month of December to pray for Moscow. You are particularly invited to pray during our prayer day, December 13. If you only have a few moments to pray, please pray for unity and vibrancy in the church in Moscow.

Prepare to Pray:

Take some time to sit quietly with this image of an open door, painted by Andrei Zadorine. If you are praying with a group, consider projecting the image onto a screen so that everyone can see it clearly. What do you notice about the way the light from the open doorway floods into the dark room? Think about the nature of light, and the way even a small light can chase away darkness.

Read aloud from Psalm 24:
“Open up, ancient gates!
Open up, ancient doors,
and let the King of glory enter.

“Who is the King of glory?
The Lord of Heaven’s Armies—
he is the King of glory” (verses 9-10)
There are many doors that God might want to open up in the context of Russian society. Where are the places He is longing to shine the light of His presence? Turn your attention from the darkness you might perceive, to the hope and strength of the light of God, made known through the life of Jesus. Keep your focus on His light as you go into prayer.

National Day of the Russian Federation in Moscow

Photo credit: www.xinhuanet.com

Let’s Pray:

- Pray that God would soften the hearts of Moscow’s people to accept Christ and that He would open doors for these believers to be discipled in a free and open environment.
- Pray for the Central Asian immigrant community. They come from restricted-access Muslim nations to Moscow in search of economic improvements. Please pray for those believers who have made these immigrant workers their mission and that in the end the immigrants would find Christ.
- Pray against human trafficking. Real statistics are hard to come by, but they seem to suggest that as many as 80,000 girls could be working in the sex trade in Moscow, many of them against their own will.
- Pray for the Russian Orthodox and Evangelical church. Less than 2% of the population attends church at least once a month. Revival is needed!
- Pray that the Russian Orthodox Church would be open to renewal and unity with evangelicals.
- The alcoholism rate is one of the highest in the world and there are a large number of drug addicts. Pray that Christians can be a stronger influence as they reach out to those in bondage due to addiction.
• Death rates have been higher than birth rates in Moscow for years, and its population growth is now solely dependent on migration. Pray for transformation of its people through Christ. Pray that the result is a lower abortion rate and fewer drug and alcohol related deaths.

• We normally think of the Russian people in Russia, but there are dozens of indigenous ethnic minorities scattered about this massive nation who have never heard the gospel in a way that they can understand. Pray for believers from Moscow to go to these unreached ethnic minorities comprising much of the population.

• Pray for prison ministries as Russia’s prison rate is one of the highest in the world (825,000 prisoners throughout the nation).

• Pray for God’s wisdom for government leaders and other leaders presiding from Moscow.

• Pray for Christians living and working in Moscow as conditions have changed in recent years, making Russia a less open nation.

• Pray for positive transformation socially and culturally of Moscow as a megacity.

• Many reporters and fans have praised Moscow for its hospitality and handling of the 2018 Soccer World Cup last summer. Christian workers and churches were able to seize this opportunity to hold evangelistic events where people could watch the games. Praise God for how He used the 2018 Soccer World Cup for evangelistic purposes.

• Pray for openness for evangelism. Russia is now listed as one of the worst countries in the world for religious freedom because of its ongoing crackdown against foreign missionaries, evangelists and other religious activities.

Luzhniki Stadium – One of Many Stadiums Used for the 2018 World Cup
Photo credit: The Straits Times
Take Action:

- Learn about working in megacities such as Moscow: https://www.ywamcity.org/get-involved and https://www.ywamcity.org/resources and https://www.ywamcity.org/media
- Visit Moscow. Make sure your trip includes a historical tour of Red Square, a visit to a Russian Orthodox church and a guided tour with someone who understands the cultural challenges in Moscow.
- Identify a short-term mission opportunity in Moscow.
- Moscow is a thriving international business hub and many foreigners find work as “guests” in Moscow. Explore business and expat opportunities to work there.
- Read about the history of Russia and the Communist leaders of the Soviet Union/Russia who have presided from Moscow (Lenin, Stalin, Khrushchev, Vrezhnev, Andropos, Chernenko and Gorbachev) to gain further understanding of how to pray for the people of Moscow.
- Commit to pray for Moscow on an ongoing basis. Subscribe to news feed(s) to stay current on conditions in Moscow so that your prayers can stay fresh.

Left to right, top to bottom: St. Basil’s Cathedral, Moscow International Business Center, World Cup Final, Soccer Fans Gather Near Red Square
Photo credits left to right, top to bottom: World Travel Guide, Russia Beyond, Birmingham Mail, Irish Times
• Share on facebook.com/youthwithamission, post a picture and add a comment about how you prayed.
• Go to twitter.com; search for #praywithywam and tweet about your prayer time/post a picture. You can also post a photo on Instagram and use the same hashtag, #praywithywam.
• Send an email to prayer@ywam.org letting us know how you prayed and what God revealed to you.

Praying for North Africa

Photo credits: YWAM Lebanon

How We Prayed:

November 2018 – North Africa

• YWAM Stockholm, Sweden prayed. They sensed God focusing their time on Habakkuk 1:5 and Romans 6:3-11. They also prayed for Christian-Muslim relationships in North Africa.
• YWAM Lebanon prayed and provided pictures they drew (see above). Pictures denoted darkness going away and light coming.
• YWAM India prayed.
• YWAM Hope Land and YWAM Torch, both in Jinga, Uganda, partnered to pray and reported that they “had an intense and serious time of prayer and hearing from God for North Africa.”

Future Topics:

January 10, 2019: YWAM Foundational Values 13 - 15

February 14, 2019: Redeeming Cultures

March 14, 2019: Muslim Unengaged People Groups

Don’t Miss The Invitation:

● Sign up for prayer updates. Go to ywam.org, find the “Stay Connected” box on the home page, put in your email address and click “Sign Up.”

● Download prayer updates in a specific language. Go to ywam.org/theinvitation. (Currently available in Spanish, Portuguese, Indonesian, Korean or request other languages.)

● Join the conversation about how God is leading in these prayer times. Comment on the Facebook page on the second Thursday at facebook.com/youthwithamission or on Twitter @ywam, hashtag #praywithywam. You can also post a photo on Instagram and use the same hashtag, #praywithywam.

● You can now listen to The Invitation as a podcast. To sign up or listen to past episodes, go to: ywampodcast.net/prayer.

● If you sense God giving you a word or a direction for YWAM’s prayer, please contact us: prayer@ywam.org.