

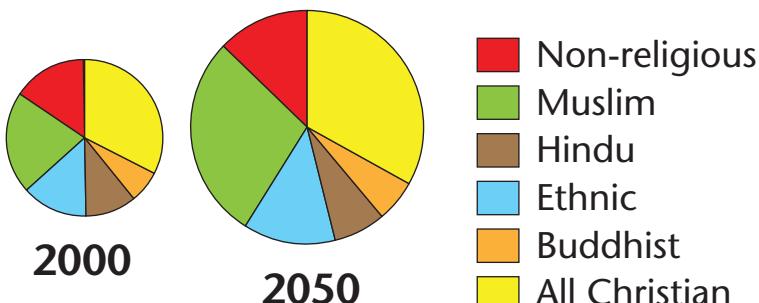
PRAYING FOR THE WORLD

The future Church

How different will the world of 2050 be compared with today? We can't know, but we can project some possibilities based on what is happening now. This can shape our prayers.

Some projections for 2050:

- One third of the world will still call itself Christian.
- Islam will grow fast (because of high birth-rates) and will become almost the same size as the Christian community.
- Every other faith community – Hindus, Buddhists, followers of Chinese religions – will be a smaller slice of the population than today.
- The non-religious part of the world will also shrink because of low birthrates.
- There will be the same number of under-15s as there are today (around two billion), but over-60s will climb from under a billion today to more than two billion in 2050.



Relative global growth of religions

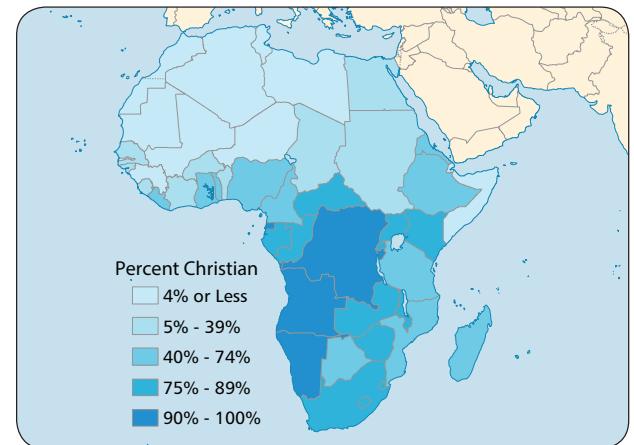
— THE NATIONS

AFRICA



Africa's Church is a light to the world

The burden of poverty has eased in the last 20 years. Mother and child health, take-up of primary education, and access to clean water and electricity have been transformed in most countries. Deaths from malaria have halved, and the AIDS epidemic is being tamed. But this follows decades of stagnation. Africa is still the poorest continent. Thirty-seven of the world's 40 poorest countries are African – a lingering injustice.



Africa's youth are a fifth of all the young people in the world and they may grow to be a third by 2050. These young people as disciples of Jesus could be a power for good; unemployed and angry they could be the fuel for civil wars.

Africa's Church is a light to the world. Already, one in four of the world's Christians is an African. This could rise to four in 10 by 2050. In great prayer meetings, in faithfulness to the Bible, in starting new churches at home and overseas, Africans are changing the world.

 Pray for wise, honest leaders in every African sphere, in politics, church and business.

 Pray for Africa's women. More than a third suffer domestic violence, and they are denied equality almost everywhere: in education, health-care, employment.

 Pray for a great turning to Christ in Africa's many Muslim peoples.