



# Global Ministries

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## Pray with South Africa on Sunday, February 4, 2018

BY [SCOTT COUPER](#) ON JANUARY 30, 2018

***Lectionary Selection: Mark 1:29-39***

***Prayers for South Africa:***

Gracious God, by your power, make the Gospel message universal. Teach us through the ministry of Jesus Christ, the Word, that the Gospel is ‘good news’ and not ‘law and order.’ Through the Holy Spirit, provide us an epiphany that alerts us to the fact that the Gospel is not determined by national borders made by humans. May you, our God, the Son and the Holy Spirit awaken us to a spirit of mission, that deprioritizes parochialism and emphasizes a diverse and Pentecostal Church. Inspire us to connect with those less privileged, for what a pity it would be to allow our privilege to merely protect itself. May you bless your followers, so that we may use all the tools at our disposal to pray, to connect, to listen and to respond when needed. In doing so, may we emulate your son, the pioneer and perfecter of our faith. Amen.



***Mission Stewardship Moment from South Africa:***

Scholars agree Mark is the earliest written gospel narrative that we currently possess. The author wrote shortly after the destruction of Jerusalem by the then-future Emperor Titus in 70 AD. One author recounted the event: “[...] everywhere was slaughter and flight. Most of the victims were peaceful citizens, weak and unarmed, butchered wherever they were caught.” So, Mark’s Gospel is in large part written as a response to a *real* suffering. Suffering can be deeply personal as well as societal. So, Mark wrote about Jesus’ response to suffering, both personal, with Simon’s mother-in-law (31-32), and societal, with “the whole city” (33), through healings and exorcisms. Jesus’ response to suffering was first prayer (35), as we are through these weekly prayers, and then action: mission. Jesus declares, “Let us go to the neighboring towns [...]” (38). Thus, our faith life is in large part governed by how we as Jesus followers respond to suffering. There is much suffering in our own city; there is much suffering in the neighboring towns. Jesus did not stop with responding to suffering close to home with a mantra that said ‘My City First.’ After prayer, Jesus broadened his scope to neighboring towns, which were not referred to as ‘fecal-holes.’ Your support of Inanda Seminary enables young, bright, black girls to realize their fullest God-given potential through Christian education, thus enabling them to respond appropriately and potently to the suffering in their cities and to neighboring towns – even ours in North America.

(Prayer and Mission Moment by Scott Couper)

***Global Ministries Mission Coworker in South Africa:***

*Rev. Dr. Scott Couper, serves as a long-term volunteer with the United Congregational Church of Southern Africa. Scott's appointment is made possible by your gifts to Disciples Mission Fund, Our Churches Wider Mission, and your special gifts.*

***More information on South Africa:***

[http://www.globalministries.org/south\\_africa](http://www.globalministries.org/south_africa)



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## South Africa

South Africa is located in Southern Africa at the southern tip of the continent of Africa.

When South Africans elected Nelson Mandela the first black president of their country, members of the United Congregational Church of Southern Africa (UCCSA) felt special satisfaction. With a membership representing all of South Africa's ethnic diversity, the UCCSA had long struggled for the end of apartheid. The UCCSA could now get on with the business of reconstructing and developing a new South Africa. One of the most hopeful developments in the church was the establishment of a Pastoral Plan for Transformation to take all the structures and ministries of the UCCSA from a maintenance mentality to mission action.

Our partners in South Africa are the United Congregational Church of Southern Africa and the South African Council of Churches. We also work with Ons Plek in Cape Town, catering to street children. A long relationship exists between Global Ministries and Theological Education by Extension College in Southern Africa.

*Pray for:* The Treatment Action Campaign of South Africa which aims at bringing affordable treatment and drugs to persons living with HIV/AIDS. Ons Plek (Our Place), a facility for female street children in Cape Town.

Population (2014 est) – 48,375,645

Area – 757,500 mi

Capital – Pretoria

Ethnic Background

Black African – 79.2%

White – 8.9%

Colored – 8.9%

Indian/Asian – 2.5%

Other – 0.5%

Exports – gold, diamonds, platinum, other metals and minerals, machinery and equipment

Imports – machinery and equipment, chemicals, petroleum products, scientific instruments, foodstuffs

Life Expectancy (2014 est) – M 51 F 49

Infant Mortality (2014 est) – 41.61 deaths/1,000 live births

Adult Illiteracy Rate – 7%