

HOW TO PRAY FOR CENTRAL ASIA



ANM

ADVANCING
NATIVE
MISSIONS

Thank you for praying for Central Asia!

As you read through this guide, you'll learn about their unique history and an unreached people group scattered throughout this region.



Central Asia consists of the nine countries east of the Middle East and west of China: Afghanistan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Azerbaijan, and Armenia.

These countries share a unique cultural heritage, which they received from their many influential neighbors. Turkic people groups came from the West and Islamized the region around the 1100s A.D. Genghis Khan of Mongolia came from the East and dominated the area with tribal warrior



leaders. A series of Turkic conquerors followed before Russia and later the Soviet Union took control from the North.

All Central Asian countries gained independence in the 1990s following the collapse of the Soviet Union. Soviet-era atheism remains a strong religious influence today, although Islam is the predominant religion. The Russian Orthodox Church also still exists in the area, leaving less than 1% of evangelical Christian believers.

With so few believers and so many geographical barriers like large deserts, long mountain ranges, and rivers, it's unfortunately unsurprising that there are almost 400 unreached people groups in Central Asia.



An unreached people group (UPG) is a group of people that have cultural features in common and contain less than 2% of evangelical Christian believers. Believers from a UPG often struggle to evangelize their people on their own.



The Uyghers, pronounced wee-gher, is one such people group. They're descended from Turkic nomads and traditionally lived as shepherds and oasis farmers, although they were also an important part of the Silk Road trade route.

Today, they participate in many business industries, such as manufacturing, oil drilling, and transportation. Music is an important part of their culture, and many young people also enjoy playing sports.

Eleven million Uyghers live in China, where the government heavily persecutes them for their Sunni Muslim faith. Nearly 474,000 live scattered throughout Central Asia. Many identify as Muslim because of their culture, not because of personal belief, although there is currently a Sunni Islam faith revival.

According to the Joshua Project, 0.1% of the 12 million Uyghers worldwide are evangelical believers. In Central Asia, the number of believers is statistically zero.

Evangelistic activities in this region are heavily monitored by respective country governments, and often illegal. Thankfully, native missionaries persevere.



Richard and Sasha are two native missionaries reaching the Uygher populations in Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan.

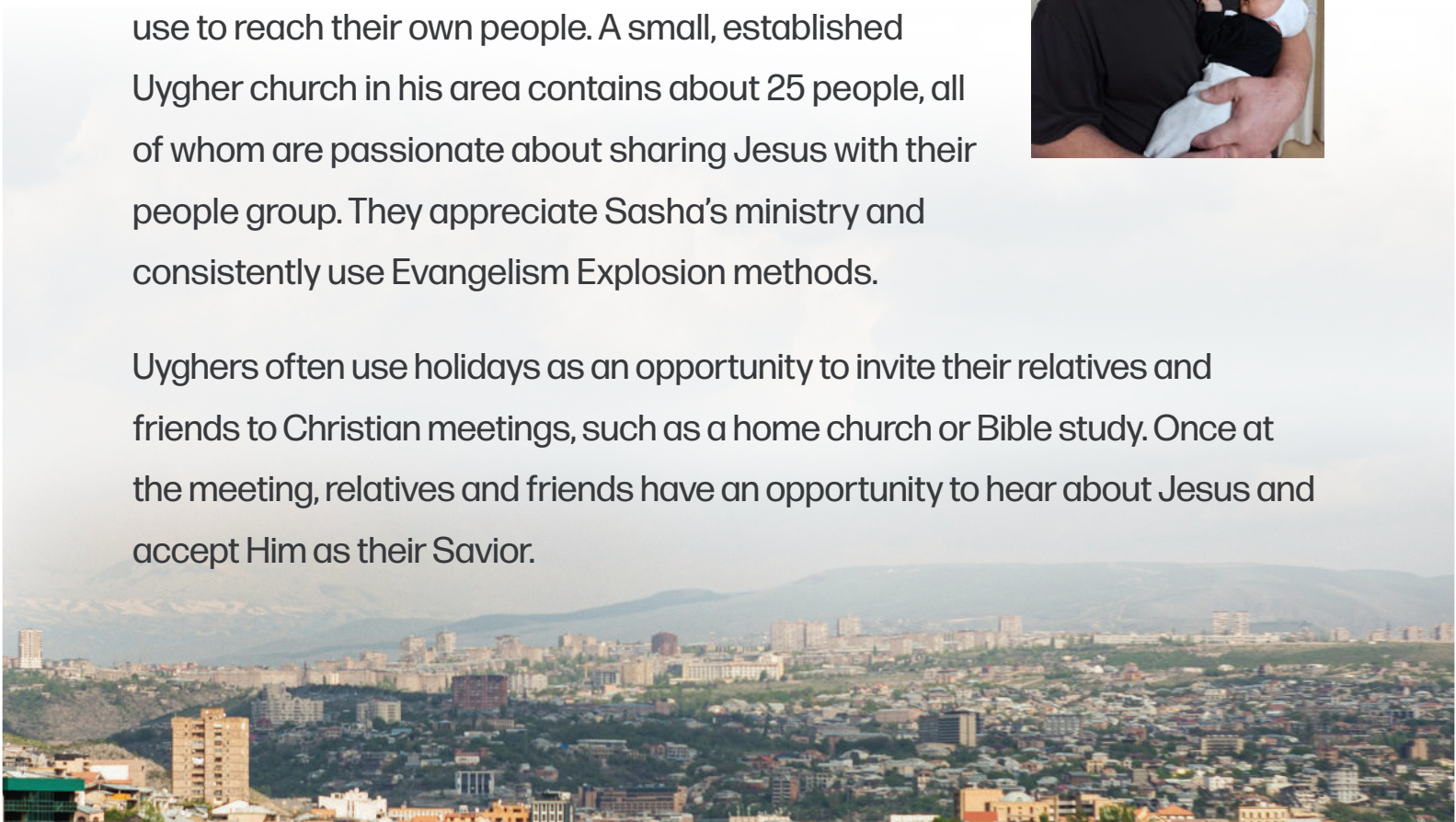
Richard is ethnically a Uygher who accepted Jesus as his Savior many years ago. He leads a home-based church for other Uyghers in his hometown. His church often leads evangelistic outreaches to Uyghers in other Central Asian countries. Whether meeting fellow Uyghers at home or abroad, he bases gatherings around traditional meals and uses the opportunity to give Bibles as gifts.



Sasha is not ethnically a Uygher, but lives in the same country as a large Uygher population, so he has some culture in common with this UPG. He runs a ministry called Evangelism Explosion, which many native Uyghers use to reach their own people. A small, established Uygher church in his area contains about 25 people, all of whom are passionate about sharing Jesus with their people group. They appreciate Sasha's ministry and consistently use Evangelism Explosion methods.



Uyghers often use holidays as an opportunity to invite their relatives and friends to Christian meetings, such as a home church or Bible study. Once at the meeting, relatives and friends have an opportunity to hear about Jesus and accept Him as their Savior.



PRAY FOR CENTRAL ASIA

- 1.** For a spiritual awakening among the people of Central Asia, so that the shackles of atheism and materialism will fall and people will begin seeking opportunities to know God and receive salvation through Jesus Christ
- 2.** For the persecuted church; the main sources of persecution of Central Asian church persecution are the controlling post-Soviet governments and radical Islam.
- 3.** For underground missionaries who bring the Gospel to people, despite the risk of deportation for evangelistic activities, which are often prohibited.
- 4.** For an awakening among Muslims, that many will turn to Christ, especially during the holy month of Ramadan when they seek truth and clarity.
- 5.** For local evangelical churches who are openly preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ, that they will use evangelism and discipleship to reach the nations for Christ.
- 6.** For the hundreds of secret house churches throughout Central Asia, that God will protect them and keep them safe from radical religious people.
- 7.** For Turkmenistan, the most closed country in Central Asia, that God will open doors for the Gospel here and people will turn to Jesus Christ as Savior.
- 8.** For Kyrgyzstan, which has adopted a new religious law that limits the rights of believers in the country, that this government will allow believers to live freely.



- 9.** For Tajikistan and the Christian believers in this country, that they will have perseverance and protection while hiding their faith from violent radical Muslims.
- 10.** For the persecutors of the Church in Central Asia, so that, like the Apostle Paul once did, they will turn to Christ.



ANM is a global missions organization delivering the Gospel to those who still need to hear the Good News of Jesus in 100+ countries.

We're a little different from the traditional missions organizations you may be familiar with. Instead of sending missionaries to other countries where they have to learn a new language, adapt to new ways of living, and make substantial cultural adjustments, we support missionaries sharing the Gospel in their own countries.

These native missionaries are impacting the kingdom tremendously – ***you can help.***

Learn more at advancingnativemissions.com

Thank you for praying!

