

Praying for World's Poor

Christians worldwide are praying for global poverty issues as part of Tearfund's Global Poverty Prayer Week, which begins today.

✘ **February 23, 2009** – Thousands of Christians in the United Kingdom are joining believers worldwide this week in praying for the world's poor.

As part of its Global Poverty Prayer Week, which begins today and lasts through Sunday, the Britain-based charity Tearfund is calling on churches to pray for areas affected by poor sanitation and lack of clean water, and by the HIV/AIDS pandemic, among other global challenges.

The effort is also targeting prayer for disaster relief and the impact of local churches in areas with the most need.

"Whichever way you look at it, God has invited us to be part of restoring this fallen, broken, beautiful world. He has given us the privilege of partnership," Tearfund Chief Executive Matthew Frost said in a statement.

"We know that praying about global poverty issues and world events does have an impact, both on our own lives as well as to others," he added. "God is at work in this world, and it's exciting to be part of it."

Frost said prayer was key in bringing a breakthrough in the Democratic Republic of Congo, where an offensive in Goma launched by rebel leader Laurent Nkunda forced some 250,000 people to flee their homes last year.

"We took it to God in prayer, alongside those who were suffering and oppressed, and cried out for justice," Frost

said. "Soon afterwards, the rebel group unexpectedly split, lessening Nkunda's power, and then Nkunda himself was arrested by Rwandan troops."

Tearfund is mobilizing youth to participate in 24-7 prayer rooms throughout the week and is linking Christians around the globe through its interactive prayer map.

Tearfund has received prayer requests from around the world. Discipleship Centre in India asked that participants pray for its relief and development work in Orissa, where thousands were killed in anti-Christian violence last year.

In a statement, Tearfund said the world recession has worsened an already poor situation in many nations. In Cambodia, Tearfund partners say fears abound that women will lose their jobs as demand for clothing drops worldwide. In Uganda, many can no longer afford to feed their families because of rising food prices. And in Haiti and Myanmar, relief efforts are still under way after natural disasters devastated those nations last year.

Among the prayer week's supporters are Lynne Hybels, co-founder with her husband, Bill, of Willow Creek Community Church in Illinois, and worship leader Tim Hughes. Both participated in a DVD sharing their prayer requests.