

Netanyahu Thanks Christians for Support, Urges Israel Visit

Israel Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is reaching out to Christians with warm wishes even as Israel supporters are urging Christians to continue praying for the Holy Land.

"I want to wish the Christian citizens of Israel, as well as Christians around the world, a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Israel is proud of its strong and growing Christian community, and we are proud of the deep and passionate support of so many Christian friends of Israel around the world," Netanyahu said in a video.

"We are living in a time of great uncertainty and instability in the Middle East and Israel, throughout this instability, remains a beacon of religious freedom and pluralism," he continued. "In a region where Christians are routinely persecuted and where there is little tolerance for the faith of others, Israel safeguards the holy places of the great religion and ensures freedom of worship for all."

Netanyahu urged Christians who have never been to Israel to visit Jerusalem, Galilee and other places where Jesus preached and lived a message of universal peace that spread across the world. As Christians celebrate Christmas and the New Year, he said the people of Israel join believers in hoping for a year of prosperity a year of security and above all a year of peace.

"During these perilous times, as God's people, we need to intensify our support for Israel, the nation fighting to protect the world," says Robert Stearns, founder and director of Eagles' Wings, a global movement of churches, ministries and leaders. "As we remember the coming of our Savior to this

earth, we must protect the Holy Land of His Covenant and keep it holy, which makes the prime minister's greetings so important."