



**WORLD DAY OF PRAYER**

**Prepared by the WDP of Suriname**

**March 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2018**

**“All God’s Creation is Very Good!”**

**Country Background Information**

| Country Overview  |   |  |   |   |   |   |   |   |                   |                   |                  |
|---|---|--|---|---|---|---|---|---|-------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| Geography and population  |   | Photo/Copyright  |   |   |   |   |   |   |                   |                   |                  |
| <p>The Republic of Suriname lies in the northeastern part of South America. Suriname is named after the <i>Surinen</i> tribe, one of the indigenous peoples of the land. Suriname is part of the Guianas, an ecological region within the Amazon.</p>   | 1   |    |   |   |   |   |   |   |                   |                   |                  |
| <p>There are 715 species of birds. The giant sea turtles flock to sandy beaches like Galibi and Matapica, to lay their eggs. There are many orchids and over 60 species of heliconias (lobster claw flower). The National flower is the 'fajalobi' (passionate love).</p>   | 2   | <table border="0"> <tr> <td>Fajalobi Flower</td> <td>Heliconia Flower</td> <td>Rupicola rupicola Bird</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>by Wendy Hopcroft</td> <td>by Diana Sanches</td> </tr> </table>   | Fajalobi Flower   | Heliconia Flower  | Rupicola rupicola Bird  |      |     |    |                   | by Wendy Hopcroft | by Diana Sanches |
| Fajalobi Flower   | Heliconia Flower  | Rupicola rupicola Bird   |   |   |   |   |   |   |                   |                   |                  |
|    |     |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |                   |                   |                  |
|   | by Wendy Hopcroft   | by Diana Sanches   |   |   |   |   |   |   |                   |                   |                  |
| <p>The biggest nature reserve is the Central Suriname Nature Reserve. Because of the mountainous areas, rapids in the rivers, savannah soil with rock formations and the remarkable vegetation (orchids, ferns, palm trees, plants and trees) and animal wildlife, this nature reserve has been placed on UNESCO’s list of Heritage Sites.</p>  | 3   | <table border="0"> <tr> <td>Palm Trees</td> <td>Surinam River</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>by Wendy Hopcroft</td> </tr> </table>  | Palm Trees  | Surinam River   |     |    |   | by Wendy Hopcroft   |                   |                   |                  |
| Palm Trees  | Surinam River   |  |   |   |   |   |   |   |                   |                   |                  |
|   |    |  |   |   |   |   |   |   |                   |                   |                  |
|   | by Wendy Hopcroft   |  |   |   |   |   |   |   |                   |                   |                  |
| <p>The country has approximately 540,000 inhabitants. We have a multi ethnic population consisting of indigenous peoples, African descendants (Creoles and Maroons) and also Asian descendants (Hindustani, Javanese and Chinese people), and European descendants.</p> <p>Sranan tongue was the language used among the slaves. Now, it is the language spoken among the different ethnic groups. The official language is Dutch, a remnant from the last colonizer of Suriname.</p> | 4   | <p>Indigenous Dress, Creole (Koto Dress), Chinese (Shanghai Dress), &amp; Indian (Salwar Kameez Dress) &amp; Creole (Koto Dress)</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="4">by Diana Sanches</td> </tr> </table> |    |  |  |  | by Diana Sanches  |   |                   |                   |                  |
|    |    |   |  |   |   |   |   |   |                   |                   |                  |
| by Diana Sanches  |   |  |   |   |   |   |   |   |                   |                   |                  |
| <p>The majority of the indigenous peoples and the Maroons communities live in the vast forests of the interior. About 90% of the population of Suriname lives in the coastal areas. More than half live in the capital city of Paramaribo.</p> <p>There are almost 400,000 Surinamese or descendants living in diaspora.</p>  | 5   | <table border="0"> <tr> <td>Paramaribo</td> <td>Indigenous Marketplace</td> <td>Ferry to the coast</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="3">by Wendy Hopcroft</td> </tr> </table>   | Paramaribo  | Indigenous Marketplace  | Ferry to the coast  |    |  |  | by Wendy Hopcroft |                   |                  |
| Paramaribo  | Indigenous Marketplace  | Ferry to the coast   |   |   |   |   |   |   |                   |                   |                  |
|    |  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |                   |                   |                  |
| by Wendy Hopcroft   |   |  |   |   |   |   |   |   |                   |                   |                  |

| Political history  |   | Photo/Copyright   |
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| <p>After Columbus arrived in America in 1492, there was an influx of Europeans to the 'New World', particularly from Spain and Portugal, in search of the Gold Coast. Subsequently, the country was captured by the French, the English, the Zealanders and the Netherlands for short periods of time. The English ruled Suriname from 1651 to 1667, but as a result of the war between the Netherlands and England, Suriname was exchanged by New Amsterdam (presently New York, USA), a Dutch settlement at the time. Since then, Suriname was a Dutch colony until its independence in 1975.</p>  | 6 | <p>Fort Zeelandia/Dutch Queen Wilhelmina</p>   |
| <p>In 1948, Suriname achieved self-government, under the supervision and control of Netherlands. On November 25th, 1975 after much diplomatic negotiation Netherland agreed to give Suriname full independence. Its first President was also the last Governor of the self-government period, J. Ferriër. A Prime Minister, Henck Arron, stood at the head of the government.</p>  | 7 | <p>Independence Square</p>   |
| <p>A military coup d'état in 1980 changed the political system. The president and ministers were selected by the military.</p> <p>Until the end of military government in 1987, the Constitution has been put aside. Now based on the new Constitution, democratic elections have been restored and the head of government is an executive president.</p>  | 8 | <p>Presidential Palace</p>    |
| Economy  |   | Photo/Copyright   |
| <p>Over 300,000 Africans were brought to Suriname and forced to work as slaves on the plantations. Many slaves ran away and started a community in the interior, known as Maroon villages. They fought against the plantation owners and the colonial government. The most famous Maroon leaders were Baron, Boni and Joli Coeur, who were captured and burned to death publicly.</p> <p>It was not until 1814 that the slave trade to the colonies (including Suriname) was abolished.</p> <p>With the end of slavery, indentured labourers from the Dutch colonies like India (1873–1916) and Indonesia (1890–1910) were contracted to work on the plantations. As early as 1853, Chinese and Portuguese, from the island of Madeira, were also brought to work in Suriname as indentured laborers</p> | 9 | <p>Slave Statue</p>  <p>Maroon Village</p>  <p>by Wendy Hopcroft</p> |

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| <p>During World War I, the United States started mining for bauxite in Suriname. Bauxite was the raw material for aluminum, which was necessary in the aircraft industry.</p> <p>With the decline of bauxite mining and Suriname's political independence in 1975, the diversification of the economy has been placed at the forefront. Small scale gold miners, exports of red or grey snapper and tuna fish, and the recovery of agriculture with the supply of regional markets with rice, fruit, vegetables and cassava, are the signs of a new economy.</p>                                | 10 |  <p>by Wendy Hopcroft</p>  |
| <p>Even though there are two international gold mining companies very active in the country, there is also illegal mining. Surinamese and foreigner miners (such as the Brazilian 'porknockers') are illegally mining and damaging the environment.</p> <p>High-pressure hoses are used to dislodge sediment, loosen it and mine gold dust, and sometimes gold nuggets, from it. As a result, huge areas of forest have disappeared, making way for enormous craters and desert-like landscapes. The water in rivers and creeks has been polluted by the mercury used by the 'porknockers'.</p> | 11 | <p>Gold Mine and Deforestation</p>  <p>by Wendy Hopcroft</p>   |
| <b>Social issues</b>  |    |  |
| <b>Waste Collection and Recycling</b>   |    | <b>Photo/Copyright</b>   |
| <p>Waste collection, waste separation, recycling, composting, and re-use of materials improve the well-being of the community. Ultimately it reduces greenhouse gas emissions from landfills, which will then lessen the contribution to global climate change by keeping the earth cooler.</p>   | 12 |  <p>by Wendy Hopcroft</p>  |
| <b>Education</b>  |    | <b>Photo/Copyright</b>   |
| <p>Education in Suriname is based on the Dutch educational system. Education is required for children from 7 to 12 years old, but there is no compulsory school attendance.</p> <p>The government is responsible for education, but there are also church and private schools across the country.</p> <p>In remote areas, education is offered in nucleus centers and boarding schools. There is a need for adult education and Second Chance Education for young people who drop-out. It is significant the number of boys who drop out of school.</p>   | 13 |  <p>by Diana Sanches</p> <p>Primary School and University</p>  <p>by Wendy Hopcroft</p> |

| Health Care  | Photo/Copyright |   |
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| <p>There are six hospitals, five of which are in Paramaribo. There are various health care centers in the districts and in the interior.</p> <p>Different churches in Suriname have played an important role sending their medical missions to attend people affected by malaria, HIV and AIDS, and other diseases with high occurrences in the interior of Suriname.</p> <p>The Bureau for Public Healthcare keeps the population informed to combat the mosquitos and to prevent dengue, chikungunya, and zika.</p>  | 14              | <p>Health education</p>  <p>by Diana Sanches</p>   |
| Religion diversity   | Photo/Copyright |   |
| <p>Freedom of religion is laid down in the Constitution. Religions that are practiced in Suriname are Christianity (approx. 48.4%), Hinduism (approx. 22.2%), Islam (approx. 13.8%), Traditional Religions (approx. 1.8%), Javanism (approx. 0.8%) and a small percentage of the Jewish faith and other religions.</p> <p>Significant to mention is that Mosque Keizerstraat (original wooden building from 1932) was built adjacent to Synagogue Neve Shalom (original wooden building inaugurated in 1723) in Paramaribo.</p> <p>The Cathedral-Basilica of Saints Peter and Paul is the highest wooden structure in South America.</p> | 15              | <p>Synagogue Neve Shalom      Mosque Keizerstraat</p>   <p>Hindu Temple      Cathedral Basilica Interior and Exterior</p>    |
| Women's rights   | Photo/Copyright |   |
| <p>Dr. Sophie Redmond (1907-1955) was the first female doctor in the country. She dedicated her life to fight for accessible basic sanitation and nutrition education.</p> <p>Women's suffrage was only granted fully in 1948. However, in 1938, the first female Member of Parliament was elected, Grace Schneiders-Howard.</p> <p>During the elections in 2015, approximately 31% of the candidates for the representative bodies were women. In these elections, 15 female members of Parliaments were elected and, for the third time, a woman was elected the Parliament Chairperson.</p>   | 16              | <p>S. Redmond Painting      Women's work</p>   <p>by Diana Sanches</p>  |
| Children's rights  | Photo/Copyright |   |
| <p>The interests of the child are protected both in the Surinamese Constitution, and on national laws. A law from 2000 eliminated the distinction between legitimate and natural children in the law of inheritance.</p>   | 17              |  <p>by Diana Sanches</p>   |

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| <p>Yet, there are still hidden forms of violation of their rights. The sight of children selling fruit in the streets and in front of shops in town has become quite common. More serious is the fact that children also seem to be actively involved in working in the gold mines of the interior.</p>   |           |  |
| <p><b>Culture</b></p>   |           | <p><b>Photo/Copyright</b></p>  |
| <p>Each ethnic group brings its own language, traditions and religion from its native country. Adding ethnic diversity to the cultural riches of the native inhabitants of Suriname, and there is a country blessed with a wide variety of art, literature, music, clothing, dance and drama.</p>   | <p>18</p> | <p>Culture celebration</p>  <p>by Diana Sanches</p>   |
| <p><b>WDP History</b></p>   |           |  |
| <p><b>World Day of Prayer in Suriname</b></p>   |           | <p><b>Photo/Copyright</b></p>  |
| <p>The ecumenical collaboration was established in Suriname in November 1942 under the name Committee of Christian Churches (CCK). The Women’s World Day of Prayer started in the year 1953. In February 1954, a board was officially appointed.</p> <p>WDP services were initially held only in the ‘Grote Stadskerk’ (Moravian ‘Mother Church’) and the Roman Catholic Cathedral.</p> <p>The offering has been used locally for missionary work of the churches, a community center, and communities in the interior, and also sent to the writer country.</p> <p>From 1953 till now every year on the first Friday in March men and women congregate from the various districts in our nation, to pray for a specific country. Services are also held in elderly homes and a prison. Children’s services are held on the Sunday following the adult service. In total there are 20 locations for adult services and 5 for children’s services.</p> | <p>19</p> | <p>Moravian ‘Mother Church’</p>  <p>WDP Workshop</p>  <p>by Lucien Chin A Foeng</p> |
| <p>On November 2014, a Strengthening National Committee workshop was held to start the writing process with the support of World Day of Prayer International Committee (WDPIC). The focus of the workshop was to understand the theme according to the environmental context of Suriname.</p> <p>The Preparatory Workshop for a writer country held on April 2015 with around 35 women and young women provided a writing training and opportunity to organize the writer working groups.</p> <p>We thank the Lord for the dedication of these women in writing the materials for the 2018</p>  | <p>20</p> | <p>Writer working groups</p>  <p>by Diana Sanches</p>  |

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| <p>program, which we did with the assistance of experts and female pastors.</p>  |           |  |
| <p><b>The Artist and the painting</b></p>  |           | <p><b>Photo/Copyright</b></p>  |
| <p>I am Alice Pomstra - Elmont, born on 20 January 1947 in a very special place in Suriname. I am a member of the Hervormde gemeente (Dutch Reformed Church). At an environment exhibition, I was asked to participate in designing a cover for WDP program.</p> <p>The painting: the Divine gift. We live in a beautiful country that we received from our Creator. Here we symbolically see the hands that receive the divine gift and pass it on to the next generations.</p> <p>What a precious gift. Let us keep it as beautiful as we received it.</p> | <p>21</p> | <div data-bbox="750 260 889 436" data-label="Image"> </div> <div data-bbox="940 260 1219 436" data-label="Image"> </div> <p>by Lucien Chin A Foeng</p> |

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*This material is part of the worship service and educational resource for the 2018 WDP annual celebration.*

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