

# **Baptist pastor on hit list in Turkey**

December 3, 2007

Posted: 12/03/07

## **Baptist pastor on hit list in Turkey**

Washington, D.C. (BWA)-A Baptist pastor in Turkey has been placed on a death list.

Ertan Mesut Cevik, pastor of a Baptist church in Izmir, the modern name for biblical Smyrna, and Turkey's third largest city by population, has received increased police protection after his name was found on a list carried by three suspected terrorists. The three, who are arrested, are suspected of planning wide scale attacks after a large cache of weapons was found in their possession.

Cevik has been under police protection since April 2007 after he hosted a funeral service for one of three Christians that was killed in Turkey on April 18. Two of the murder victims, Necati Aydin, 36, and Ugur Yuksel, 32, were Turks who converted from Islam to Christianity. The third man, Tillman Geske, 46, was a German citizen.

The Baptist pastor was also protected after he and the Baptist congregation were accused in a Turkish newspaper article, published after the three murders in April, of engaging in "coercive evangelism" by using money and drugs to attract young people. These charges were denied by the church.

Cevik was ordained by the Union of Evangelical Free Churches in Germany, a member body of the Baptist World Alliance (BWA). The Izmir

congregation was founded in 2001 and is an associate member of the European Baptist Federation (EBF), one of six continental federations that are part of the BWA.

EBF General Secretary Tony Peck and General Secretary of the German Baptist union, Regina Claas, are appealing for prayer for Christians in Turkey and for the Baptist congregation in Izmir in particular.

News of religion, faith, missions, Bible study and Christian ministry among Baptist churches, in Texas, the BGCT, the nation and around the world.