

# Prayer Alert

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[www.prayer-alert.net](http://www.prayer-alert.net) | [editor@prayer-alert.net](mailto:editor@prayer-alert.net)

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Can you hear it? Heaven is filled with Your praises, O Lord! All the holy ones are praising You for Your miracles. The sons of God are all praising You for your mighty wonders. We could search the skies for ever and never find one like You. (Psalm 89:5,6 - The Passion Translation)

We are pleased to enclose this week's edition of Prayer Alert.

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Thank you again for standing with us in prayer over the nations.

David Fletcher – Editor

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## Praise Reports

### [One thousand New Testament translations!](#)

The thousandth New Testament translation, completed with involvement from SIL and Wycliffe Bible Translators, was launched on 11 August in a celebration in northwest Uganda. The translation is for the Keliko people and represents the first time they can hear and read the New Testament in their own language. The Keliko, whose homeland is in South Sudan, travelled from all around to be present. Many came from local refugee camps in Uganda; others hitched rides from South Sudan and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The event was attended by church leaders and local government dignitaries, as well as by international visitors from across Africa, Europe and North America. The translation represents a triumph over adversity. Twice translation efforts were interrupted by civil war. The translators are Episcopalian pastors, very godly men, and they pressed on. Although SIL provided technical and advisory support throughout, this project belongs to the Keliko church.

Praise: God for the tenacity of the Keliko people to have a Bible in their own language. (Matthew 24:14)

More: [www.wycliffe.org.uk/about/our-story](http://www.wycliffe.org.uk/about/our-story)

### [Christian bakers win Supreme Court fight](#)

Daniel and Amy McArthur from Ashers Baking Company told activist Gareth Lee they would not make a cake supporting gay marriage, and they were prosecuted for their decision. After a long-running legal battle over whether they had broken discrimination laws, on 10 October the five Supreme Court justices unanimously found them not guilty. The court's president, Lady Hale, said that the McArthurs did not discriminate against the customer by refusing to make the cake. They refused because the message was offensive to them, not the person requesting the message. She said, 'It is an affront to human dignity, to deny someone a service because of that person's race, gender, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief. But that is not what happened in this case.'

Praise: God for a ruling that protects freedom of conscience for everyone. (Psalm 11:7)

More: [news.sky.com/story/christian-bakers-win-gay-cake-supreme-court-fight-11522566](http://news.sky.com/story/christian-bakers-win-gay-cake-supreme-court-fight-11522566)

## British Isles & Ireland

### [Peace on our streets](#)

Tens of thousands of young people are caught up in criminal activity and violence every year. The recent upsurge in knife crime is both terrifying and heart-breaking. It is time now for Christians to fight this battle with prayer. Following a popular prayer campaign held just before the summer holidays (a time traditionally when violence increases), Christians from across the country and across

denominations are being called to harness the power of prayer to reduce knife violence. A recent survey revealed that although few youths admitted to owning a knife 15% said that they have friends who carry knives. The Peace on our Streets campaign encourages people to sign up to receive a daily prayer by text and then pray every day at noon using either the text or the downloadable prayer information sheet as a prompt to their prayers. To watch a video by a youth and children's worker explaining the issues, click the 'More' button.

Pray: for peace on city streets, rural streets, parks, playgrounds and pubs. (Isaiah 2:4)

More: [www.peaceonourstreets.org.uk/](http://www.peaceonourstreets.org.uk/)

### Transgender - concerns over damage to girls

Therapists fear losing their jobs if they attempt to help a child explore why they may feel they were 'born in the wrong body'. Therapists can only affirm a patient's confusion or face being found guilty of 'conversion therapy'. Meanwhile concerns are growing that teenage girls are turning to transgenderism as a coping mechanism in the same way many have with anorexia and self-harm. An anonymous child protection officer said, 'If I have concerns about a child who says they identify as transgender, I can't pass them on, as I could be labelled a bigot. But I have spoken off the record to GPs, education psychologists, and social workers, and many of us are questioning why so many young women are doing this to their bodies. We should at least be allowed to ask: "Are you sure?" It is a growing issue that needs to be addressed in a fair and balanced way.'

Pray: for the Government officials who are currently looking into potential causes. (Isaiah 5:20)

More: [www.christian.org.uk/news/transgender-cheerleaders-silencing-concerns-damage-girls/](http://www.christian.org.uk/news/transgender-cheerleaders-silencing-concerns-damage-girls/)

### Bishop challenges Government on climate change

Following a report by a UN panel (see article 'New UN report on climate change' in world section), the Bishop of Salisbury said that the evidence shows that climate change risks are now critical. Ours is the first generation to know and understand this, and probably the last to be able to do something meaningful towards climate justice. 'We have a narrow window now to act if we are to protect God's creation for generations to come.' He challenged the Government to lead in this change. 'Building on the ten-year anniversary of the Climate Change Act, an ambitious UK Government would seek to be a world leader by committing to a target of net zero emissions by 2050.' Christian Aid reported recently that major cities in the world including Houston, Shanghai, Jakarta, and London are in danger of being flooded if sea levels continue to rise at the current rate.

Pray: for our Government to give serious thought to the action needed to care for God's creation. (Genesis 1:31)

More: [www.churchtimes.co.uk/articles/2018/12-october/news/uk/take-drastic-action-to-save-the-planet-ipcc-urges](http://www.churchtimes.co.uk/articles/2018/12-october/news/uk/take-drastic-action-to-save-the-planet-ipcc-urges)

### Aasia Bibi: dementia and court appeal

Reports from Pakistan have prompted fears that British Christian mother-of-five Aasia Bibi, held in prison there for over nine years, is displaying symptoms of dementia. The British Pakistan Christian Association (BPCA) cited a recent visit to Bibi by a Pakistani journalist who suggested her memory, mental sharpness and judgement were in decline. Found guilty of insulting Muhammad and drinking from the same water source as Muslims, she has been in solitary confinement - sentenced to death, despite support from high-profile figures including the Pope. On 8 October a special three-member Supreme Court reserved its judgment on her final appeal against execution. The chief justice warned media against commenting on or discussing the case until the court's detailed judgment has been issued. No date has yet been given for when the verdict will be announced. [See https://www.dawn.com/news/1437605](https://www.dawn.com/news/1437605)

Pray: for her speedy release and appropriate medical support. (Psalm 18:6)

More: [www.premier.org.uk/News/World/Dementia-fears-for-Christian-mum-Asia-Bibi-held-in-Pakistan](http://www.premier.org.uk/News/World/Dementia-fears-for-Christian-mum-Asia-Bibi-held-in-Pakistan)

### Brexit: PM urges MPs to put national interest first

Mrs May has faced the Commons for the first time since the EU rejected her Brexit plan. We can pray for a plan to be agreed that respects the United Kingdom's 2016 vote. There is mounting pressure from some Tory MPs to change course in the run-up to a crucial meeting of EU leaders next week. Pray for God to inspire Theresa May and her cabinet to recognise and agree on a good strategy that will 'put God's agenda for the national interest first' in all talks and future votes. Mrs May recently said she had a duty to voters to ensure the UK left the EU in March in a way which protected jobs. May God help her fulfil that duty. The DUP's ten MPs could vote against the Budget if they consider any Brexit deal breaks their 'red line trade barriers'.

Pray: for rational reasoning to replace threats or brokering. (Philippians 2:3-5)

More: [www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-45806066](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-45806066)

### Over half of detained immigrants 'at risk'

There are ten immigration removal centres in the UK, housing roughly 2-3,000 people at any one time. A survey of seven of the centres by law firms and charities showed almost 56% of the detainees were defined as 'adults at risk'. Such individuals are only supposed to be detained in extreme cases, suggesting that Home Office guidelines on detention have been breached. The survey also found that a third had dependent children in the UK, 84% had not been told when they would be deported, and almost half the detainees had not committed a crime. The majority had lived in the UK for five years or more, and some had been in the country for over 20 years. Pray for the home secretary, Sajid Javid, to change our immigration system to something that has compassion on the vulnerable and end indefinite detention.

Pray: for God to bring relief to trafficked victims and war casualties held in UK centres. (Psalm 4:1)

More: [www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2018/oct/10/revealed-sick-tortured-immigrants-locked-up-for-months-in-britain](http://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2018/oct/10/revealed-sick-tortured-immigrants-locked-up-for-months-in-britain)

## Universal credit - another poll tax?

Sir John Major has called the government to rethink the nationwide roll-out of Universal Credit, warning of an unfair cost to families. Benefit changes coming into force next year have been compared to the poll tax that caused the downfall of Margaret Thatcher. About 3.2 million households will be worse off by about £50 a week, according to the Resolution Foundation think-tank. Theresa May has promised financial help for those affected. But the compensation system is not in place yet - and fewer than 20% of affected families are expected to receive support from it. People whose circumstances change, who make a brand-new claim, or who come off benefits and then go back on them, will not be protected. Veteran anti-poverty campaigner Frank Field said families in his Birkenhead constituency were being forced into 'destitution' by the introduction of Universal Credit.

Pray: for the Government to listen to analysts, pause the rollout, and fix the problems. (Proverbs 15:31)

More: [www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-45817897](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-45817897)

## Europe

### Russia: Putin's popularity decreasing

A survey by the independent pollster Levada Centre shows the number of Russians regarding Putin as Russia's most trusted politician has fallen significantly recently. The survey asked respondents to list five or six politicians whom they trusted the most. Although Putin was first with 39%, trust in him had fallen 9% since June and a total of 20 percentage points since November. He recently signed into law an unpopular bill that gradually increases the state retirement age to 60 for women and 65 for men. Most ordinary Russians are deeply opposed to the reforms, which sparked rare street protests across the country. Putin's lowest-ever rating in a Levada poll came in 2013, when only 30% said he was a trusted politician. Then his popularity surged to over 80% after Russia annexed Crimea from Ukraine.

Pray: for Putin to resist radical actions to enhance his reputation with the people. (Proverbs 19:1,3)

More: [www.eurasiareview.com/09102018-poll-shows-putins-popularity-decreasing-sharply/](http://www.eurasiareview.com/09102018-poll-shows-putins-popularity-decreasing-sharply/)

### Europe: kicking the plastic habit

The EU is taking a hard line on single-use plastics, with the European parliament's environment committee voting to bolster the Commission's plastics policy. The report now lays out bans on plastic straws, plastic cutlery, and expanded polystyrene food packaging, as well as committing countries to cutting down on other plastics. It now faces a final vote later in October.

Pray: for every voting country to agree to take the harder option on banning plastics. (Psalm 23:3b)

More: [www.euronews.com/2018/10/11/kicking-the-plastic-habit](http://www.euronews.com/2018/10/11/kicking-the-plastic-habit)

## Worldwide

### Australia: 'after-birth abortion'

Researchers claimed in the Journal of Medical Ethics that if a baby is born with a disability that was not previously detected, or if a mother is unwilling to care for the infant, it should be legal to kill the baby in a procedure called 'after-birth abortion'. They argued that if a condition that justified abortion is only discovered after the baby's birth then the same rule to kill the child, after birth, should apply. 'New mums' should be allowed to 'abort both healthy and disabled babies once outside the womb in a quick and painless act'. They added, 'Such circumstances include cases where the newborn has the potential to have an acceptable life, but the well-being of the family is at risk.' These views received much criticism. In defence the journal's editor said that similar arguments appear in academic literature by the most eminent philosophers and bioethicists in the world.

Pray: for the differences between foetus and newborn, and abortion and euthanasia, to be acknowledged, and for this argument to go no further. (Exodus 20:13)

More: [starts60.com/news/australian-researchers-after-birth-abortion-article](http://starts60.com/news/australian-researchers-after-birth-abortion-article)

### Maldives: break the cycle of impunity

An ethical cloud is over the Maldives, an idyllic tropical holiday destination. Islands and submerged coral lagoons have been leased out to tourism developers in no-bid deals. At least US\$79 million from the lease fees was embezzled into private bank accounts. The scandal involves local businessmen and international hotel operators, and leads all the way to outgoing president Abdulla Yameen. Transparency International and Transparency Maldives urge all politicians and civil servants involved in the transition to the newly-elected government to ensure that there are no further secret deals to allow those connected to corruption to escape accountability. It was revealed that in the eighteen months before the 23 September election which ended President Yameen's presidency, senior government officials leased out 50+ islands at a fraction of the original price, and Yameen anonymously received US\$1.5 million. [See also](https://www.transparency.org/news/pressrelease/maldives_break_the_cycle_of_impunity_with_a_transparent_transition)

[https://www.transparency.org/news/pressrelease/maldives\\_break\\_the\\_cycle\\_of\\_impunity\\_with\\_a\\_transparent\\_transition](https://www.transparency.org/news/pressrelease/maldives_break_the_cycle_of_impunity_with_a_transparent_transition)

Pray: for former administrators to face the consequences of crimes committed while in office. (Proverbs 17:20)

More: [www.transparency.org/news/feature/paradise\\_lost\\_among\\_maldives\\_dodgy\\_land\\_deals](http://www.transparency.org/news/feature/paradise_lost_among_maldives_dodgy_land_deals)

### New UN report on climate change

Following the remarks to the UN about climate change by Dominica's foreign minister (see <https://www.prayer-alert.net/worldwide-pa-site/item/11038-un-assembly-climate-change-a-global-responsibility>), on 7 October a UN intergovernmental panel added to that warning by stating that preventing an extra single degree of heat could make a life-or-death difference in the next few decades for multitudes of people and ecosystems on this fast-warming planet. It detailed how weather, health and ecosystems would be in better shape if the world's leaders limited future human-caused warming to half a degree, instead of the Paris-agreed goal of 1

degree. Meeting the more ambitious goal requires immediate cuts in emissions of heat-trapping gases and dramatic changes in the energy field. The panel said it is technically possible, but saw little chance of the needed adjustments being made by every nation. See also the article 'Bishop challenges Government on climate change' in the UK section.

Pray: for every nation to make far-reaching changes that will bring down rising carbon dioxide levels. (Gen. 4:7)

More: [globalnews.ca/news/4525966/u-n-report-climate-change/](http://globalnews.ca/news/4525966/u-n-report-climate-change/)

### India: Christian wives wait for justice

Ten years ago, three illiterate Christians from a remote area in Odisha state were arrested. Two months later four other Christians were arrested. They are all still in jail charged with the 2008 murder of a Hindu leader that triggered the worst anti-Christian violence in India, orchestrated by a Hindu nationalist group claiming that the murder was a 'Christian conspiracy'. They were convicted to life imprisonment even though two trial court judges openly indicated during the trial that the accused were innocent. In 2015, two top police officials (who had relied upon the same conspiracy theory to ensure the conviction of the innocent Christians) testified before a judicial inquiry commission that allegations were false. Despite this, the appeal hearing has been constantly postponed.

Pray: for the authorities to declare them innocent and release them. (Amos 5:24)

More: [www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2018/10/ten-years-after-arrest-of-their-illiterate-husbands-indian-wives-wait-for-justice/](http://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2018/10/ten-years-after-arrest-of-their-illiterate-husbands-indian-wives-wait-for-justice/)

### Nigeria: action needed

Reconciliation seems far away between Christian farmers and Muslim herdsmen in Nigeria's middle belt areas. Christians fled to Plateau and Benue states because of discrimination and attacks from Boko Haram in the north, but now they are being killed and having their homes torched by Muslim Fulani herdsmen. Over 56 villages have been attacked this year, three in the past week. It is a religious battle and a battle over land. There is no reconciliation in sight, and the attitude of government is not helping. Governments should protect their people, but this government has allowed the people to be continuously attacked. Some Christians are having their faith eroded, while many are holding on trusting in God. A local farmer said, 'We believe God will come through for the church as believers stand with us worldwide in prayer - He will sort out these issues'. Pray for those carrying the burden of housing people who have fled persecution.

Pray: for God to give Nigeria's leaders compassion. May they promote justice. (Micah 3:1,2a)

More: [www.premierchristianradio.com/News/World/Something-needs-to-be-done-or-the-church-will-be-destroyed-says-Nigerian-Christian](http://www.premierchristianradio.com/News/World/Something-needs-to-be-done-or-the-church-will-be-destroyed-says-Nigerian-Christian)

### Global: severe weather on 11 October

In eastern India a 140-165 km/hr cyclone called Titli ravaged Odisha. All buildings were closed, 300,000 people were evacuated, and 1,112 relief camps opened for evacuees from five coastal districts. 123 pregnant women were moved to hospitals. 'The entire nation is with you', tweeted President Ram Nath Kovind. Pray for those now working to clear roads, restore power, minister medical care and comfort those in shock or mourning. In North America 155 mph Hurricane Michael became a tropical storm as it moved from Florida to Georgia. It was described as one of the most powerful hurricanes to ever hit the US. A total of about 370,000 homes and businesses were without power across Florida, Georgia and Alabama. See <http://edition.cnn.com/interactive/storm-tracker/> In Majorca 9 inches (23 cm) of rain fell in four hours, causing flash floods that killed at least ten. See <https://majorcadailybulletin.com/news/local/2018/10/10/53399/heavy-rains-floods-kill-least-eight-sant-lorenc.html> Meanwhile, in Indonesia, the death toll has risen to 200, but 5,000 are still missing.

Pray: for emergency services, volunteers, and all in the clean-up operations. (Psalm 41:1,2)

More: [www.ndtv.com/india-news/cyclone-titli-live-updates-storm-makes-landfall-near-gopalpur-in-odisha-1930154](http://www.ndtv.com/india-news/cyclone-titli-live-updates-storm-makes-landfall-near-gopalpur-in-odisha-1930154)

### USA: who is Brett Kavanaugh?

Brett Kavanaugh replaces Justice Kennedy as a US Supreme Court judge, and is expected to keep the position for decades. He was one of the lead writers of the report that led to Bill Clinton's impeachment, and was a White House lawyer and adviser under the George W Bush administration. A devout Catholic, Kavanaugh is expected to establish conservative control of the court as he becomes Trump's second appointment to the nation's highest judicial body. The Supreme Court's decisions have a profound impact on American society. It is often the final word on highly contentious laws. Disputes involving abortion, immigration, gay rights, voting rights and transgender troops could all be ruled on soon. Kavanaugh is expected to cast conservative votes in all of them. He is against abortion and supports the right to bear arms including semi-automatic weapons. Historically he has ruled against regulations regarding air pollution and climate change.

Pray: for the Supreme Court to move forward with God's agenda, not lobbying memos. (Isaiah 1:17)

More: [www.aljazeera.com/news/2018/10/brett-kavanaugh-supreme-court-judge-181006194126283.html](http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2018/10/brett-kavanaugh-supreme-court-judge-181006194126283.html)

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