

Prayer Alert

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Call to me and I will answer you and tell you great and unsearchable things you do not know. (Jeremiah 33:3)

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

[Andrew Brunson freed](#)

American pastor Andrew Brunson has been released after being detained in Turkey for two years. President Trump has already met Brunson, who had been charged with helping to plot a coup against President Erdogan and sentenced to 37 months in prison. The Turkish authorities chose to release him based on his time already served, as well as his manner during the proceedings. Prosecutors had been demanding a ten-year jail term. The case had soured relations between Turkey and the US, heightened by Trump's desire to support Brunson and emphasise the importance of religious freedom. Erdogan's office denied that any deal with the US had taken place, and criticised Trump for tweeting that he had been 'working very hard for Pastor Brunson' and his release.

Praise: God for the release of an innocent man, and continue to pray for the release of Turkey's other coup victims thrown into filthy jails. (Psalm 44:5)

More: edition.cnn.com/2018/10/12/europe/andrew-brunson-turkey-us-released-intl/index.html

[Syria: border crossings reopened](#)

Syria has re-opened two border crossings, one at Nassib on the Jordanian border and another on the divide between Syrian- and Israeli-controlled areas of the Golan Heights. Travellers expressed their joy. Nassib will once again be a major trade artery for the region. Its reopening had been anticipated since pro-Syrian government forces took the area from rebels in July. The Syria-Jordan crossing was a major link for direct trade between the neighbouring countries as well as longer-distance transit, which was a significant source of revenue. Its closure cut all land trade routes between Lebanon and the Gulf. Imad Sariheen, a Jordanian taxi driver, called the crossings reopening a source of 'great happiness for all of us' which will help ease 'economic hardships'. Druze living in the Israeli-controlled area can now use the crossing to visit family, attend Syrian universities, or sell apples and other local produce.

Praise: God for the deal brokered by Syria, Israel and the UN. (Proverbs 29:4a)

More: www.middleeasteye.net/news/jordan-reopens-border-syria-idlib-rebels-miss-deadline-leave-273830283

British Isles & Ireland

[Intercessor Focus: praying for Parliament](#)

The Brexit divisions appear to be reshaping UK politics. In this time of turmoil we can pray for every ungodly plan or schedule to be completely broken. Ask God to inspire Theresa May, the Cabinet, and the advisers and technocrats working behind the scenes to embark onto the track and the timing that God purposes for the UK's future relations with Europe, Ireland and the wider world. May every unnecessary burden currently being carried by those responsible for the nation's future wellbeing be replaced with workable strategies. Rumbling on, the domestic front around Universal Credit is providing a fresh headache for Mrs May. Pray that this unpopular welfare policy will not distract her from a clear Brexit process. As the bloc's leaders walk away from seeming deadlock, key mediators and advisers are working behind the scenes. Pray for God to give them the solutions that will not put Northern

Ireland's peace process and the Good Friday Agreement at risk. (Linda Digby - Prayer Alert team)

Pray: for humility to enter into all negotiations, and for decisions to be held in God's hands. (Psalm 149:4)

More:

Youth: peer to peer evangelism

'Open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest.' Recently 100 evangelists and leaders gathered at Lambeth Palace to launch Advance 2020. 100 budding evangelists (ages 11-18) are to be trained by a wide range of ministries and denominations to prepare for 2020 and a 'reaping year'. As the country goes through what will surely be two difficult years politically, they want to be ready to offer the hope only Jesus can give through a new generation of gifted evangelists. From 30 November to 2 December, a new Youth Evangelism event will begin to train young evangelists; all attendees will be given a free ticket to the National Youth Evangelism Conference ([see http://theyec.uk/](http://theyec.uk/)). Here they will be further equipped and empowered to be God's youth leaders in evangelism with and to young people.

Pray: for a powerful anointing on every delegate. May God open many doors of faith. (Romans 10:14)

More: hopetogether.org.uk/Groups/256558/Press_Releases.aspx

Commons abuse 'tolerated and concealed'

Disturbing cases of bullying and sexual harassment have 'long been tolerated and concealed' in the House of Commons, according to a report by Dame Laura Cox QC, who said there was a culture of 'deference, subservience, acquiescence and silence'. She said the procedures for protecting staff were inadequate, and that 'broad cultural change' was needed. The inquiry was commissioned following a BBC investigation earlier this year. Dame Laura described the House of Commons as a 'stark reminder of how bad things used to be. No workplace is immune, but the culture in which it has been able to take hold in the House of Commons and the ineffective mechanisms for dealing with it make this a particularly serious case.' Now that the nature and extent of the problem is exposed we can pray that all alleged sexual harassment by members of parliament is fairly dealt with according to new policies, procedures and personnel.

Pray: for God to infuse the House of Commons with an atmosphere of valuing others. (Philippians 2:3)

More: www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-45862741

Fracking restarts in Lancashire

Fracking for shale gas has begun for the first time in the UK since it was linked with earthquakes in 2011. Energy firm Cuadrilla confirmed that the controversial process had started at its site in Lancashire after a legal challenge failed. Cuadrilla insisted the process was safe and would be of 'enormous' benefit, leading to tens of thousands of jobs if successful. After at least three months fracking two horizontal wells, they will then test to see if the gas flow is commercially viable. If it is, up to 20 wells could be built. Protesters call it a toxic industry and an environmental disaster. Cat Smith, Labour MP for Lancaster and Fleetwood, tweeted, 'Future generations will look back at this and wonder why we didn't heed climate change warnings'. Many believe the process of hydraulic fracturing of the earth's crust in the UK is taking an enormous risk of triggering earthquakes.

Pray: for fracking to go ahead only if it is 100% ecologically sound and safe to do so. (Psalm 4:8)

More: www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-lancashire-45825268

Right to life

On 23 October, Diana Johnson MP will bring forward a motion to Parliament under the ten-minute rule. Her proposal is to introduce abortion access in Northern Ireland, but in reality it would remove all the current legal safeguards around abortion, with drastic effect. Abortion campaigners want to remove sections 58 and 59 of the Offences Against the Persons Act. This would have the effect of making the Abortion Act 1967, along with all the legal safeguards it provides, void through to at least 24-weeks. Abortions could happen for any reason, without any legislative protections or safeguards for women or the unborn.

Pray: for those opposing this proposal to succeed, and for no loopholes in the current system. (Psalm 115:14)

More: righttolife.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/short-briefing-note-diana-johnson-mps-ten-minute-rule-motion-on-abortion-23-october-2018.pdf

British victims of modern slavery

A report has revealed that the number of British people referred to the Salvation Army's specialist support for adult victims of modern slavery has nearly doubled since last year to 86 people - and that is the tip of the iceberg. Traffickers systematically target and exploit the vulnerable; those with mental health problems, people without secure family networks or experiencing homelessness or addicts. After years of substance misuse, 30-year-old J was without work or a home. At this extremely vulnerable stage in his life, he was targeted by dealers who forced him to sell drugs on their behalf around the country with promises of money, which soon changed to threats and coercion making it impossible for him to escape. He was rescued when police arrested him for dealing, but soon realised he was more victim than perpetrator. After months in a Salvation Army safe house, J is now living independently and receiving professional support to overcome his addictions.

Pray: for anti-trafficking professionals making dark places light and UK streets more safe. (Psalm 25:12)

More: www.salvationarmy.org.uk/british-victims-of-modern-slavery-double-in-a-year

Praying for our communities

The following is part of a recent prayer and declaration from Passion for the Nation: 'We come into agreement with Jesus' words, "Any kingdom divided against itself will be ruined, and a house divided against itself will fall". We decree and declare in this nation,

every wall of division will be removed, barriers of ethnicity, religion and culture will fall, that communities will be both integrated and safe. We call everyone in our towns and cities into agreement with Your word that “the stranger living among you must be treated as one of your native born”, and we speak Godly wisdom into Government agencies, local and national, community groups and religious organisations seeking to bring respect and safety into society. As Your Spirit moves in this nation, we decree and declare that the Spirit of reconciliation, peace and self-control will become prevalent and desired in our streets, replacing prejudice, anger, hatred, and revenge.’

Pray: for the revelation of Jesus into the lives of individuals and communities in our nation. (Ephesians 1:18)

More: us12.campaign-archive.com/?e=be117c6125&u=307c3ce43ea66a282cde62b61&id=9af7f1aea2

Europe

Crimea: eighteen students killed

Attacks by disaffected teenagers at schools and colleges have hit the headlines recently in Russia. In January, a student in Siberia attacked a teacher and fellow-students with an axe and set fire to the school. In April, in the Urals, another student stabbed a teacher and a student and set fire to a classroom. But this week’s tragedy of 18 school children killed and 53 injured has led to three days of mourning from 18 October. Speaking to journalists and parents of missing students in the city of Kerch, where the shooting took place, Crimean leader Sergei Aksyonov said the death toll stood at eighteen 14- to 16-year-olds, plus the killer Vladislav Roslyakov. Witnesses said they heard shots and ran into the corridor, where they were randomly targeted with a machine gun. Victims were taken away in buses and minibuses: ‘Children and staff, without legs, without arms’.

Pray: for the victims to receive God’s counsel and comfort. (Matthew 5:4)

More: www.france24.com/en/20181017-crimea-deadly-attack-strikes-vocational-college

The poorest country in Europe

Albania is considered to be the poorest country in Europe, with a high level of poverty and little access to basic social services. Thousands of children face injustice in many forms of abuse, violence, exploitation and early marriage. The country still lacks a fully functional system which should prevent, protect, and rehabilitate children from all forms of discrimination and abuse. World Vision works there to speak up on behalf of children and improve lives through child protection programmes ([see https://www.wvi.org/albania](https://www.wvi.org/albania)) In spite of the introduction of child protection measures, Albania is still one of the riskiest places for children in Europe. The risks start at birth - a high infant mortality rate - and continue through to early adulthood, when the lack of opportunities makes it difficult for them to become independent. UNICEF reported that 12% of children aged 5-14 are working while adults face unemployment and poverty.

Pray: for children who have lost parental care and for families suffering poverty. (Psalm 6:4-6)

More: www.sos-childrensvillages.org/where-we-help/europe/albania

Worldwide

Islam’s ‘war’ to destroy Israel

On 14 October Palestinian leader Mahmoud Abbas’s advisor on religious and Islamic affairs, Mahmoud Al-Habash, declared on TV that ‘Islam’s religious war to destroy Israel’s “culture of Satan” has begun’; and ‘Jerusalem is the arena of conflict between us and the colonialist project (Israel)’. He described the fight as ‘a war between Islamic culture in all its splendour and the culture of Satan, oppression and aggression’. [See https://unitedwithisrael.org/watch-islams-war-to-destroy-israel-is-underway-claims-abbas-advisor](https://unitedwithisrael.org/watch-islams-war-to-destroy-israel-is-underway-claims-abbas-advisor) On 17 October a predawn rocket attack from Gaza struck an Israeli home, and another rocket landed off the coast near Tel Aviv. ‘There are only two organisations in Gaza with this calibre of rocket - Hamas and the Palestinian Islamic Jihad’, said the IDF. Later the Israeli military bombed twenty Gaza Strip areas including weapons factories, military bases and Hamas’s tunnel-building efforts.

Pray: for God to protect and comfort civilians living in fear in dangerous areas in both Israel and Gaza. (Romans 12:19)

More: www.timesofisrael.com/idf-says-20-targets-bombed-in-gaza-including-tunnels-blames-hamas-for-rockets/

Tonga: failing faith

Faithful missionaries brought the Gospel to Tonga in the 19th century. The bold red cross displayed on the country’s flag represents its Christian heritage. Today nearly everyone in Tonga has access to the Gospel. But the islands are experiencing a slow and steady spiritual decline. The church is plagued with bitter schisms, selfishness, politics, false teachings, and nominalism. Many are being drawn away to ‘new’ teachings. Tonga has the world’s highest percentage of Mormons, and 4% follow Baha’i teachings. Some say that faith across the Pacific has become so shallow that the region must be re-evangelised. A move of God is desperately needed. Pray for freedom from the love of money among young adults tempted to seek riches abroad. Pray for emigrant believers to keep their Christian identity in their host nations. Pray for hope and eternal purpose for youth turning to crime and drugs as solutions to boredom.

Pray: for Tonga to recapture the dynamic faith of its forefathers. (Psalm 89:31-33)

More: prayercast.com/tonga.html

Angola and Rwanda: churches closed

The Angolan government has put 1,106 churches on notice for operating illegally. The director for religious matters said they had been given a 30-day ultimatum from 4 October to regularise their operations or be shut. The number of illegal churches in the country has reached 4,000, and they need to change their status. According to the culture ministry, there are only 84 legal churches, and apart from the 1,106 churches on notice another 2,006 have already been shut. Pray for freedom of religion, and for

legislation only to be applied where necessary. Meanwhile in Rwanda, where 81% of the population are believers, the government has closed 8,000 churches, believed to have 'untrained leaders and poor accountability', with pastors being accused of enriching themselves financially. Pray for the government to eradicate mental, spiritual and financial abuse by leaders and promote safe building standards for church structures. See <https://www.christiantoday.com/article/why-has-rwanda-closed-8000-christian-churches/130243.htm>

Pray: for sound theological training for church leaders in a changing society. (2 Timothy 3:16)

More: www.theeastafrican.co.ke/news/africa/Angolan-puts-churches-on-notice/4552902-4805570-mkpxa8z/index.html

Yemen: 13 million at risk of death

The UN has warned of a historic famine that could put as many as 13 million people in Yemen at risk of death by starvation. The fierce fighting between Saudi-backed government forces and Houthi rebels, and the ongoing blockade of aid shipments, have created the conditions for humanitarian disaster on a scale not seen since Ethiopia in the 1980s or the Soviet Union in the 1930s. 75% of the population need food assistance; 8 to 10 million go hungry daily. Prices have doubled in the past month. The war has killed 10,000 to 50,000 civilians and displaced over two million. Civilian deaths are up 164% since the beginning of the siege of the port city of Hodeidah in June. When 17 were killed on 14 October by Saudi planes bombing buses waiting at a Houthi checkpoint, it was just another daily occurrence. People say, 'Why is Saudi Arabia under attack over Jamal Khashoggi (a missing, presumed murdered reporter), but not over Yemen?' See <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2018/oct/17/why-is-saudi-arabia-under-fire-over-jamal-khashoggi-but-not-yemen>

Pray: for an end to arms sales to aggressors, and the start of realistic aid to the starving. (Psalm 140:1,2)

More: www.cbc.ca/news/thenational/national-today-newsletter-yemen-saudi-cannabis-marketing-1.4862908

Afghanistan: convert faces death if deported

It is illegal to be anything other than a Muslim in Afghanistan, a tribal society where leaving Islam is seen as a betrayal of the tribe. Christians who are discovered may be sent to a psychiatric hospital, on the grounds that no sane person would leave Islam. Baptism is punishable by death. Radical Islamic militants rule in over 40% of the country. If the Swiss government succeeds in deporting an Afghan Christian convert (known as AA), he faces persecution, imprisonment, or death. A religious liberty advocacy group appealed to the European Court of Human Rights on his behalf on 18 October, after the Swiss authorities refused his application for asylum. The Swiss were accused of 'turning a blind eye to the situation of religious minorities in Afghanistan'.

Pray: for Switzerland to recognise the oppression of religious minorities and protect victims. (Job 5:21)

More: www.worldwatchmonitor.org/coe/afghan-convert-face-death-deported-switzerland/

Nigeria: aid workers killed, hostages held

Hauwa Liman, a midwife with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), was killed days after her kidnappers set a deadline. Ms Liman was taken with two others in the northern town of Rann last March. Fellow-midwife Saifura Ahmed Khorsa was killed last month. Ms Loksha remains a hostage. A 15-year-old schoolgirl is also still being held by the same group, which is affiliated to a faction of Boko Haram. Most of the other 110 students who were kidnapped have now been freed but the girl, who reportedly refused to convert to Islam, remains in captivity. The ICRC's regional director said there was no justification for the execution of innocent young healthcare workers, and feared for its implication on their work in the region. The information and culture minister said that the government would 'keep the negotiations open' and continue to work to free Ms Loksha and the schoolgirl. Pray for this work.

Pray: for better security for all helping internally displaced people. (Psalm 119:45,46)

More: www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-45871361

Brazil: a new style of president?

Amid rampant political corruption and a crime epidemic in Brazil, Jair Bolsonaro is on the verge of becoming Brazil's next president on 28 October. He has expressed enthusiasm for former military rulers (particularly Carlos Brilhante Ustra, a colonel who ran a military torture squad in the 1970s). His chosen deputy president, a former general, said that the military may be needed to clean up corruption. For many years former army captain Mr Bolsonaro was a marginal Congress figure, known for defending the military dictatorship and making offensive comments about women, blacks, gay men and lesbians. Earlier this year he was investigated for inciting hatred and discrimination. His critics accuse him of racism and misogyny, and tens of thousands of women organised protest marches with the slogan #EleNão - or #NotHim. But he came out of the first round of voting with a strong lead, thanks to last-minute backing from the evangelical lobby and powerful business and commerce groups.

Pray: for a new leadership team to remove Brazil's corruption and crime peacefully. (Proverbs 6:5)

More: www.nytimes.com/2018/10/16/world/americas/brazil-jair-bolsonaro-david-duke.html

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