

# Prayer Alert

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Praise be to the Lord my Rock, who trains my hands for war, my fingers for battle. He is my loving God and my fortress, my stronghold and my deliverer, my shield, in whom I take refuge. (Psalm 144:1,2)

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

Can you help? - Prayer Alert is brought to your inbox without charge thanks largely to the generosity of individuals and organisations that freely provide most of the resources we need to operate. However, we would be grateful for donations from appreciative subscribers towards our costs. Please go to the 'Donations' link that follows to make a contribution: <http://www.prayer-alert.net/pa-contact/donate>

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

David Fletcher – Editor

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## Praise Reports

### They were not spies

On 20 September (<https://www.prayer-alert.net/pa-pray/regions/british-isles/item/12204-they-are-not-spies>) we prayed for Jolie King, a Cambridge University honours graduate in Middle Eastern studies, and Australian Mark Firkin to be released from a Tehran prison for flying a drone near military installations. On 5 October Australia's foreign affairs minister said, 'It is with some enormous relief that I announce that they have been released and returned.' He said 'very sensitive' negotiations with Iran over their release helped ensure they were treated appropriately while detained. Please continue to pray for British-Australian academic Kylie Moore-Gilbert, who has been in Evin prison, in solitary confinement, serving a ten-year sentence for espionage. She has no contact from family or friends.

Praise: God for their release. May God bring justice for those still in Evin prison. (Deuteronomy 20:4)

More: [www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2019/oct/05/australian-and-british-bloggers-jolie-king-and-mark-firkin-released-in-iran](http://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2019/oct/05/australian-and-british-bloggers-jolie-king-and-mark-firkin-released-in-iran)

### Iran: blessing Israel

The persecuted Iranian Christians belong to what is said to be the fastest-growing church network in the world. The core of their theology is that all roads lead to Jerusalem, which is why they are praying for the salvation of Israel. They feel that it has been prophesied (Jer. 30:7; Zech. 14:2) that in the days approaching Jesus' return to Jerusalem as King, there will be trouble for the Jewish state. The Persian people (as many Iranians still prefer to be called) blessed Israel in the past. King Cyrus freed the exiles so that they could return to the Land and rebuild the Temple; Queen Esther saved her people from extermination, so that Iranian Christians might stand in the gap for the Jewish people. What Satan has meant for evil, God can turn for good.

Praise: God for the way He blesses those who bless His people and protects, refines and grows His persecuted church. (Genesis 12:3)

More: [www.prophecytoday.uk/index.php?option=com\\_k2&view=item&id=1600:refined-in-the-fire&Itemid=181](http://www.prophecytoday.uk/index.php?option=com_k2&view=item&id=1600:refined-in-the-fire&Itemid=181)

### Christian forgiveness in emotional murder trial

After a long shift Amber Guyger, a tired policewoman, parked her car on the wrong floor of her apartment block and entered Botham Jean's apartment, where he was sitting and watching TV. Thinking he was an intruder, she shot and killed him. Guyger was white and Brandt was black. It was seen as another American racial injustice in an emotionally charged courtroom. Then Brandt's brother removed outrage and grief when he stood up and said, 'I don't want you to go to jail. If you truly are sorry, I know I can speak for myself - I forgive you. I think giving your life to Christ would be the best thing that Botham would want for you. I love you as a person, and I don't wish anything bad on you.' Brandt then asked state district Judge for permission to hug the policewoman. The lengthy, emotional hug caused a hush in the room and went viral. Judge Kemp also gave Guyger a Bible and praised Brandt for his gesture, saying to him, 'Thank you for the way you modelled Christ'.

Praise: God for this demonstration of love over hate in a racially-charged atmosphere. (Luke 24:47a)

More: [godreports.com/2019/10/rare-powerful-example-of-forgiveness-offered-in-racially-charged-murder-trial/](http://godreports.com/2019/10/rare-powerful-example-of-forgiveness-offered-in-racially-charged-murder-trial/)

## British Isles

### Keep praying for our nation

In February, Prayer Alert highlighted the National Call to Prayer. In this time of both uncertainty and significance for our nation this is a reminder for Christians to join in prayer across the UK for the UK. Christians in Government believe that Christians can play an important role. This is not about politics, but all about seeking God. The Bible says that we may not know what to do, but our eyes can be on God. In this major time of change, we can commit the UK to God with Psalm 23 as our inspiration, for Jesus to be the Good Shepherd to the UK, to bring comfort and to guide us as a nation. Churches across the UK are invited to partner with the national call to prayer, in particular over the whole period leading up to Brexit, especially the final two weeks. For more information click the 'More' button.

Pray: for millions across the nation to catch the vision to fast and pray as God releases His purposes for our future. (2 Chronicles 7:14)

More: [nationalcall2prayer.com/](http://nationalcall2prayer.com/)

### Christian climate action

October Rebellion aims to be the biggest and boldest Extinction Rebellion protest yet. On 7 October a fortnight of planned protests began around the world, calling governments to take action on the climate crisis. In London, Christian faith and prayer played an important role as Christian Climate Action created a space for prophetic prayer, worship, prayer walking, and peaceful actions on Lambeth Bridge, renaming the bridge 'Faith Bridge'. The family-friendly prayer walks assembled on the first day of protests at 7am on the grassed area on Albert Embankment, to pray and plan before moving onto Lambeth Bridge, securing the space for round the clock prayer and worship in the heart of London and demanding action for Creation from the Government. On Tuesday some groups from Faith Bridge moved to Trafalgar Square to reaffirm their baptismal vows in a paddling pool under Nelson's Column, where Rev Jon Swales marked people with the sign of the cross. See <https://www.christiantoday.com/article/christians-hold-baptism-service-in-traffic-square-as-part-of-extinction-rebellion/133392.htm>

Pray: for the Christian witness and perspective in London and elsewhere to be picked up by the media in the midst of controversial actions and reporting. (Psalm 19:1, 9:14a)

More: [christianclimateaction.org/](http://christianclimateaction.org/)

### Ireland and Brexit

At the time of writing Boris Johnson and his Irish counterpart Leo Varadkar agree they can 'see a pathway to a possible deal'. A government website is advising the nation how people and businesses should prepare for 31 October, and the Church is praying. Father, we ask for Your grace and wisdom to come into every phase of decisions. As a Brexit is birthed, and fresh foundations laid, we pray for Heaven's design and schedules over every vote. We ask You to remove every deadlock so that 'detailed discussions' on the Brexit process will connect the United Kingdom to Your perfect plans.

Pray: for a new spirit of thanksgiving, joy and praise to arise as unity of heart, vision, and purpose expands God's Kingdom within and through our nation. (1 Chronicles 16: 34)

More: [www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-49995133](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-49995133)

### Hounded out of career for Facebook post

Seyi Omooba had been given the lead role in the award-winning musical The Colour Purple, based on Alice Walker's classic American novel. The casting was announced on the same day that Seyi went to Buckingham Palace with her father, Pastor Ade Omooba (Christian Concern's co-founder), to receive his MBE. After the cast was announced, Seyi was criticised by another West End actor because she had cited the Bible in a Facebook post over four years earlier. As a result, she lost her leading role and was dropped from her agency. With help from the Christian Legal Centre, she is now launching a legal challenge against the theatre and the agency. The case raises the question of whether Christians can hold and express Biblical mainstream views in public - whether we can freely express opinions and interpretations of art, literature, and drama that are contrary to LGBT ideology.

Pray: for the Christian Legal Centre to win Seyi's court case. May God bless her career. (Psalm 71:17)

More: [christianconcern.com/news/actress-hounded-out-of-career-for-biblical-facebook-post/](http://christianconcern.com/news/actress-hounded-out-of-career-for-biblical-facebook-post/)

### Day of prayer for rural Britain

On 16 November, between 10am and 3pm, a day of prayer for the churches and communities of rural Britain will be held at St James's Church, Sutton, Macclesfield SK11 0DS. Prayer Alert intercessors are invited to join Hope for the Countryside in a time of worship, sharing, listening, and seeking the Lord for a fresh move of the Holy Spirit across the countryside and the nation. There will be no charge, and hot drinks and lunch will be provided. For more information click the 'More' button.

Pray: for God to impact the lives of all who live, worship, work, or serve in the countryside. (Psalm 65:10)

More: [cntp.uk/2019/10/02/hope-for-the-countryside-oct-newsletter-and-a-day-of-prayer-for-rural-britain-16th-nov-2019/](http://cntp.uk/2019/10/02/hope-for-the-countryside-oct-newsletter-and-a-day-of-prayer-for-rural-britain-16th-nov-2019/)

### Mental health: 40 seconds of action

World Mental Health Day was 1 October. This year it was supported by the International Association for Suicide Prevention. Every forty seconds, someone commits suicide. '40 seconds of action' raises people's awareness of the frequency of suicide, and the role that each of us can play to help prevent it. In the UK one in four adults will have mental health problems at some stage in their lifetime. For every suicide, there are twenty suicide attempts. These have an impact on families, friends, colleagues, communities and societies. Pray for a proactive church to support vulnerable people with mental health challenges wisely. 20% of the UK population will suffer from depression. Pray for more friends, neighbours, and relatives prepared to stand with the sufferers with compassion and support them through their crisis.

Pray: for family and friends of those who have committed suicide to know God's comfort, and for God to rescue the confused and vulnerable considering self-harm or suicide. (Psalm 118:17)

More: [www.who.int/health-topics/suicide#tab=tab\\_1](http://www.who.int/health-topics/suicide#tab=tab_1)

### British IS fighters taken into US custody

Two of the so-called 'IS Beatles' have been taken from a prison run by the Kurdish militia in northern Syria to a secure location controlled by the US. El Shafee Elsheikh and Alexandra Kotey are accused of being part of an IS cell which kidnapped and murdered Western

hostages. The pair are from London, and Mr Trump described them as 'the worst of the worst'. He said the decision to remove them from Syria had been taken 'in case the Kurds or Turkey lose control'. The announcement came after the USA withdrew its forces from the region this week. See world article - Syria: praying into turmoil.

Pray: for the thousands of IS fighters and their relatives in Syria's prisons and camps to choose repentance, not revenge. (James 4:8-10)  
More: [www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-49995909](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-49995909)

### Controversy in Cornwall

Philip de Grey-Warter, vicar of Fowey for 17 years, resigned from the Church of England and on 6 October started his own church in the town. The new church community, Anchor, will be run under the auspices of AMiE (Anglican Mission in England), a mission society established by GAFCON to multiply and strengthen healthy Anglican churches in England, assisting in evangelism and Biblical teaching. It intends to pioneer 25 AMiE churches by 2025. GAFCON is a global movement of conservative Anglican clergy who aim to restore the Bible to the heart of the Anglican Communion. Mr de Grey-Warter decided to leave the CofE when the House of Bishops allowed the baptism liturgy to be used for those who are transitioning gender. He denied that the new church is homophobic, and posted his story online <https://vimeo.com/359011100>. See also <https://anglicanmissioninengland.org/pioneering-plan>

Pray: for the Christian community in Fowey to experience reconciliation. (Ephesians 4:2)  
More: [www.cornwalllive.com/news/cornwall-news/controversy-cornwall-town-vicar-starts-3360310](http://www.cornwalllive.com/news/cornwall-news/controversy-cornwall-town-vicar-starts-3360310)

## Europe

### Europe: persecution of Christians

News from across Europe in recent years has been bleak at times. Politicians and pastors have been investigated for 'hate crimes' simply for teaching or quoting from the Bible. We have seen medical professionals lose their jobs because they did not want to be complicit in practices that went against their consciences, and we have seen families risk losing their children because they sought to bring them up in accordance with biblical principles. Christians who fled persecution in the Middle East found themselves facing harassment and oppression in European refugee camps, painfully similar to what they left behind. Attacks on churches have risen; last year, in France alone, on average two churches were desecrated every single day. Our God of redemption can turn things around; pray that He speaks to those who are persecuting Christians, like Saul, that they may come to know Him for themselves. May He comfort all who are suffering persecution across Europe.

Pray: for Christians to show boldness in a culture hostile to their faith. (Proverbs 28:1)  
More: [gallery.mailchimp.com/ffd99da83edd4244458b59317/files/32fc7556-f88a-4f11-a65e-1e3864fc2854/Canopy\\_73\\_English.pdf](https://gallery.mailchimp.com/ffd99da83edd4244458b59317/files/32fc7556-f88a-4f11-a65e-1e3864fc2854/Canopy_73_English.pdf)

### EU: misspending in the millions

The EU squandered millions on overseas projects last year, including paying for broken toilets in Haiti and providing computer systems for empty offices in Jamaica. Auditors examined the EU's £138 billion annual budget. The budget for aid and overseas projects was around £720 million in total: 3% of this was misspent on items such as a Mozambican radio drama series. They found that a further £4 billion was misspent because the EU Commission had sometimes 'assumed' that cash was spent within the rules. The UK pays £9 billion to the EU annually, and the bloc is demanding £39 billion in a Brexit divorce bill - even if there is no deal. Tory MP Nigel Evans said, 'While we're in the EU, we have little control over how this money is spent. In fact, it looks as if no-one is in control.' 2.6% of the EU's total budget was misspent last year, up from 2.4% from the year before.

Pray: for stronger scrutiny of contracts between the EU Commission and non-governmental organisations and projects. (Job 31:5,6)  
More: [www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-7552519/EU-squandered-millions-overseas-projects-year-including-paying-broken-toilets-Haiti.html](http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-7552519/EU-squandered-millions-overseas-projects-year-including-paying-broken-toilets-Haiti.html)

### Spain: conflict in Catalonia

Catalonia is a semi-autonomous region in north-east Spain whose history dates back almost a thousand years. The wealthy region has 7.5 million people, with their own language, parliament, flag, anthem, and police force. It also controls some of its own public services. Catalan nationalists have long complained that their region sends too much money to poorer parts of Spain, as taxes are controlled by Madrid. Last October about 90% of Catalan voters backed independence, in a turnout of 43%. Recently Spanish police arrested 9 Catalan independence activists in Barcelona. They face charges of rebellion, terrorism and possession of explosives used in bomb-making. They are associated with the Committees for the Defence of the Republic (CDR), a network of radical groups that advocates direct action to secure independence from Spain. CDR has previously blocked major roads and railway lines. Police believe the activists plan to carry out sabotage and violent attacks on the anniversary of the referendum on independence.

Pray: for the civil disobedience calls to change to calls for positive dialogue. (Leviticus 26:6a)  
More: [www.theguardian.com/world/2019/sep/23/spanish-police-arrest-catalan-separatists-on-suspicion-of-terrorism](http://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/sep/23/spanish-police-arrest-catalan-separatists-on-suspicion-of-terrorism)

## Worldwide

### Australia: children display anti-Semitism

A five-year-old boy, from a family of Holocaust survivors, suffered anti-Semitic harassment at a school in Melbourne where pupils hounded him in the school toilets, calling him a 'Jewish cockroach'. He was chased continuously to the bathroom and laughed at for being circumcised, to the point that he started to wet himself in class rather than using the toilet. His mother said that after behaving strangely for months, one morning he burst out crying over breakfast and literally fell down on the floor, saying, 'Mummy, you shouldn't love me. I'm a worthless Jewish rodent. I'm vermin'. Meanwhile a 12-year-old Jewish student was forced (<https://www.cufi.org.uk/news/australia-jewish-boy-forced-to-kiss-the-feet-of-muslim-classmate/>) to kneel and kiss the shoes of a Muslim classmate. Then nine boys beat him up. Because the incident happened outside school, education officials denied responsibility for the incident. Melbourne media also reported other acts of anti-Semitism.

Pray: for God to intervene in the anti-Semitic intimidation emerging in Melbourne. (Job 11:18)  
More: [www.cufi.org.uk/christians-against-anti-semitism/australia-5-year-old-child-called-jewish-cockroach-in-hoard-of-abuse-at-school/](http://www.cufi.org.uk/christians-against-anti-semitism/australia-5-year-old-child-called-jewish-cockroach-in-hoard-of-abuse-at-school/)

## Day of prayer for persecuted church

Join Christians around the world on Sunday 3 November, the International Day of Prayer for the Persecuted Church - a global prayer meeting for our Christian brothers and sisters who witness for Christ boldly at any cost. Voice of the Martyrs has produced a short film providing a dramatic example of the challenges of following Christ inside North Korea, the world's most restricted nation. The film will inspire all who watch it to pray for persecuted Christians around the world. It depicts the true story of Pastor Han, who was assassinated by North Korean agents in China because of his effective gospel work among North Koreans. The story is told through the eyes of one of his disciples who has followed in his mentor's footsteps by continuing to share the gospel with North Koreans, despite the danger.

Pray: for millions of churches, prayer groups, and families to use this film and other resources to inform and inspire deep concern for the persecuted church. (Isaiah 56:7)

More: [www.persecution.com/idop/?\\_source\\_code=WEBI19J2](http://www.persecution.com/idop/?_source_code=WEBI19J2)

## Benin: prayer needs

Benin is best known for its peaceful democracy, one of the most stable in Africa. However, corruption remains a significant issue. The country, once hosting main ports crucial in the slave trade, still negotiates shady deals. Poverty increases each year. This year deadly protests broke out after opposition parties were banned from participating in elections. The nation's annual Voodoo Day brings thousands of participants to the country's celebration. Voodoo, a religion approved by the government, has more than 60% devotees and contributes to significant spiritual bondages over the nation, its people and the Church. The country allows freedom to practise and propagate any religion. Pray for humility and repentance to grip the government (2 Chronicles 34:27). Because Benin has such strong connections with voodoo, it is difficult for people involved to leave it and follow Jesus. It is also difficult for Christians to grow in their faith without dealing with the spiritual bondages of voodoo. Ask God to minister deliverance and freedom (2 Corinthians 2:11).

Pray: for the Christian workers reaching remote villages with the Gospel. Pray for new converts to establish churches in their communities. (Acts 2:38-39).

More: [www.windowreporter.com/prayer-points-day?day=10](http://www.windowreporter.com/prayer-points-day?day=10)

## Protests in many countries

Ecuador's government has moved out of the capital after week-long violent anti-government protests over austerity measures and fuel price rises. The disturbances began with transport workers before spreading to students and then indigenous peoples. An 8pm to 5am curfew has been imposed around key state installations, government buildings, airports and oil refineries, which have been targets for protests. See (<https://news.sky.com/story/curfew-imposed-in-ecuador-as-indigenous-groups-lead-violent-anti-austerity-protests-11831248>) Meanwhile, Hong Kong streets have been racked by anti-government protests that began in June. Hard-core protesters have clashed with riot police and those with opposing political views, in conflicts leading to more entrenched divisions that carve right through society. See (<https://multimedia.scmp.com/infographics/news/hong-kong/article/3032146/hong-kong-protests/index.html>) Iraq's latest wave of unrest has killed 100+ and injured thousands more, calling for the downfall of a corrupt political system that has brought unemployment and poor public services. See (<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-49960677>) Extinction Rebellion activists are protesting in Berlin, Amsterdam, Sydney and London - see (<https://www.theguardian.com/world/video/2019/oct/07/extinction-rebellion-protests-launch-around-the-world-video>) Finally, Americans are protesting against Trump ending support for Kurds in Syria: see the next article.

Pray: for the injured and bereaved to be comforted and for countries to have reformed political agendas that everyone can adhere to. (Ecclesiastes 3:3b,4)

More: [www.theguardian.com/world/video/2019/oct/09/us-pulling-support-for-kurds-in-syria-will-lead-to-genocide-says-protester-video](http://www.theguardian.com/world/video/2019/oct/09/us-pulling-support-for-kurds-in-syria-will-lead-to-genocide-says-protester-video)

## Syria: praying into turmoil

After a US policy reversal, withdrawing its troops, Turkey was free to send forces into northern Syria, and they have done so - causing tens of thousands of people to flee an area controlled by the US-backed Kurdish militia who fought against IS. Turkey is bombing people who are also part of the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF). It wants a 'safe zone' along its border where it can send an unwanted 3.6 million Syrian refugees, and also aims to prevent Kurds from establishing a self-ruling Kurdish area on its doorstep. Pray that the Kurds, the Middle East's largest ethnic group without an independent country, will be allowed to settle without persecution. Pray for the safety of Syrian refugees forced to move to a 'safe zone' and the refugees fleeing current bombing. Pray for the 60,000 fighters of SDF, cut loose from America, who may be looking for alliances with Russia or Iran. Also, SDF Syrian prisons hold 10,000+ IS fighters who could now escape and find a path back to the battlefield. See also <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-49998035>

Pray: for the void that the US has left to be filled in line with God's purposes for the people. (Psalm 2:1,10,11)

More: [www.gzeromedia.com/who-wins-and-loses-from-trumps-new-syria-policy](http://www.gzeromedia.com/who-wins-and-loses-from-trumps-new-syria-policy)

## Pakistan: Christian children given Islamic names

Bishop Samson Shukardin of Hyderabad told Aid to the Church in Need that abuse was an issue for minority students at public schools. He said that Christian parents in the country are resorting to giving their children Islamic names to prevent them suffering 'abuse' at school. With Islamic names, they will not be singled out as Christians and become potential targets for discrimination in primary or secondary schools or colleges. The bishop said that even school textbooks portrayed minorities in a negative light, and they are considered as infidels. The fundamentalists believe that Islam is the only complete religion - that salvation is only found in the Qur'an as the last holy book. Therefore most minorities, particularly Christians, are persecuted, and some religious minorities are at risk of being kidnapped.

Pray: for God to convert and transform societies that persecute minority religions. (Ephesians 2:8-9)

More: [www.christiantoday.com/world/christian-parents-giving-children-islamic-names/133367.htm](http://www.christiantoday.com/world/christian-parents-giving-children-islamic-names/133367.htm)

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