

# Prayer Alert

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A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots. The spirit of the LORD shall rest on him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD. (Isaiah 11:1,2)

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

### Bishop of Dover urges unity

At her installation as bishop, Dr Rose Hudson-Wilkin asked the congregation to think what it might look like if we became a unifying body, focussing not on what separates us but on what we have in common. 'What if we recognised God's presence as we seek to ensure that the resources we have been blessed with are not for amassing personal wealth but to be shared in such a way that those in poverty are no longer in need? She added, 'If we are going to experience that oneness of purpose that Jesus prayed for, we need to be identified more with the name of Jesus. We have kept him hidden in our beautiful churches and cathedrals that people visit on our terms.' She challenged the congregation to think about how they might share the gospel in a natural way on social media, challenge policy-makers, and make decisions that will help their community.

Praise: God for sermons that prompt us to renew our walk with Jesus and shed cultural barriers. (John 10:7,9-10)

More: [www.premierchristianradio.com/News/UK/Rose-Hudson-Wilkin-urges-unity-at-installation-as-Bishop-of-Dover](http://www.premierchristianradio.com/News/UK/Rose-Hudson-Wilkin-urges-unity-at-installation-as-Bishop-of-Dover)

### Mexico: from murder to mercy

23 people died following cartel gun battles in a town near the US border. Mexico's murder rate is up 2% this year, but God's Spirit is moving. Recent evangelistic meetings in Sonora attracted 1,500+ people, 100 became Christians, and 75,000+ Spanish Bibles and Christian resources were distributed. As a leader walked to his car after an event, a man approached him saying, 'I was behind the stage drinking Heinekens, and I heard you talking at the evangelistic meeting. I spent 10 years in Pelican Bay because I killed two people. I don't know why I do bad when I want to do right.' The man sobbed and was given a comforting embrace. 'Then I led him in the plan of salvation. He gave his life to the Lord Jesus Christ. We gave him a free Bible and got him introduced to a local pastor.'

Praise: God for the fruit produced when prayer and proclamation walk hand in hand. (Mark 16:20)

More: [www.mnnonline.org/news/murderer-comes-to-christ-in-northern-mexico/](http://www.mnnonline.org/news/murderer-comes-to-christ-in-northern-mexico/)

## British Isles

### 12 days of prayer for the UK

From 1 to 12 December, Prayer Watch invites you to join thousands 'decreeing God's righteous government and governance in our land'. All those involved in this initiative believe that this is God's appointed time for us to decree that His government is established in our nation. It is not by chance that our election date is 12/12. 12 is the Biblical number of authority and divine government. 12 tribes of Israel. 12 Apostles of Jesus. The response in prayer is 12 days of 12 decrees at 12 noon to establish God's government in our nation through prayer. It is time for the British Isles to pray together like never before, as we arrive at our significant spiritual 'open door' of opportunity as a nation. For the daily decrees, click the 'More' button.

Pray: for our nation to be born again in a day? (Isaiah 66:9)

More: [www.facebook.com/Cananationbechangedinaday/](https://www.facebook.com/Cananationbechangedinaday/)

### An election prayer

Father, thank You for all you have done for us throughout this year. Even when things don't go our way, may we still rejoice in Your faithfulness and provision in our lives. We pray that You will build our government and watch over the UK. 'Unless the Lord builds the house, the builders labour in vain; unless the Lord guards the city, the watchman stays awake in vain.' (Psalm 127:1) Lord, we ask You to build our nation according to Your template and guard us from evil. Father, thank You for being our defender and ever-present help in our times of need. We ask You to protect Your children involved in election campaigning in the coming week, keeping them safe from those who would wish to harm them. 'Those who trust in the Lord are like Mount Zion, which cannot be shaken but endures for ever. As the mountains surround Jerusalem, so the Lord surrounds his people both now and for evermore.' (Psalm 125:1)

Pray: for God to watch over and surround our politicians so that they know his will as they focus on politics. (Matthew 5:9)

More: [www.eauk.org/what-we-do/prayer-centre/praying-ahead-of-the-general-election/general-election-prayer-series](http://www.eauk.org/what-we-do/prayer-centre/praying-ahead-of-the-general-election/general-election-prayer-series)

### 450 attacks in three years

There have been calls for protection of churches in Northern Ireland after figures showed almost 450 attacks in three years. For example, Saintfield Road Presbyterian Church suffered two arson attacks in July 2016, while the Sacred Heart Church in Ballyclare was attacked with paint on Easter Sunday 2019. In Belfast, both the synagogue and the Islamic centre have been damaged in the last ten years. Christian Access Research and Education (Care NI) has written to the leaders of all the political parties asking for more support to be made available for religious buildings, and urged them to set up an initiative like the Place Of Worship fund which helps protect religious buildings in England and Wales.

Pray: for places of worship to be protected so that they continue to be cherished places of peace and sanctuary. (Mark 11:17a)

More: [ausprayernet.org.au/calls-for-protection-for-northern-ireland-churches-following-450-attacks-in-3-years/](http://ausprayernet.org.au/calls-for-protection-for-northern-ireland-churches-following-450-attacks-in-3-years/)

### Reaction to the London Bridge attack

On 29 November, Usman Khan injured three and killed two people in a knife rampage. Attending a conference on prisoner rehabilitation, he suddenly threatened to blow up the building. Wearing a fake suicide vest, he was tackled by members of the public before being shot dead by police on London Bridge. Andrew Nunn, Dean of Southwark, said it is hard to come to terms with the fact that there has been another terror attack on the community. 'It felt as though time had shifted as I was faced again with people running away from the direction of the cathedral. I got into it just as a lock-down was being put in place. A visiting organist played gentle and calming music. I led prayers with all those there, seeking to reassure them without really knowing what was happening.' He added that acts of terror can never defeat acts of love. Justin Welby tweeted, 'What a privilege to live in a country where passersby are so astonishingly brave.' See <https://twitter.com/JustinWelby>

Pray: for God to watch over and comfort all the friends and relatives of the victims and everyone involved in the incident. (Psalm 23:4)

More: [www.premierchristianradio.com/News/UK/I-was-faced-again-with-people-literally-running-away-from-the-direction-of-the-Cathedral-Dean-of-Southwark-on-London-Bridge-attack](http://www.premierchristianradio.com/News/UK/I-was-faced-again-with-people-literally-running-away-from-the-direction-of-the-Cathedral-Dean-of-Southwark-on-London-Bridge-attack)

### Championing sexual purity in a pornographic age

We are living in an age of unprecedented sexual revolution. Very quickly we have moved from acceptance and toleration of LGBT lifestyles to an active promotion of LGBT ideology by government agencies, schools, corporations, and even churches. Similarly, pornography has gone from being an underground sexual fetish to being publicised and even praised by mainstream media. But it remains an unseen and under-discussed root of the sexual revolution, damaging lives and relationships and creating addicts who feel trapped and unable to break free. There are porn addicts in most churches, if not in every church, as well as in schools, workplaces, and communities. At a conference on 29 - 30 January 2020, Christian Concern plan to discuss the roots of the sexual revolution and hear from speakers who have broken free from sex addictions or helped others to break free. If you wish to attend, or for more information, click the 'More' button. See also the next article, 'Teenage morality'.

Pray: for more Christians to recognise the need to help and support people caught in an unhealthy sex trap. (Psalm 119:52)

More: [www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/championing-sexual-purity-in-a-pornographic-age-tickets-79712741957](http://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/championing-sexual-purity-in-a-pornographic-age-tickets-79712741957)

### Teenage morality

The relationships and sex education teaching in this country is lacking. The level of STDs amongst teenagers is at epidemic level, with the highest rate of infections amongst the 15-24 age group. We have the highest teenage pregnancy and abortion rates in western Europe, and a 4,500% increase in the number of children seeking gender reassignment treatment over the last few years. 80% are girls. Research published this year by YouGov states 16% of UK teenagers now identify as bisexual. In 2015 the number was 2%. Stonewall said it is great to see the increase in numbers since 2015, adding, 'There's still a lot to be done'. These statistics are the result of policies once designed to 'protect' children. Yet now, statements by the DfE and even its recently reissued FAQs show that the overriding aim is not protection, but the promotion and normalisation of LGBT behaviours and lifestyle choices.

Pray: for an end to ideological teaching agendas which reject Biblical truths and traditional morality. (Matthew 18:6)

More: [vfjuk.org.uk/news-updates/shame-2/](http://vfjuk.org.uk/news-updates/shame-2/)

## Europe

### Spain: immigrant centre attacked

On 4 December, a bomb squad in Madrid destroyed a grenade which had been thrown over the wall of a migrant centre for

children. Police said it was a training grenade containing a small amount of explosives, and no injuries were reported. The centre houses dozens of unaccompanied minors, many of them immigrants. The attack has been widely condemned by Spanish politicians and human rights campaigners, with many linking it to anti-immigrant rhetoric. During a televised election debate in November, the leader of the far-right Vox party, Santiago Abascal, accused youths at the centre of causing a spike in crime in the surrounding neighbourhood, where he lives. In the election, Vox more than doubled its seats to become the country's third most-powerful party.

Pray: that the politics of hatred and anti-immigrant sentiment will not prevail. (Proverbs 8:13)

More: [www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-50672023](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-50672023)

### The new European Commission

The mandate for the 2019-2024 European Union sees the election of new MEPs to the Parliament and a change to the whole European Commission, as Ursula von der Leyen replaces Jean Claude Juncker as president. Pray for God to direct the new members to be people of integrity as they step into positions of authority. Ms von der Leyen, who took office on 1 December, will focus on an ambitious climate agenda to make Europe the first climate-neutral continent by 2050, and will work closely with the European Parliament to strengthen democracy and create a fair social market economy in Europe. She also gave a very personal insight into her idea of Europe's path amid global challenges saying, 'We need to do it the European way'.

Pray: for the Commission members as they play their part in deciding the direction that Europe is going, both by their agenda and their decisions. (Proverbs 1:20)

More: [gallery.mailchimp.com/ffd99da83edd4244458b59317/files/6ad13eef-9b96-456a-b490-eb59e62c4928/Canopy\\_77\\_English.pdf](http://gallery.mailchimp.com/ffd99da83edd4244458b59317/files/6ad13eef-9b96-456a-b490-eb59e62c4928/Canopy_77_English.pdf)

### Ukraine: Russia 'biggest obstacle' to peace

Lithuania's foreign minister has said that Russia represents the biggest obstacle to the peace process in Ukraine, as it represents itself misleadingly as a 'neutral party' in the conflict while actively participating. Ukrainian armed forces have fought Russia-backed separatists in Ukraine since 2014 and killed over 13,000 people. Moscow denies providing weapons, training and personnel to support the separatists, but independent observers, journalists and official monitors have substantial evidence to the contrary. Lithuania, with an ethnic Ukrainian population of 44,000 people, has sent military equipment to back Kyiv's efforts in the war, and hosts 500 American soldiers to bolster NATO's eastern flank near Russia's borders.

Pray: for revised four-party talks between Ukraine, Russia, France, and Germany, to end Ukraine's conflict. (1 Chronicles 13:4)

More: [www.rferl.org/a/lithuanian-fm-calls-russia-biggest-obstacle-to-ukraine-peace-settlement/30254919.html](http://www.rferl.org/a/lithuanian-fm-calls-russia-biggest-obstacle-to-ukraine-peace-settlement/30254919.html)

## Worldwide

### Captivity and conflicts, seventy years on

In 1949 the UN agreed a Convention of the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and of the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others. Seventy years later, there are an estimated 21 million forced-labour victims worldwide. Contemporary forms of slavery include trafficking, sexual exploitation, child labour, forced marriage, and abducting children for use in armed conflict. Pray for stronger, wiser networking between governments and agencies working to eliminate slavery. Also in 1949, NATO was established as the world's most powerful defence alliance. The current 'alliance' has strained relations between America and France, who hold opposing views, Turkey disagrees with NATO'S plans for Baltic areas, the USA is criticising NATO countries for their alliance funding, and the UK's Armed Forces Christian Union's director said it is unfortunate that 'public disagreements' have marked the anniversary of an alliance created to stand for unity. See <https://www.premier.org.uk/News/World/Christians-called-to-pray-for-leaders-as-tensions-rise-at-Nato-summit>

Pray: for the 29 NATO members to strengthen their alliance, lay down rancour and agree to work in unity without animosity. (1 John 3:23)

More: [www.awarenessdays.com/awareness-days-calendar/international-day-for-the-abolition-of-slavery-2019/](http://www.awarenessdays.com/awareness-days-calendar/international-day-for-the-abolition-of-slavery-2019/)

### Global: GO 2020 outreach

Christians will soon celebrate Christmas, BUT hundreds of millions of people have not yet heard of Christ. The great revivals and mission advances throughout church history followed the pattern of prayer preceding evangelism. Now, tens of thousands of churches with hundreds of mission organisations and prayer movements are joining forces for an epic prayer and mission initiative, unlike anything the world has known, called GO 2020. The goal is to reach one billion unreached people with Christ's Good News. By May 2020, GO 2020 aims to have mobilised 100 million Christians to pray that unreached people groups, at home and abroad, will come to know the Lord, as mission agencies preach and teach. No one organisation can accomplish such a feat, but many can flow together like tributaries into one unstoppable river. To get involved, go to <https://www.go2020.world/get-involved>

Pray: for thousands of churches, ministry organisations, and intercession groups to join and mobilise others to fulfil this vision. (Mark 13:10)

More: [www.ipcprayer.org/ipc-connections/item/12455-editorial-go-2020-invitation-to-the-church.html](http://www.ipcprayer.org/ipc-connections/item/12455-editorial-go-2020-invitation-to-the-church.html)

### Global: small island states and COP25

The Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) is an intergovernmental organisation of low-lying coastal and small island countries, many of which are put at risk by climate change. As COP 25 enters its second week, AOSIS warns, 'We are mired in a planetary emergency of existential proportion. We have breached 60% of the 15 planetary tipping-points. The impacts are real and current for people living on small islands. The entire atoll of Tuvalu is at risk of flooding from sea-level rise by 2050. Even greater segments of other small island states are at risk much earlier than previously projected. Our schools, ports, hospitals, centuries-old monuments, sacred sites, and other critical infrastructure are at risk of inundation and destruction.'

Pray: for COP25 to be a definitive trigger for saving small island and low-lying coastal states. May God hold back the waters. (Psalm 37:3)

More: [www.aosis.org/2019/11/30/cop-25-must-trigger-our-decade-of-ambition/](http://www.aosis.org/2019/11/30/cop-25-must-trigger-our-decade-of-ambition/)

### **Samoa: measles crisis**

An exceptional measles epidemic in Samoa is attributed to a decision in 2018 to suspend a vaccination programme after two infants died following vaccination. UNICEF has now sent Samoa 110,500 vaccines, and the government has issued extreme measures to secure 'public safety' as the crisis worsens. No vehicle is permitted on the road unless it belongs to an exempt service from the public sector or is being used to seek medical assistance from a medical facility. All inter-island travel between Upolu and Savaii is prohibited, except to get medical assistance. Everyone must stay at home to await the vaccination units being mobilised for the MMR vaccination plan. Public sector services exempt from closure include hospitals, morgues, fire and emergency services, police, search and rescue, and security. But people continue to avoid vaccinations, even as the country is shut down under strict emergency laws, in part due to high-profile foreign interference.

Pray: for church leaders, village councils, faith-based organisations, village mayors and government representatives to be successful in persuading the public to be vaccinated. (Deuteronomy 32:29)

More: [www.newshub.co.nz/home/world/2019/12/samoa-measles-crisis-samoa-s-prime-minister-very-angry-residents-are-refusing-vaccinations.html](http://www.newshub.co.nz/home/world/2019/12/samoa-measles-crisis-samoa-s-prime-minister-very-angry-residents-are-refusing-vaccinations.html)

### **Iran: 200+ killed, hundreds arrested**

Iran's president Hassan Rouhani has called for the release of unarmed and innocent people arrested during the two weeks of protests in over 100 cities and towns after a 300% fuel price increase. The protests have now turned political as young and working-class protesters demand that religious leaders step down. Iran's leaders, blaming 'thugs' linked to the USA, Israel, and Saudi Arabia, have urged the country's judiciary to mete out harsh sentences to those involved in the demonstrations. Amnesty International reported at least 208 deaths on 2 December. Demonstrations and deaths have continued since then. Amnesty says that families of victims were threatened and warned not to speak to the media or hold funeral services. It added that the death toll is evidence that Iran's security forces went on a horrific killing spree, and urged the international community to help ensure accountability. See <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/11/amnesty-208-killed-iran-protests-191130151227593.html>

Pray: for human rights observers to be allowed to enter Iran, investigate these crimes, and hold perpetrators accountable. (Deuteronomy 16:19)

More: [www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/12/iran-rouhani-calls-release-innocent-unarmed-protesters-191204084412158.html](http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/12/iran-rouhani-calls-release-innocent-unarmed-protesters-191204084412158.html)

### **Georgia: anti-corruption activism**

When the ruling party, Georgian Dream, backtracked on a promise to transition to a fully proportional parliamentary system before the 2020 elections, thousands of citizens protested, demanding a progressive electoral reform. But such protesters face smear campaigns and accusations of bias - typical of the intimidation tactics used in such situations. This also happened recently in Brazil. Those who denounce corruption and human rights abuses are often the target of disinformation campaigns, with their reports and findings dismissed as 'fake news'. Anti-corruption activism relies strongly on trust in independent media. The use of social media and the impact of fake news is a real threat for the work of organisations like Transparency International (TI). But fake news is not always easy to detect and spreads rapidly. What can be done? In Georgia, for example, coordinated accusations against TI through anonymous Facebook posts were recently detected, labelled and debunked by another civil society group.

Pray: for fact-based reporting to topple misinformation, and for social media platforms to expose fake news, not promote it. (Psalm 45:4)

More: [www.transparency.org/news/pressrelease/georgia\\_political\\_crisis\\_dialogue\\_with\\_civil\\_society](http://www.transparency.org/news/pressrelease/georgia_political_crisis_dialogue_with_civil_society)

### **South Africa: Eritrean family denied asylum**

In July Filmon, an Eritrean victim of anti-Christian persecution, applied for political asylum via Port Elizabeth (PE). The Department of Home Affairs told him to return after a month. Despite a court order for the department to reopen its Cape Town office, people like Filmon have to make repeated trips to PE. When he finally had a hearing on 9 October, the official concluded he was a genuine victim of religious persecution - but in November his application was refused, and despite being assisted by an experienced lawyer he got a permit for only one month. His wife Sharon, a medical doctor, who fled from their Marxist-governed country ahead of her husband, was also refused asylum. Filmon has been advised to pay a bribe, as the only way to be successful, but as a matter of principle he does not wish to do this. He now has to go to PE for the fifth time, unless God intervenes.

Pray: for this grave injustice to be overturned, and for the greed of corrupt government employees to end. (Proverbs 29:4)

More: [gatewaynews.co.za/grave-injustice-as-family-from-eritrea-repeatedly-denied-asylum-in-sa/](http://gatewaynews.co.za/grave-injustice-as-family-from-eritrea-repeatedly-denied-asylum-in-sa/)

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