

# Prayer Alert

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**Your throne, O God, will last for ever and ever; a sceptre of justice will be the sceptre of your kingdom. (Psalm 45:6)**

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

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Thank you for partnering with us in praying for the nations.

Blessings,

David Fletcher and the Prayer Alert Team

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## Praise Reports

### [Former transgender drug dealer sees 'coronarevival'](#)

Nichol Collins was a transgender drug dealer for twenty years, then became a Christian after a brutal attack. As a minister for the last few years, she has prayed with people on social media to receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit. When the pandemic spread across the USA she started getting calls from people seeking spiritual help. 'People were terrified and started saying, "Hey I heard that you pray with people to receive the Holy Spirit"', Collins explained. 'I always clarify that I'm not giving it out. God is pouring out His Spirit in the last days on all flesh. I'm just a conduit to pray with people, kind of coach them through it. Explain it, make them more comfortable. This is a gift to anyone who asks according to Luke chapter 11:13.' Recently, more than 120 people have been baptised.

Praise: God for the healing and freedom that comes through His Holy Spirit. (Matthew 7:7)

More: [www1.cbn.com/cbnnews/us/2020/august/former-transgender-drug-dealer-launches-corona-revival-sees-more-than-120-people-baptized-in-holy-spirit](http://www1.cbn.com/cbnnews/us/2020/august/former-transgender-drug-dealer-launches-corona-revival-sees-more-than-120-people-baptized-in-holy-spirit)

### ['God called me'](#)

'And then, as I sat there, I knew that I was being called to come back for longer. A simple thought at one level, but more profoundly an invitation to an adventure that would, in so many ways, turn life as I knew it upside down.' Interserve partner Chris B shares his story of how a simple call from God led him on a journey of faith to be used by God in ways he would never have expected. 'In the following months, I explored and tested that invitation with others, and God was gracious enough to confirm his call in several ways. Like Peter, it has been far from plain sailing! But I have never looked back, and 16 years and three countries later I still feel incredibly privileged to be on this journey.'

Praise: God for Christian outreach. May mission partners be protected, inspired and led by the Holy Spirit. (Isaiah 26:3)

More: [interserve.org.uk/how-god-called-me-outside-my-comfort-zone/](http://interserve.org.uk/how-god-called-me-outside-my-comfort-zone/)

## British Isles

### [Police on alert for Bank Holiday protest](#)

Three thousand police will be in London over the bank holiday weekend amid fears of public disorder from Extinction Rebellion (XR) which plans a 'civilly disobedient long weekend'. XR urges its supporters to join a 'Million People March' by Black Lives Matter, calling for the defunding of the police. There will be 60 police units of 25 officers, 8 armed response teams and 46 officers with firearms intervention training. Also police will close premises holding unlicensed events and use teams to remove sound systems and barricades. XR is urging local chapters to cause 'high-impact disruption' this weekend before a nationwide 'rebellion' on 1 September. Its website states, 'Countdown to Rebellion will be creative and nonviolent, and draw attention to the greatest existential threat we face - climate and ecological emergency. People up and down the country will come together in their communities to tell the Government that, frankly, we've had enough of them putting us all at risk.' See <https://extinctionrebellion.uk/2020/08/26/dont-fear-the-messengers->

[theres-much-worse-coming-down-the-road-than-our-bank-holiday-protests-if-we-dont-sort-this-mess-out/](#)

Pray: for XR's plans for non-violent protests to be fulfilled, and for peace on the streets, protection of properties and accurate police intelligence. (Psalm 37:37)

More: [www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-8654575/Up-3-000-police-alert-Bank-Holiday-weekend-protest.html](http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-8654575/Up-3-000-police-alert-Bank-Holiday-weekend-protest.html)

### Armed forces providing training for repressive regimes

Campaigners have called on the Government to review its military collaboration and training with regimes that abuse human rights. From 2018 to 2020, the UK provided military training for 17 countries identified as 'human rights priority countries' by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO). Much of the training for Saudi Arabian forces is linked to the use of UK-made fighter jets being used in the war in Yemen, where the Saudi-led bombardment has created the worst humanitarian crisis in the world. There has also been training for regimes with poor human rights records but not on the FCO list. Many of these armies have appalling human rights records and are linked to brutal oppression as well as international aggression. By training and collaborating with despots, dictatorships, and human rights abusers, the UK risks making itself complicit in the abuses that are being inflicted.

Pray: for informed government scrutiny into military training provided to regimes that abuse human rights. (Galatians 6:4)

More: [www.ekklesia.co.uk/node/29909](http://www.ekklesia.co.uk/node/29909)

### Children's mental health in lockdown

Some children may be feeling excited about the easing of some of the lockdown restrictions. But it is also normal for children and young people to feel anxious about it. During lockdown they have spent long periods of time at home and are living with uncertainty about the coming weeks and months. Moving out of lockdown might be worrying, and some may find it difficult to adjust. Before the pandemic some were already suffering bullying, cyber bullying, school challenges, or relationship challenges. Coming out of lockdown for these more vulnerable children may cause them to fear meeting up with others at school. They may need some time to adjust to the new situation. Also some parents will be struggling to decide whether their child should go back to school at the moment. Pray that they will feel comfortable in deciding what is right for the entire family.

Pray: for children returning to school, feeling worried or overwhelmed to easily adjust; and also for teachers as they help pupils to process new rules and systems. (Psalm 103:6)

More: [youngminds.org.uk/find-help/for-parents/supporting-your-child-during-the-coronavirus-pandemic/](http://youngminds.org.uk/find-help/for-parents/supporting-your-child-during-the-coronavirus-pandemic/)

### Survey reveals higher stress levels

A report by the Child Poverty Action Group stated a 'significant deterioration' in living conditions for low-income families caused by the coronavirus. 80% of the 285 families surveyed (those with children eligible for free school meals) are in a worse position, and 48% had a debt problem that was new or worse than before. In all, 83% found the pandemic has affected their ability to pay for food, with 76% struggling to pay for utilities. The report tells of problems with how benefits have been distributed - not covering basic living costs, delays and inconsistencies in delivery, and a lack of knowledge about where to get advice or support. Half of the families reported physical or mental health problems caused by money worries. The group recommends a £10 a week increased child benefit, the extension of free school meals to all receiving universal credit or working tax credit, and abolition of the benefit cap to those whose employment is disrupted by the crisis.

Pray: for the Government to do all that it can to protect families and children by applying the report's recommendations. (Psalm 112:5)

More: [www.churchtimes.co.uk/articles/2020/28-august/news/uk/poor-families-hit-hardest-by-coronavirus-charity-warns](http://www.churchtimes.co.uk/articles/2020/28-august/news/uk/poor-families-hit-hardest-by-coronavirus-charity-warns)

### Assisted suicide legal within four years?

Conservative MP Andrew Mitchell, the former international development secretary, has said his mind has changed on assisted dying and he now supports making it legal. He said he supports 'very, very tight reform', to allow people to end their own life when they are told they have six months to live. This would be for people mentally capable of making the decision. Also, he thinks many more MPs support the idea than ever before, and that the House of Commons will be mostly in favour of it before this parliament is up. Care Not Killing said, 'It comes down to the sanctity of life and the belief that it is important to offer care and support to people rather than trying to end their lives. And I think that is a good view, not just for Christian MPs but actually for all MPs to bear in mind.'

Pray: for euthanasia to remain illegal, and for more research into alleviating pain and stress experienced by those suffering terminal illness. (Psalm 109:31)

More: [premierchristian.news/en/news/article/conservative-mp-reckons-assisted-suicide-will-be-legal-in-uk-within-4-years](http://premierchristian.news/en/news/article/conservative-mp-reckons-assisted-suicide-will-be-legal-in-uk-within-4-years)

### 'I became alcoholic during lockdown'

Before lockdown Chris enjoyed nights out with friends and going to football. Alcohol played a part in his life but was no problem. 'I was in a good place before lockdown, I was keeping fit, swimming five days a week, doing well at work and in a good mind-set.' His daughter moved out during lockdown, leaving him living on his own - isolated, anxious, uncertain about the future and growing increasingly depressed. Within weeks Chris went from being someone who enjoyed a drink to someone who needed a drink, and began experiencing withdrawal symptoms. 'I wanted to cut down and stop, but I wasn't in control, that was frightening.' But with help and encouragement of his family and a rehabilitation service he's been sober for over 70 days, determined to lay his demons to rest. Rehab agencies report a 500% increase in calls since lockdown.

Pray: for councils, churches, organisations and social services to provide help and support for families and individuals caught in lockdown alcoholism. (Psalm 10:14)

More: [www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-53807908](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-53807908)

### Flu vaccine complacency warning

Complacency over the flu jab risks overwhelming the NHS as data reveals the scale of the challenge in expanding the vaccination

programme. Last month, the Government announced plans to double the number of people who receive the jab even though the take-up rate among people in vulnerable groups eligible to have it for free has declined. The UK has an ambition to vaccinate 55% of people in vulnerable groups, such as those with multiple sclerosis, diabetes, or chronic asthma. WHO has previously said countries should vaccinate 75% of people in 'vulnerable' categories. Getting the flu vaccine is vital now more than ever with the possible co-mingling of Covid and flu.

Pray: for the take-up rate for immunisation to increase this year. (Psalm 18:36)

More: [www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-53889184](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-53889184)

## Europe

### Belarus: election protests update

Two senior figures in Belarus's protest movement were given ten-day jail terms at the notorious Okrestino detention centre for organising demonstrations. Olga Kovalkova and Sergei Dylevsky are high-profile members of the National Coordination Council, set up to organise a rerun of the election. Meanwhile teachers gathered outside the education ministry to protest against Mr Lukashenko's threat to sack teachers who fail to back the government. He promised to crack down on his opponents as daily demonstrations swelled into unprecedented, mass protests in Minsk. In her latest video statement from neighbouring Lithuania, opposition leader Ms Tikhanovskaya told the European Parliament that protesters were being 'illegally detained, imprisoned and beaten', emphasising the 'democratic revolution' was neither pro- nor anti-Russian, nor pro- or anti-European. In Lithuania 50,000 people expressed solidarity with Belarusians by forming a human chain from Lithuania's capital Vilnius to Medininkai on the border with Belarus.

Pray: for Belarusians to negotiate a peaceful transition that paves the way for a re-run of the election. (Proverbs 29:6,7)

More: [www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-53900806](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-53900806)

### Germany scraps plans for Brexit talks

The German government, which holds the rotating presidency of the EU council, had intended to discuss Brexit during a meeting of EU ambassadors on 2 September, but has now decided to drop the Brexit issue because there has not been 'any tangible progress' in talks. EU officials now believe the UK government is prepared to risk a no-deal exit when the transition period comes to an end, and will try to pin the blame on Brussels if talks fail. A diplomat said, 'Brussels laments a completely wasted summer as there is a lack of tangible Brexit progress.'

Pray: for Boris Johnson, our chief negotiator Mr Frost, and the UK negotiating team to perceive God's path forward for the United Kingdom. (Isaiah 30:21)

More: [www.theguardian.com/politics/2020/aug/26/germany-scraps-plans-for-brexit-talks-at-eu-ambassadors-summit](http://www.theguardian.com/politics/2020/aug/26/germany-scraps-plans-for-brexit-talks-at-eu-ambassadors-summit)

## Worldwide

### USA: Hurricane Laura

Powerful Hurricane Laura battered the Louisiana and Texas coastline, bringing unsurvivable storm surges up to 20 feet in Louisiana and Texas with 150 mph winds. Parts of Lake Charles will be underwater that no-one has seen before. 100,000 residents are at risk of flooding. Pray for the search and rescue operations as they swing into action. The storm is complicating evacuations in the midst of a pandemic, as officials send evacuees to hotel rooms. Pray for all evacuees now in fear for the future. Some first responders in Louisiana stood outside the sheriff's office for a moment of prayer before the hurricane made landfall. Over 270,000 homes in Texas and Louisiana are without power. Pray for hospitals and the vulnerable who need electric machines to survive. People refusing to evacuate were told, 'Write your name, address, social security number and next of kin and put it in a Ziploc bag in your pocket. Pray that it does not come to this.'

Pray: for co-ordinated aid to reach all who need it in the coming days and weeks. (Psalm 35:2)

More: [edition.cnn.com/2020/08/27/weather/laura-gulf-coast-weather-forecast-thursday/index.html](http://edition.cnn.com/2020/08/27/weather/laura-gulf-coast-weather-forecast-thursday/index.html)

### USA: disorder after police shoot unarmed black man

Wisconsin's governor called in the National Guard to help quell unrest after police shot unarmed Jacob Blake in the back seven times at close range. The incident was videoed and went viral on the internet sparking nationwide demonstrations and the postponement of major sporting events as players protested against the shooting. Trump's administration made its sympathies clear: 'We will always stand with the men and women who serve on the thin blue line of law enforcement.' Meanwhile Rev Al Sharpton and his National Action Network are leading a march on Washington to demand action on police brutality. He said, 'That policeman's life was never under threat, and yet he shot multiple times. That's why we're marching.' Some say, 'Riots are not saving Black lives, they're destroying lives, businesses and the social fabric of cities.' Others reply, 'There needs to be unrest in the streets as long as there's unrest in our lives'. See <https://eu.detroitnews.com/story/opinion/2020/08/25/opinion-americans-want-peace-not-portland-riots-perverse-leadership/5632753002/>

Pray: for ethical policing reforms and unity to overthrow division so that communities can be built up and the public feel safe. (John 16:33b)

More: [www.washingtonpost.com/nation/2020/08/23/kenosha-police-shooting-video-wisconsin/](http://www.washingtonpost.com/nation/2020/08/23/kenosha-police-shooting-video-wisconsin/)

### USA: how should Christians respond to racial unrest?

Dr Martin Luther King Jr said we must live together as brothers or perish together as fools. His niece Dr Alveda King said, 'We're fighting over trying to reconcile separate races when we are only one race - the human race.' Bishop Harry Jackson said, 'We're seeing a readiness to respond to race across racial boundaries. But what's missing is in Galatians 3:26; we say there's neither Jew nor Greek, there's neither bond nor free. These distinctions can be solved by coming together in Christ.' We can pray for Christians to lead the way with answers to the ills of society. We have the Bible and the Holy Spirit to guide us. The church must find answers and right any wrongs that exist and then boldly become part of the national discussion on race relations in America. Bishop Williams added, 'When

someone needs blood, they don't ask if it was black blood, white blood or Jewish blood; they need blood.'

Pray: for people to learn to treat each other with dignity and respect, so that we see ourselves as one human race. (Galatians 3:26)  
More: [www.charismanews.com/us/82372-charisma-panel-how-should-spirit-filled-community-respond-to-racial-unrest-in-america](http://www.charismanews.com/us/82372-charisma-panel-how-should-spirit-filled-community-respond-to-racial-unrest-in-america)

#### **Uzbekistan: restrictions remain in new law**

The draft religion law now in parliament would, in defiance of human rights, continue to ban all exercise of freedom of religion without state permission, banning teaching about religion without state permission, continuation of compulsory censorship of all religious materials and to ban sharing of faith. 'There's not much difference between the draft law and the current one', commented human rights defender Bahodiyr Eliboyev. Although the draft reduces the number of adult citizens required to apply for a community to be allowed to exist from 100 to 50, it would retain the registration process and most of the restrictions. 'The state must not be afraid of giving full religious freedoms,' insists Abduvohid Yakubov, an independent rights defender from Tashkent who is also critical of the draft law.

Pray: for unlawful limitations on religious freedoms to be removed from the new law. (Job 34:17a)  
More: [www.forum18.org/archive.php?article\\_id=2596](http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2596)

#### **Mexico: Protestants risk losing essential services**

Two Protestant families who were forced to sign an illegal agreement to renounce their right to hold religious services in order to have their access to essential services reinstated have now been told they risk being cut off again if they cannot pay the remainder of a fine that was levied as part of the agreement. In 2019 they refused to sign a similar document renouncing their faith when other Protestants in the village signed it. Their refusal to do so caused their access to water, drainage, government benefit programmes and the community mill cut off for over a year until they signed it. They were also threatened with forced displacement by community leaders unless they contributed to local Roman Catholic festivals and participated in other activities which conflicted with their religious beliefs.

Pray: for Mexican laws giving freedom of religion or belief to be respected. (Proverbs 21:15)  
More: [www.csw.org.uk/2020/08/27/press/4777/article.htm](http://www.csw.org.uk/2020/08/27/press/4777/article.htm)

#### **China: 'brave new world'**

The Chinese government is obtaining blood samples from up to 70 million – 10% of all men and boys – as the high-tech surveillance state builds a 'DNA Skynet' of the country's 700 million males. Any individual who refuses to give blood samples risks his family being barred from benefits such as travel, fast internet connection and hospital treatment. The powerful genetic mapping tool, which is being compiled from samples collected since 2017, will join up with China's existing countrywide video-surveillance network. The system will be capable of tracking every male relative of any individual man just from a sample of his genetic material, such as skin or hair. Only 5-10% of the male population needs to be sampled in order to build a complete genetic map, because one sample unlocks the identity of all related males.

Pray: for God's Spirit to give Chinese Christians strength. May they show Christ's character in their lives, thus bringing peace, love, joy and harmony to their society. (Galatians 5:22)  
More: [barnabasfund.org/resources/magazine/bfaidsep\\_oct20.pdf](http://barnabasfund.org/resources/magazine/bfaidsep_oct20.pdf)

#### **Iraq: assassinations in Basra**

Dozens of activists have been killed in Iraq in recent years. In under a week, two have been assassinated and three narrowly survived murder attempts, as tensions between pro-Iran groups and a Western-leaning government claim new victims. Riham, an athletics coach who was deeply involved in anti-government protests, was shot dead in Basra on 26 August; five days earlier activist Tahsin died after being shot two dozen times. The targeted killings sent shivers down spines in Iraq's civil society, already deeply disturbed by the killing in Baghdad of Al-Hashemi, a government adviser and widely respected historian. 'The government and security forces have done nothing,' said Ammar Al-Hilfi, a prominent Basra activist. In July a senior Iraqi official said the government suspected 'possible assassinations' as a reaction to a policy of extending state control.

Pray: for Basra's civil society network to be secure and the government strengthened to contain the militias. (Isaiah 40:29)  
More: [www.arabnews.com/node/1722756/middle-east](http://www.arabnews.com/node/1722756/middle-east)

#### **USA: California fires update**

Firefighters battling historic blazes in Northern California made progress towards getting the massive fires under control after temperatures cooled in the region. Lightning strikes, many of which sparked the fires, have decreased, and fire officials said they have had successes battling three blazes burning around the San Francisco Bay area as they prepare for a 'marathon' in the coming weeks to suppress the rest of the wildfires.

Pray: for the stable weather to continue and fires to be completely stifled. (Psalm 147:8)  
More: [eu.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2020/08/25/california-wildfires-dry-lightning-tuesday-gavin-newsom/5629290002/](https://eu.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2020/08/25/california-wildfires-dry-lightning-tuesday-gavin-newsom/5629290002/)

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