

Prayer Alert

ISSUE 38-2020 | Friday 18 September 2020
www.prayer-alert.net | editor@prayer-alert.net

You, God, see the trouble of the afflicted; You consider their grief and take it in hand. The victims commit themselves to You; You are the helper of the fatherless. (Psalm 10:14)

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 click the 'Donations' button above to make a contribution.

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

Blessings,

David Fletcher and the Prayer Alert Team

Praise Reports

[17,000 turn to Christ after watching film](#)
[National prayer landmark granted planning permission](#)

British Isles

[Politics post-Brexit](#)
[Reducing pollution by speed limits](#)
[Stop virus surge, protect Christmas](#)
[Covid marshals controversy](#)
[Asylum-seeker 'too tired to carry on'](#)
[Rationing Covid testing](#)
[Parents seek judicial review over sex education curriculum](#)

Europe

[Belarus: growing tensions at Ukraine border over Jewish pilgrims](#)
[France: return of Yellow Vests](#)

Worldwide

[World: G20 must combat coronavirus corruption](#)
[Haiti: teachers on strike](#)
[Peru: Christianity, corruption, economy, pandemic](#)
[USA: BLM unsavoury spirituality](#)
[USA: Hurricane Sally](#)
[India: persecution continues](#)
[Kenya: bracing for locusts' return](#)

Praise Reports

[17,000 turn to Christ after watching film](#)

More than 1.8 million people tuned into Greg Laurie's new outreach film *A Rush of Hope* during the Labour Day weekend (4-7 September). It broke all attendance records in Harvest Crusades' thirty-year history as it aired on dozens of online streaming and on-demand channels and over 600 radio stations. It will also air on TV in major markets across the US and on cable networks; then it will be released to streaming platforms and on DVD in November. In a year of unending bad news the Harvest team heard from over 17,000 people who came to faith after they watched the film. Harvest's founder said the film is a reminder that God is greater than a pandemic or any other challenge we are facing. He can do above and beyond anything we can dream, and He is still transforming lives. Watch the film's trailer [here: https://harvest.org/a-rush-of-hope/#](https://harvest.org/a-rush-of-hope/#)

Praise: God for the film's message of hope and changed lives. (Ephesians 5:1)

More: www1.cbn.com/cbnnews/2020/september/a-rush-of-hope-more-17-000-people-make-professions-of-faith-after-watching-greg-lauries-cinematic-crusade

[National prayer landmark granted planning permission](#)

In 2016 Prayer Alert asked intercessors to pray for the success of an enormous wall, to be built with each brick representing an answered prayer. The local council approved the plan, which this week was ratified by the Secretary of State. Building will commence in spring 2021, with the hope of completion in autumn 2022. The Coleshill site is expected to attract 300,000 visitors each year. Each answered prayer gives hope to those who visit. Standing at 169 feet, the landmark will also host a visitor centre, cafe, bookstore, and a 24-hour on-site chaplaincy service.

Praise: God for this thought-provoking work of art that encourages reflection alongside recreation. (Psalm 9:1)

More: www.eternalwall.org.uk/testimony

British Isles

[Politics post-Brexit](#)

The political agenda has been dominated by the Internal Markets Bill with reading debates and two Commons committee stage days this week. There are two more scheduled for next week amid a gathering storm over the bill in the Lords. Part 5 of the bill gives ministers powers to modify the rules on moving goods from Northern Ireland to Britain, and rules relating to state aid, that would come into force if the UK and EU are unable to reach an alternative agreement. At this critical time, MPs are seeking assurances that the UK will not betray its treaty obligations. Please pray that all debates on Monday 21 September around amendments and the bill's handling of Northern Ireland issues will be led by God's Spirit, and for Heaven to usher the result through the committee stage the following day.

Pray: for trade, fisheries, food exports, the environment, finance and labour laws to encounter no further stumbling blocks or cause broken relationships between nations. (Amos 5:24)

More: news.sky.com/story/brexit-peers-warned-not-to-block-internal-market-bill-as-uk-branded-despot-like-north-korea-12072780

Reducing pollution by speed limits

The UK is not meeting its current targets on limiting air pollution. Therefore, pollutants from traffic fumes, factories and industrial sites put vulnerable people at risk. Highways England is preparing to introduce reduced speed limits on four locations by the end of September. The speed limit will be reduced to 60mph for a trial period to improve roadside air quality in areas which are identified as having high levels of nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) from car engines. Each location is up to 4.5 miles long and the new speed limit reductions will be operational 24 hours a day. The reduced speed limits will be assessed after a year to see if they are having an impact. Asthma UK says co-ordinated measures are required at a local, national and European level to improve air quality; it believes not enough has been done. See <https://www.asthma.org.uk/support-us/campaigns/our-policy-work/air-pollution-affects-asthma/#:~:text=The UK is currently failing,people with asthma at risk>.

Pray: for the Government to develop a new clean air act, increase pedestrianisation in pollution hot spots and subsidise the cost of electric vehicles. (1 Timothy 2:1-3)

More: news.sky.com/story/motorway-speed-limit-to-be-slashed-to-60mph-in-these-four-areas-12069957

Stop virus surge, protect Christmas

Boris Johnson has warned actions to stop a second surge of coronavirus must be 'tough now' in order to 'protect' Christmas. His words came as stricter new measures are announced for areas where cases are on the rise. The PM said people have to be 'both confident and cautious' and that it is 'crucial' the country does not re-enter 'some great lockdown again that stops business from functioning'. He told the Sun newspaper that the Government wants to protect Christmas: 'We want everyone to have a fantastic Christmas. But the only way to make sure the country is able to enjoy Christmas is to be tough now. He wants us to grip it now and stop surges. The communities secretary said on 17 September, 'Over the course of the day a full briefing will be made available to everybody including the councils and business community'. Earlier in the week many were sceptical of new measures: see next article.

Pray: for the air we breathe to be uncontaminated. (Job 12:10)

More: premierchristian.news/en/news/article/stop-virus-surge-to-protect-christmas-warns-pm-as-more-restrictions-expected

Covid marshals controversy

The Government wants stronger enforcement of pandemic rules and proposed a register of environmental health officers to support councils and marshals to enforce social distancing, group gatherings and wearing masks. But a lack of detail has been criticised by councils who say rules have caused confusion. Hospitality venues' records of contact details must be held for 21 days. Venues not following Covid-secure guidelines will be fined. Local authorities will be supported to use existing powers to close venues while police break up and fine large groups. Employers have a legal duty to ensure health, safety and welfare of employees. Marshals will help employers to meet their legal duties and the ongoing management of keeping the workplace Covid-secure (<https://teamsafetyservices.com/product/covid-19-marshall/>). The Government's reaction to medical advice and its attempt to stop a second wave brings the problem of people understanding and hearing.

Pray: for sensitive situations to be wisely evaluated by marshals and for the public to understand and honour government guidelines. (Nehemiah 9:29)

More: www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-54162189

Asylum-seeker 'too tired to carry on'

'The boat is our only chance for a new life in a safe country', said Kamal, an Iranian Christian convert who has been in Calais for 10 days with his wife Niki and their baby daughter Sava. 'I am too tired to carry on. If they try to stop us I will drown myself'. Over 4,600 people have crossed the Dover Strait on small boats so far this year, with increased surveillance and coronavirus travel restrictions having effectively closed the more popular method of hiding in vehicles. With inflamed UK rhetoric, the UK's immigration minister is discussing 'new, comprehensive action plans' to stem channel crossings. Priti Patel plans to use warships to intercept migrant vessels, but a MoD official said it's 'completely potty, inappropriate and disproportionate'. Kamal has lost everything since leaving Iran three years ago. They were incarcerated with 300 others after seeking refuge in Slovenia, where their savings were lost to the mafia.

Pray: for wise compassionate action to be organised for asylum-seekers, and for authorities to discern the difference between them and 'economic migrants'. (Psalm 103:4)

More: www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/migrant-channel-crossings-navy-asylum-refugee-jump-overboard-a9666146.html

Rationing Covid testing

Rationing plans for coronavirus tests in England will prioritise NHS patients, staff, care homes and key workers - especially teachers - as the Government grapples with a surge in demand. The tiered system for booking tests would follow a similar pattern to testing at the beginning of the pandemic, with NHS patients with respiratory conditions at the top of the list and healthcare staff and those who work in education also prioritised. The new strategy will be published in the week beginning 21 September, detailing efforts for more laboratory capacity, faster testing results, and the prioritisation list for testing. There is concern that making it more difficult to book a test could ultimately hinder efforts to contain the virus. Strict enforcement could quickly become unnecessary if more laboratory capacity were opened. Boris Johnson conceded that there was not enough testing capacity and that many are 'deeply frustrated'.

Pray: for testing to be available for everyone who needs it and for contact tracing systems to work smoothly so that the virus spread is halted. (Psalm 107:20)

More: www.theguardian.com/world/2020/sep/16/teachers-to-top-englands-covid-test-list-as-rationing-returns

Parents seek judicial review over sex education curriculum

Christian, Jewish, Muslim and other faith group parents have commenced a judicial review into the new relationships and sex education curriculum. The judicial review, launched by Let Kids Be Kids Coalition, will challenge the education secretary's decision to prevent parents from withdrawing their children from relationships lessons that came into effect on 1 September. The mandatory curriculum includes transgender and LGBTQ topics. While schools are required to consult parents on the lessons content, parents do not have any right of veto. Parents voiced concern that books on sexual orientation and gender dysphoria, like 'King and King', 'And Tango Makes Three' and 'My Princess Boy' are becoming normalised in primary schools and relationships education had become 'sex education by a different name'. They do not want children exposed to ideologies that do not reflect the family's religious convictions and are crowdfunding to cover the legal costs of their challenge.

Pray: for the success of this legal challenge, so that attending classes is optional. (Proverbs 22:6)

More:

www.christiantoday.com/article/parents.seek.judicial.review.over.controversial.relationships.and.sex.education.classes/135566.htm

Europe

Belarus: growing tensions at Ukraine border over Jewish pilgrims

Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year, runs from 18 to 20 September. Hasidic Jews travel to Ukraine every Jewish New Year in their tens of thousands to worship at Rabbi Nahman's tomb. But Ukraine is keen to avoid a spike in coronavirus infections, and Kyiv has closed its borders to foreigners until late September. However, Ukraine has accused Belarus of encouraging more Jewish pilgrims to go to their shared border, as 2,000 (including children) are camped out at the border of the two countries, where charities and pilgrims are running out of food and medical supplies. 'We are stuck here with no money, no roof, no food or drink', said Haim Weitshandler. He urged the Israeli government to resolve what he called a 'humanitarian catastrophe'. Ukraine said that Belarus was 'exacerbating tensions' by claiming that the pilgrims will be able to cross the border.

Pray: for Ukraine and Israel to successfully urge Belarus to open its border to release pilgrims from the neutral territory they are currently stranded in. (Psalm 25:15)

More: www.euronews.com/2020/09/15/hundreds-of-hasidic-jews-blocked-at-ukraine-border-plea-for-help

France: return of Yellow Vests

After pausing for the coronavirus lockdown and summer holidays, the Yellow Vests brought their anger back to the streets for a series of protests in Paris and a number of other French cities. Their last major protest was on 14 March, on the eve of local elections. This was just three days before the country went into lockdown for Covid-19. The protests were in defiance of a ban from President Macron over mass gatherings. It is almost two years since the first Yellow Vest protest on 17 November 2018. Their numbers at first soared and then ebbed. The question now is whether they will rise again like a phoenix from the ashes as social dissension grows over Covid restrictions. People fear another outbreak of violence on the Champs-Élysées, where all gatherings have been banned.

Pray: for the minister of the interior, Gérald Darmanin, to maintain order and be able to guarantee both security and the right to demonstrate peacefully. (Job 11:18)

More: www.france24.com/en/20200912-the-return-of-the-yellow-vests-provide-a-challenge-to-france-s-new-government

Worldwide

World: G20 must combat coronavirus corruption

Six months ago Covid-19 was declared a pandemic and has turned the world upside down. Besides the devastating human toll there is the disturbing reality of rising authoritarianism and misuse of relief funds. The growing corruption related to Covid-19 spending calls for global, multilateral solutions. The G20 is one of the few international forums that has the potential to shape and implement policy to fight this crisis. While they promised US\$21 billion to fight Covid in June, they have stayed silent on how they will ensure that the funds reach those who need them the most. Last week was the first time the G20 anti-corruption group met in seven months. Also the pandemic has exposed vulnerabilities in public contracting systems around the world and shown how unprepared governments are to buy safely during emergencies. South Africa is one of the worst offenders: [see https://www.transparency.org/en/blog/in-south-africa-covid-19-has-exposed-greed-and-spurred-long-needed-action-against-corruption](https://www.transparency.org/en/blog/in-south-africa-covid-19-has-exposed-greed-and-spurred-long-needed-action-against-corruption)

Pray: for the G20 to ensure that the relief funds reach their intended beneficiaries without falling into the hands of criminals and the corrupt. (Psalm 14:3,6)

More: rightsandwrongs.co.uk/quick-links/110-politics/36370-the-week-in-corruption

Haiti: teachers on strike

Teachers in Haiti have refused to return to classrooms, even taking to the streets to protest a lack of pay and safe working conditions. This was already a problem and the pandemic made it worse. Haiti runs in cycles. Their government gets money. Sometimes it does it out and sometimes it doesn't. When it doesn't, police work for months without payment. Teachers can work for the entire school year without payment. Theft has become an expected part of the culture. Haiti with Love has been sharing the Gospel with parents who bring in their children for burn treatment. People are very open to listening when they realise that the reason people are helping their babies is the love of Christ. They ask, 'Who is this Christ who provides all of this help? Tell me about him.' Pray for the Burn Clinic, and also for Pilgrim House which provides homes for homeless people.

Pray: for the financial, health and spiritual needs of Haiti's people to be provided for, and for all Haitians to see the healing and hope of the risen Christ. (Psalm 14:5b,6)

More: www.mnnonline.org/news/185595/

Peru: Christianity, corruption, economy, pandemic

Perú's parliament will impeach President Vizcarra for blocking an investigation into mis-use of public funds. He swept into power with an anti-corruption agenda. He denies 'moral incapacity', despite audio recordings of him misusing funds. They have provoked a public outcry in pandemic-stricken Perú which now has the highest Covid death rate per capita in the world. Perú's economy is also struggling to recover from the three-month shutdown of the mining sector due to coronavirus. Pray for lawmakers to ensure corruption is replaced with honest reliable leadership. Pray for wise business transactions and a speedy economic recovery for commerce and industry that has seen quarterly GDP plummet by over 40%. Pray for successful strategies to halt the spread of coronavirus. Meanwhile missionaries are working to reach the thousands of Chinese migrants now settling in Peru: pray for believers from their ministry ([see https://www.cmalliance.org/field/peru](https://www.cmalliance.org/field/peru)).

Pray: for the 203 churches, 154 Christian groups and 53 ordained ministers to be led by God's Spirit to bring righteous life and healing into every corner of the land. (Isaiah 60:1)

More: us12.campaign-archive.com/

USA: BLM unsavoury spirituality

Black Lives Matter organiser Melina Abdullah called out the names of blacks killed by police and summoned the spirits of the dead by pouring out a drink offering on the pavement at a Los Angeles June march. 'Our power comes not only from the people here but from the spirits that we cannot see', said Abdullah, as reported by the Los Angeles Times. 'When we say their name, we invoke their presence.' In the 1960s, the leaders of Civil Rights movements were Christians. Today's BLM leaders are completely different. Pray for the US church to weigh its response to racism and police brutality while filtering a movement whose values are diametrically opposed to the Bible's. It blends African and indigenous cultures' spiritual practices, and beliefs, ancestor worship; chanting rituals, dancing, and summoning deities. This unsavoury underpinning has caused a parallel movement called One Race to be birthed, welcoming all races and based on prayer, praise, preaching, and education.

Pray: for Christian values of righteousness and justice for all people increase in the BLM ideology and for dangerous values to decrease. Pray for freedom and justice for all. (Job 37:23)

More: godreports.com/2020/09/the-unsavory-spirituality-of-black-lives-matters-leadership/

USA: Hurricane Sally

Hundreds of people near the Florida-Alabama border were being rescued from floodwaters brought on by Hurricane Sally on 16 September. Authorities fear many more could be in danger in the coming days. 'We had four months of rain in four hours', said the Pensacola fire department. Sally has weakened since making landfall as a Category 2 hurricane, but the devastation was visible across Southern states by nightfall. Sally continues to slowly move northwest causing torrential rain over eastern Alabama and western Georgia. Pensacola and parts of Florida and Alabama are submerged, with rivers approaching dangerous levels. Numerous counties are under curfews to keep residents safe. A commissioner in Florida said they are still in evacuation and lifesaving recovery missions, as historic and catastrophic flooding threatens more communities. There could be thousands of evacuations. Pray for the families and businesses in areas looking like war zones.

Pray: for God to strengthen emergency rescuers, to bring a spirit of hope and peace to damaged communities, and comfort all who are grieving. (Psalm 9:18)

More: edition.cnn.com/2020/09/16/weather/hurricane-sally-wednesday/index.html

India: persecution continues

Year after year, Uttar Pradesh is identified as the state where most Christian Indians are persecuted. 86 of the 366 violent attacks on Christians recorded in 2019 took place in Uttar Pradesh, and 2020 has seen little improvement. While the pandemic probably reduced the rate of persecution, recent reports indicate the number of attacks on Christians is increasing as India emerges from lockdown. 'I would have been killed if God hadn't been with me,' Pastor Alok Tomar recently told International Christian Concern. 'I was worried that I would not survive as the torture was so intense. Different ones took turns as I was beaten with lashes from the police belt.' Pastor Tomar was telephoned and told to report to the police station immediately. 'I felt safe because I was going to the police station.' He was accused of forced religious conversions and kept in custody and tortured for three days by the police. It was another four days before he was given bail.

Pray: for God to pour His Spirit into Pastor Tomar and all who are living by faith in India. (Psalm 5:11)

More: www.persecution.org/2020/09/15/attacks-christians-continue-indias-persecuted-state/

Kenya: bracing for locusts' return

Kenya's locust problem hasn't gone away. In fact, Kenyans could see a third generation of the insects destroy vegetation across the country. This is the worst locust outbreak for the region in 70 years. Locusts have already caused a great deal of destruction in Kenya and surrounding countries this year. Favourable weather conditions could contribute to a return of the swarm. The last one found a route through the Rift Valley, the breadbasket of Kenya. They devastated everything that was green as they moved; they also left eggs to hatch later.

Pray: for Kenya to learn sustainable farming techniques so that even when locusts come, people will still have food to eat. (Joel 2:25)

More: www.mnnonline.org/news/kenya-braces-for-the-return-of-the-locust-swarms/

Please feel free to distribute Prayer Alert to anyone you feel will benefit from its ministry. All we ask is that you do not edit or change it in any way or charge for its use without contacting us first for written permission

Prayer Alert is produced in partnership with

The World Prayer Centre, Cornerstone House, 5 Ethel Street, Birmingham, B2 4BG, England.

The views expressed in Prayer Alert and on our website are those of the authors, organisations and websites named, and are not necessarily those of the Prayer Alert Editorial Team, the Prayer Alert Steering Group or the World Prayer Centre or any of its employees or trustees. While we try to ensure that the information we provide is correct, mistakes do occur and we cannot guarantee the accuracy of our material. If you do notice any mistakes then please let us know.