

Prayer Alert

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He rules for ever by His power; His eyes watch the nations. Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or discouraged; the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go. (Psalm 66:7a, Joshua 1:9)

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

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'At this time of uncertainty and rebellion in many countries because of the Covid crisis and the restrictions imposed by our governments, it is good to remember that we as intercessors must seek God for discernment. The wide range of information and interpretations that we get from mainstream media or other sources can only help us to a limited extent in our intercession. First and foremost, we get discernment from the heart of God - from the tree of life, and not by seeking to eat the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Genesis 2:9). God's Word brings life, correction, healing and restoration, which we all need (Revelation 22:2; Psalm 36:9). Hearing God's voice at this time is more important than any other information. We encourage you to take your time - wait for God and listen. His presence changes us and He has the words we need to intercede.'

Praise: God for His Words of life that direct our prayers by His Spirit (John 6:68)

More: www.waechterruf.de/gebetsbriefe/gebetsbriefe/briefe/

[2,500 Bibles go to tribe that once killed missionaries](#)

A remote Papua tribe has received 2,500 Bibles 55 years after two missionaries trying to reach them with the Gospel were killed. Some Yali tribespeople walked an entire day to reach the Oakbisik airstrip in the mountains of Papua, Indonesia, to receive the shipment of Bibles in their own language from Mission Aviation Fellowship (MAF). Now, instead of waiting for war, the Yali church has been waiting for more Bibles in their language. Yali tribes no longer walk the path of darkness. Their path is lit by the Word of God.

Praise: God for anthropologists, researchers, translators, missionaries and church planters who obediently follow God's call to take his word to unreached people. (Matthew 24:14)

More: www.christiantoday.com/article/2500.bibles.sent.to.remote.tribe.that.once.killed.missionaries/135657.htm

British Isles

[Disease developing and dispersing](#)

A ban on households meeting indoors was part of further restrictions announced on 1st October for the north of England. Many universities are reporting coronavirus cases and thousands of students are self-isolating, having lectures delivered online with few face to face tutorials. Students are struggling to get food supplies, others are questioning why they were told to leave home when most teaching is being done remotely. On 27 September University Hospitals Birmingham reported 1,001 deaths [since 14 March](#) (<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-birmingham-54323193>) It was the first hospital trust to record 1,000 Covid-19 deaths, saying the toll is the 'terrible reality' of the virus. Pray that God will use His people to bring hope to the thousands caught in anxiety over a fresh coronavirus wave. May His peace rest on those in fear because not knowing what tomorrow will bring, and His presence and hope for the future into lives tormented with a sense of not being in control.

Pray: for God to replace apprehension and fear with trust in Jesus and revival across the UK. (Romans 15:13)
More: www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-54371073

Government deal with faith communities recommended

A document entitled Levelling Up Our Communities, written by Christian MP Danny Kruger at the request of Boris Johnson, outlines how the UK can build on the goodwill and togetherness established as a result of the pandemic, with thousands of people volunteering to help those in isolation. Among his recommendations are a bank holiday called Neighbour Day and a national database of volunteers for use in future emergencies. He also writes, 'The Government should invite the country's faith leaders to make an offer of help in exchange for a reciprocal commitment from the state.' Faith communities will mobilise their congregations and commit their resources to tackling social problems of debt, children in care, prisoner rehabilitation, rough sleeping, or something else. Boris Johnson said the document was 'comprehensive and highly ambitious, containing many exciting ideas'. The department for culture and sport would now consider the proposals.

Pray: for God to deepen faith roots and inspire government bodies as communities support the vulnerable and preach the Good News. (Psalm 40:10)

More: premierchristian.news/en/news/article/boris-johnson-welcomes-report-which-calls-for-new-deal-between-government-and-faith-communities

Church leader: lockdown creates 'fear and isolation'

Evangelical theologian Dr Ian Paul warns that a second lockdown could create more problems than it solves. He and 800 church leaders have signed an open letter pleading with the UK governments not to close churches again. He said lockdown was having a huge effect on people, because it was creating fear and isolation: the people who suffer disproportionately are those living on their own, the poor, and those without the luxury of large places to live in or gardens to visit. He also suggested it was misguided of the Government to plan its response around any notions of 'beating' coronavirus, saying, 'One of the things the virus has done is confront us with our own mortality.' He added, 'The spiritual dimension of life is really important. The Christian Church has a message of hope to offer the world.'

Pray: for Boris Johnson and the first ministers of Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland to recognise that restrictions cause loneliness, anxiety, and damage to mental health. (Proverbs 1:5)

More: www.christiantoday.com/article/second.lockdown.will.create.fear.and.isolation.says.church.leader/135648.htm

Church: 'expand free school meals'

The Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of Durham have asked the Government to expand free school meals over school holidays as more families face hardship due to the pandemic. They said free school meals should be available to all children in families on universal credit and that the scheme should cover holidays. They also want funding to help schools that are supporting poorer families through services like breakfast clubs. They said, 'All schools must have the appropriate resources to be able to address issues of child hunger and poverty and expand their role as places of security for children who are at risk, whilst maintaining safety at school. Outdoor play, exercise and access to nature are vital to healthy learning. Helping schools ensure outside activities continue will aid mental as well as physical health.'

Pray: for funding to be available to recruit, train and oversee volunteers to run extra services for vulnerable families. and for their actions to bear fruit. (2 Thessalonians 3:13)

More: www.christiantoday.com/article/extend.free.school.meals.to.prevent.harrowing.christmas.for.families.says.archbishop/135669.htm

Disabled children's home 'at risk of death'

A home in Newcastle for twenty disabled children aged between six and eleven was closed after Ofsted inspectors visited in September. Issues at the home included staff not knowing the 'complex' health needs of children. The inspectors' report said there was serious risk of harm and loss of life because of the way the home was run. Children and young people were not safe when a fire was caused by a build-up of dirt in an oven. One child suffered 'actual harm' when a risk assessment was not observed, and a vulnerable child left alone together with one with challenging behaviour without adequate supervision. Not all staff were trained to administer emergency medication, which could have resulted in loss of life. High staff turnover meant they were unfamiliar with individuals' needs. Pray that residents can adapt easily to different routines, surroundings, and staff at their new homes.

Pray: for detailed risk assessments, safe medication administration, helpful activities and outings and peaceful ambience to be in the new homes that residents move into. (Philippians 2:4)

More: www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-tyne-54354255

UK to send refugees to Moldova, Morocco, Papua New Guinea?

Documents seen by the Guardian newspaper suggest the Government has been working on detailed proposals to build asylum detention camps on two south Atlantic islands, and also in Moldova, Morocco, and Papua New Guinea. These proposals might go further than Australia's hard-line system, based on migrants 'being intercepted outside Australian waters', allowing Australia to claim no immigration obligations to them. The Financial Times reported that the home secretary has asked officials to consider processing asylum seekers at Ascension and St Helena. Home Office sources distanced Priti Patel from the proposals, and Downing Street has also played down the story.

Pray: for the Foreign Office and Downing Street to be wise and compassionate when they study possible detention facility options. (Exodus 23:9)

More: www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2020/sep/30/revealed-no-10-explores-sending-asylum-seekers-to-moldova-morocco-and-papua-new-guinea

Coronavirus scams

A BBC investigation found criminals setting up fake businesses on an industrial scale and successfully applying for government-backed

Covid-19 emergency loans, with no intention of paying the money back. Builder Mark Telling had his details stolen to set up a bogus company which 'borrowed' £50,000 from the scheme. Mark, who had no idea the company had been set up in his name, was horrified when the BBC told him what had happened. Victims like him could find themselves liable for the debt and have their credit rating badly affected. Also the public has been warned to be on their guard against scammers taking advantage of the current coronavirus situation to extort money, or gain access to homes. Online shopping scams are the most widely reported method: [see https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/coronavirus-covid-19-consumer-advice-about-scams](https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/coronavirus-covid-19-consumer-advice-about-scams)

Pray: for people to be more wary of offers too good to be true, or being asked for personal details, or money being requested. (Ephesians 5:15)

More: www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-54326730

Europe

Brexit negotiations

Commenting on the latest week of negotiations, one UK source said, 'Obviously we are ready to up the pace but people are getting over-excited - there still is a long way to go and fish remains very tricky.' On 29 September Downing Street played down the idea that a deal was imminent despite hopes that an end to talks was in sight. EU access to British fishing waters has not been solved, there remains much to be done and many do not expect a breakthrough before the mid-October summit of EU leaders. Government ministers have agreed to give Parliament a say before ever using the powers they would be granted by the Internal Market Bill. However, the latest news is that the EU has begun legal proceedings against the UK because of some controversial clauses in this bill, which could result in a court case at the European Court of Justice.

Pray: for God to guide all those concerned in the Brexit process, so that agreement can be reached without resorting to a court case. (Matthew 17: 20)

More: www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-54341534

Spain: Madrid's sharp virus spread leads to new anti-outbreak plan

A second coronavirus wave is expanding fast, and Madrid is the worst-affected place in Spain and indeed in Europe. A row has erupted over a lockdown there. The regional government did not vote in favour of the restrictions, and questioned the legality of stricter curbs on personal movement and social gatherings. Political disputes have angered many Spaniards. Health officials from Spain's central government and the Madrid region agreed on a set of health metrics that dictate standardised restrictions in cities with a population of 100,000 or more. There are uncontrolled virus clusters in the Spanish capital. Spain has seen more than 748,000 infections and has a confirmed virus death toll of over 31,400. However, experts say all numbers understate the true toll of the pandemic due to limited testing and other factors.

Pray: for Prime Minister Sánchez to put people's lives before the regional economy. (Luke 12:15)

More: www.independent.co.uk/news/sharp-virus-spread-madrid-leads-new-antioutbreak-plan-madrid-suburbs-ap-europe-movement-b716178.html

Worldwide

Iran: Christian convert - propaganda charge

Ebrahim's ordeal began in 2013 when he was sentenced to one year in prison and two years of internal exile in the remote town of Sarbaz for 'propaganda against the regime by establishing and organising Christian gatherings' and 'having contacts with anti-revolutionary networks outside Iran'. He expected to be released in 2015, but instead he was retried and sentenced to an additional five years in prison for 'acting against national security'. On 27 September, he had to answer a further charge of 'propaganda against the state', carrying a prison sentence of three to twelve months. Thankfully, the next day the case closed for lack of evidence. Iranian Christians are thankful that the prosecutor did not press charges, but request prayer that Ebrahim will know the Lord's peace during this time of increased pressure from the authorities, even while continuing to serve the internal exile sentence.

Pray: for Iranian authorities to stop harassing and persecuting Christian converts in violation of their human rights. (Amos 5:24)

More: meconcern.org/2020/09/29/iran-christian-convert-faces-propaganda-charge/

Yemen: victims 'screaming in pain, but no one is hearing'

'There are no heroes in Yemen, just criminals and victims', said a human rights investigator. The victims are millions of ordinary Yemenis caught in a protracted proxy war that brought Yemen to its knees and turned it into the world's biggest humanitarian disaster. The lack of easy access to the country for journalists and international monitors means many Yemenis feel, as one doctor put it, that 'we are screaming in pain, but no one is hearing'. Recently a Sky investigation team travelled hundreds of miles through armed checkpoints and rough terrain to gather testimonies from the victims, witnesses and survivors. Families in Taiz, Yemen's third-largest municipality and once a cultural epicentre, have experienced some of the fiercest fighting during the six-year civil war between pro-government troops backed by a Saudi-led coalition (supported by the USA and the UK) and Houthi rebels, supported by Iran. Both sides are guilty of grave human rights abuses: [see https://news.sky.com/story/yemen-houthi-rebels-shelled-prison-killing-six-women-and-baby-in-possible-war-crime-12084377](https://news.sky.com/story/yemen-houthi-rebels-shelled-prison-killing-six-women-and-baby-in-possible-war-crime-12084377)

Pray: for human rights groups to secure justice for the tens of thousands of suffering civilians who have no escape, and for an end to actions that are breaking international laws. (Ecclesiastes 3:17)

More: news.sky.com/story/victims-of-yemens-proxy-war-are-screaming-in-pain-but-no-one-is-hearing-12084079

Nigeria: 'Sometimes there are days without any help'

Imagine what life is like when it is unsafe to live in your own home, or you can't guarantee you and your children will have food each day? That's the awful reality for many Christian women in northern and central Nigeria - on top of the grief and trauma brought about by violent conflict and killings. Tirham, a volunteer at an Open Doors trauma centre in Nigeria, says, 'Sometimes there are days without any help

from anyone for them to be fed.' She was speaking about the impact of Covid-19 on daily life for many Christian women living in the shadow of violence. We are asked to pray that every Christian family affected by violence in Nigeria will be provided with food, shelter and safety, and that violent militant attacks will cease. Pray for continued strength, protection, and encouragement for Open Doors partners like Tirham, who come alongside those affected by persecution.

Pray: for God to bring peace where there is war, health where there is pandemic, and comfort for the bereaved. (Psalm 86:3)

More: elink.clickdimensions.com/m/1/20433554/p1-b20275-48b31e1ea3e943ea965518bde6957c41/8/377/52073507-e24d-4219-aeaa-a527ad26a7b4

Asia: missionaries' prayer needs

Due to their work being sensitive names of places and people are omitted in this prayer request, but God knows who you mean when you pray. D was in NWB for five months before safely returning to the UK with his family. They are all currently in quarantine and then will enter further training. Please pray for God to prepare a community for them to return to in the mission field. Pray for God to protect their business and the team that they left behind and for visa options to open up for those wishing to join the team. Pray also for God's guidance as they work out their fundraising plans and for open doors to be revealed so that their ministry grows. Please pray for protection for non-Covid patients and staff, and for enough income to keep going; Ask for wisdom for R, who is unsure when to return to the UK for home assignment, and for any visas that have been delayed by closures in immigration due to Covid.

Pray: for God to fill his people with boldness to pursue fresh ideas at work. (Ephesians 2:10)

More: interserve.org.uk/about-us/

Armenia/Azerbaijan: South Caucasus war?

The long-simmering conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan over the Nagorno-Karabakh region erupted on 27 September, with over 100 confirmed deaths already in the fiercest fighting in years. Many are asking, 'Will it escalate into an all-out war that threatens regional stability and drags in major outside players?' <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-54356336> For years, mainly Christian Armenia and Muslim-majority Azerbaijan have been at odds over the rugged Nagorno-Karabakh highlands. Between 1988 and 1994 the two sides fought a bloody war to control the enclave, which was part of Azerbaijan but mainly populated by ethnic Armenian Christians. The conflict resulted in over 30,000 dead, a million displaced, and a fragile truce that left Nagorno-Karabakh as a de facto independent state, recognised by Armenia but not by most other countries, including Azerbaijan. The recent violence sparked an uproar in Azerbaijan. Thousands took to the streets calling for the army to 'recapture' Nagorno-Karabakh.

Pray: for God to inspire the Armenian Christians to step back from the martial law that both sides have declared. Let peace talks replace talk of war. (Matthew 5:9)

More: us12.campaign-archive.com/?e=2b376728db&u=7404e6dc8018f49c82e941d&id=e8d841e668

South China Sea: US actions alarm China

Patches on US uniforms made for military exercises off California's coast showed an MQ-9 Reaper drone superimposed over a red silhouette of China. Throughout September the US has staged simulated island assault exercises featuring this red silhouette in what China described as a provocative gesture, saying China would fight back if the US attacked them in the South China Sea. US-based Air Force magazine reported that the military training suggested the air force was focusing more on the Pacific region. The drills deployed the Navy's carrier strike groups, submarines and other vessels and aircraft to the eastern Pacific, plus transport aircraft and special warfare and marine corps personnel. The squadron commander said, 'It's a demonstration of our capability to rapidly move the MQ-9 anywhere in the world and then get out, showing its operational reach capabilities.'

Pray: for wise actions and cooling words that will prevent escalating hostilities. (Romans 12:18)

More: www.scmp.com/news/china/military/article/3103464/does-us-military-uniform-suggest-it-preparing-war-china

USA: Trump's tax

A New York Times investigation of Donald Trump's taxes show chronic losses and years of tax avoidance. He paid \$750 in federal income taxes the year he won the presidency, and the same amount in his first year in the White House. He paid no income taxes at all in ten years - because he reported losing more money than he made (see <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2020/sep/27/new-york-times-publishes-donald-trumps-tax-returns-election>) Trump's hair styling for television was claimed as \$70,000 expenses, and \$95,464 was the total sum that nine of Trump's companies have paid to style his wife's hair. Also \$210,000 was written off as expenses to hire a photographer to take photographs at the Mar-a-Lago club. These are just a few of the expenses claimed. In total he paid no taxes in 11 of the 18 years the paper examined. A judge has ruled that his son, Eric Trump, must testify in the tax probe: see <https://www.youtube.com/watch>

Pray: for repercussions of the tax reports to be honestly and honourably proved to be either 'fake' or 'fact', and for the nation to wisely make its choice on 3 November. (Luke 8:17)

More: www.theguardian.com/us-news/2020/sep/28/hairstyling-donald-trump-taxes-numbers-us-president-finances

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