

Prayer Alert

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This then is how you should pray: 'Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread.' (Matthew 6:9-13)

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

You may like to explore our new online [Prayer Alert Prayer Wall](#) where we can add our own prayers and praise, interactively. We trust that you will find this helpful and encouraging, as we pray from our homes during lockdown.

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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

[Philippines: IJM success](#)

Praise God for the rescue of three teenage girls from online child sexual exploitation in the Philippines. They are receiving trauma-informed care from the city social welfare department. Also, a group of 13 women and men were struggling to rebuild life in freedom after being rescued. An NGO bought new bicycles for them and helped them set up small businesses delivering milk and cloth in their community - where they now earn steady incomes. Pray for more creative ways to support survivors long-term. Praise God that there have been over 100 convictions by government prosecutors for cases of online exploitation of children.

Praise: God for the commitment of law enforcement partners and prosecutors persisting in their work despite quarantine measures and COVID-19 health risks. (Psalm 107:28)

More: mailchi.mp/b52262f8006b/ijm-prayer-update-pray-for-6-children-now-free-664000

[Christian couple released unexpectedly](#)

A married Christian couple, detained for being 'apostates and evangelists spreading Christianity' in Muslim-majority Somaliland, have been suddenly released and deported to Somalia, allowing them to subsequently travel with their youngest child to a safe country and be reunited with their two elder sons. The couple were arrested by police on 21 September when Christian material was found at their home. They made several appearances in the Somaliland regional court. Then European representatives raised the case with the ministry of religious affairs and the couple were unexpectedly released and ordered to be deported on 1 November.

Praise: God that the ministry reminded the Sharia court that individuals have the right to freedom of belief under Somaliland's constitution. (Colossians 1:13)

More: news.barnabasfund.org/Christian-couple-released-and-deported-from-Somaliland/

British Isles

[Brussels trade deal next week?](#)

Britain's chief Brexit negotiator Lord Frost told Boris Johnson to expect a Brussels trade deal around 24 November. However, talks could still collapse over fishing and red tape, with both sides urging the other to 'get real'. A diplomatic source said, 'You can expect some strong words from leaders that the EU will be operating in a no-deal scenario within days and the Commission has been tasked to activate contingency planning'. (see <https://www.express.co.uk/news/politics/1361509/Brexit-news-UK-EU-no-deal-latest-trade-talks-update-Michel-Barnier-David-Frost>) There is a sense of desperation to get a deal sorted. Robin Walker, junior minister for Northern Ireland, told Parliament, 'There remain important outstanding issues to be resolved' The justice minister has urged that a Brexit deal be agreed, warning of a potential 'organised

crime bonanza'. There are huge uncertainties for justice agencies with just weeks to go until the end of the transition period. It is not just the future security partnership that affects policing and justice in Northern Ireland, it is also the economic decisions that are made.

Pray: for tempers to cool, and for tariff terms and border issues to be agreed according to God's agenda. (Proverbs 10:19)

More: www.thesun.co.uk/news/13209662/brexit-news-latest-deadline-deal-kpmg-economy-eu-uk-live/

Over 75% of NHS midwives say staffing levels unsafe

A survey by the Royal College of Midwives revealed midwifery services are at breaking point in a profession where staff are working in fear. Over three-quarters of midwives think staffing levels in their NHS trust or board are unsafe. 42% reported shifts were understaffed and a third said there were 'very significant gaps' in most shifts. Midwives have been pushed to the edge by the failure of successive governments to invest in maternity services. Maternity staff are exhausted and demoralised; some are looking for the door. For the safety of every pregnant woman and every baby, this cannot be allowed to continue. Pray for this survey to be drawn to the attention of politicians. May there be enough investment in the NHS to provide safe, high-quality care in all branches of medicine. Pray for an end to the exodus of trained professionals whose morale is at rock bottom.

Pray: for the Government to end underfunding and underinvestment in midwifery. (Philippians 4:19)

More: www.theguardian.com/society/2020/nov/11/+6/more-than-75-percent-nhs-midwives-think-staffing-levels-unsafe-says-rcm

Covid-19 vaccines: Pfizer, Moderna, and now Oxford

The UK has ordered five million doses of vaccine from the US company Moderna and 40 million of the Pfizer jab. Moderna said its vaccine may be 94.5% effective against the virus, while Pfizer suggested theirs had an efficacy of 90%. Both vaccines use the same technology which gives the vaccinated person's body the genetic instructions for their own cells to produce the antigens and generate an immune response. The trials are ongoing and final numbers could change. Moderna vaccine is much easier to distribute than the Pfizer jab which must be kept at -100C to maintain optimal efficacy causing concerns around the storage. The Moderna vaccine lasts 30 days in household fridges, 12 hours at room temperature and remains stable at -20C (equal to most freezers) for six months. The choice has been complicated by an announcement on 19 November that the vaccine being developed by Oxford University could be ready for use by Christmas. See <https://www.mirror.co.uk/science/oxford-coronavirus-vaccine-how-work-23034242>

Pray: for the Government and agencies to secure the most appropriate vaccine, and for the training of healthcare workers that will administer the vaccine. (Proverbs 16:24)

More: news.sky.com/story/covid-19-vaccines-how-do-the-moderna-and-pfizer-coronavirus-jab-candidates-compared-12134062

Isolated young adults with special needs

Parents have spoken of the 'unbearable torture' of being separated from their disabled children and young adults living in care facilities. Tens of thousands of special needs children have been unable to touch or hug their parents and siblings since March. Many have severe disabilities which mean they are unable to speak. They cannot communicate properly through Zoom calls, only through eye contact and touch. But this is now impossible. Distraught parents, banned from seeing their children for months due to care home visiting rules, have pleaded with ministers to allow reunions before Christmas amid fears that thousands of vulnerable youngsters are suffering long-term harm. The youngsters are the hidden victims of what seems a callous policy that campaigners say is killing through loneliness. The Daily Mail is highlighting their plight in a Christmas campaign for all care residents to be allowed proper visits.

Pray: for God to fill MPs with compassion for young adults with special needs and implement regular testing of visitors, allowing them to have meaningful in-person visits. (Matthew 5:6-8)

More: www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-8951639/Heartbroken-parents-vulnerable-young-people-care-beg-reunited-Christmas.html

Seeds of prayer: hope for the countryside

Hidden by other news, the Agriculture Bill 2020 (bit.ly/agbill20) has been bouncing between the Commons and the Lords for several months, but has now been finalised and received royal assent. The good news is that Lord Curry's amendment, the setting up of a trade and agriculture commission, has been included. Its purpose is to protect the UK's higher standards of environmental protection, animal welfare, and food quality in farming and food production against imports produced to lower standards. Thank the Lord for godly intervention and pray for our Government and for those who work in our food industry (1 Timothy 2:1-4). The new legislation will bring substantial change in how farming and food production are supported; pray for our farmers as they adapt (Isaiah 28:24-29). Sadly, some rural chaplains report that recent months have seen an increase in levels of stress and suicides, especially amongst younger farmers.

Pray: for the work of chaplains and all those ministering to farming communities and families. (2 Timothy 3:17)

More: www.worldprayer.org.uk/Handlers/Download.ashx?IDMF=2a67a31b-ecc0-4a47-8e88-a861638c014a

UK military to get biggest spending boost in 30 years

The armed forces are protecting people in a broader range of areas than ever, including coronavirus testing. The UK military will receive £4bn a year over the next four years to fund space and cyber defence projects such as an artificial intelligence agency. This could create 40,000 new jobs. Defence secretary Ben Wallace said 'The extra spending is on top of the government's manifesto to increase the budget. When I looked across at the armed forces today I saw them with equipment that was out-of-date, I saw our adversaries across the world having better equipment, the ability to attack us and harm us getting wider and wider from our capabilities. When that happens, you need to modernise your forces. Sometimes you must let go of some older capabilities and that takes money in order to create the headroom to invest.'

Pray: for this increase in defence spending to be the beginning of a government review which could then release resources for other underfunded government departments. (Psalm 23:4)

More: www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-54988870

Christian sacked for defending marriage

West End star Seyi Omooba is appealing against key decisions in her court case at an employment tribunal in London. She was removed from a lead role in a musical production and dropped by her agents after another actor dug up an old Facebook post where Seyi quoted the Bible and said she believed in real marriage between a man and a woman. The judges decided not to hear expert evidence from a theatre critic and theologian, and then made decisions which that evidence directly contradicted. The appeal was to be heard during the first lockdown, but an online hearing was refused, delaying the case to 2021, even though many other cases have been conducted online. The delay makes it harder for her to be vindicated.

Pray: for Seyi and others like her to be able to continue a promising career while expressing their Christian beliefs in public. (Isaiah 61:8)

More: us2.campaign-archive.com/?u=bed173cc9adfcad1e0e442a35&id=2e358721c6&e=354f1ab5aa

Properly resourced minister for families needed

In the House of Lords on 18 November, Lord Farmer called on the Government to prioritise the strengthening of families through policy. To do so, a properly resourced, cabinet-level minister for families, supported by funding and civil servants, is needed to take the lead. This idea is supported by peers and MPs who are part of the 'Strengthening Families' coalition, which CARE supports.

Pray: for Lord Farmer's comments to be acted on so that the Government delivers policies better to support and strengthen families (Acts 2:39)

More: care.org.uk/news/2020/11/time-for-a-properly-resourced-cabinet-level-minister-for-families

Europe

Spain: strategy to combat online disinformation

Spain's government has a new strategy to tackle the spread of online disinformation. The procedure was approved last month and a special government commission should combat the issue. Madrid said the ongoing coronavirus pandemic is accompanied by an 'unprecedented infodemic'. Spanish authorities will monitor the internet for disinformation campaigns, investigate their origin, and implement a 'policy response' if necessary. This response may take the form of a diplomatic warning if a foreign state is behind such a campaign. The Madrid press association has accepted the government's wish to combat disinformation, but have noted a 'clear risk' that the government will act 'as a censor rather than a guarantor of the truth'.

Pray: for media organisations in Spain and across the nations to establish and implement strategies to combat false rumours being intentionally spread. (Romans 14:16)

More: www.euronews.com/2020/11/18/spain-divides-opinion-with-strategy-to-combat-online-disinformation

EU faces challenge to Covid budget

In Brussels a high-stakes disagreement has emerged with a jackpot worth the total value of the EU budget until 2027 plus its €750bn Coronavirus Recovery fund. 24 member states and a majority in the EU Parliament are in opposition to Hungary, Poland, and Slovenia over the division of EU funds between member states being linked to the behaviour and the values of individual governments. The EU wants to pass a law that if a member state pursues policies that the EU feels are in conflict with its core values, it will lose access to the funds. Poland and Hungary emerged as democracies from communist dictatorship and both have gone on to elect right-wing nationalist governments, heavily dependent on EU funds. Political opposition and economic reliance has introduced a strain of toxicity into their Brussels relations.

Pray: for the EU to refrain from using financial means to punish countries that oppose a new rule of law. (Romans 14:19)

More: www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-54985621

Worldwide

Central America: 'in the hands of God'

Category 4 Hurricane Iota began devastating Nicaragua on 16 November. It is the strongest storm on record to reach Nicaragua 'We are in the hands of God. If I have to climb up trees, I'll do it', said a farmer in Guatemala. 'We don't have food, but we are going to wait here for the hurricane that we're asking God to stop from coming.' It came. Swollen rivers burst their banks, roofs flipped onto the streets and electricity poles have been downed. In Honduras the mayor of Wampusirpi said, 'We are flooded everywhere, we need food and water. We lost crops when hurricane Eta struck two weeks ago.' Pray for the residents of Central America which is still partly flooded, farms destroyed and debris from Eta everywhere. The wind tore the roof off a makeshift hospital. Patients were evacuated, including intensive care and two women giving birth during the first rainstorm.

Pray: for the 40,000 Nicaraguans and 80,000 Hondurans evacuated from their homes, and for the rebuilding of the 98% of Colombia's infrastructure which has been destroyed. (Psalm 107:20)

More: www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/11/17/in-the-hands-of-god-hurricane-iota-pummels-central-america

USA: Biden transition - spy world is feeling uneasy

A series of sackings and appointments - with rumours of more to come - has created a sense of deep uncertainty around the US intelligence and national security community. Some believe this is part of an attempt by Trump to hold on to power; many others see it driven by a desire for personal revenge. But there remain fears that the uncertainty of a divisive transition could hold real dangers. The sacking of a number of top civilian leaders at the Pentagon, including the secretary of defence, was, many believe, just the start. Trump wants to achieve specific policy goals during his final days, like removing troops from Afghanistan. America's national security is accused of being in a 'deep state' of conspiring against him. In recent months, he has declassified information which he wrongly thinks supports his case. The head of cybersecurity is in trouble because he proved vote rigging was false.

Pray: for America's national security systems to remain secure, free of meddling by Trump appointing 'moles' to continue to play a role after 20 January when Joe Biden is inaugurated. (John 15:16)

More: www.bbc.co.uk/news/technology-54965344

Ethiopia: conflict spreads to Eritrea

A rocket attack by Tigray forces on Eritrea marks a major escalation of violence as thousands of Ethiopian refugees continue to pour into Sudan. The UN refugee agency says that over 20,000 people have crossed into Sudan from Ethiopia's northern region, where federal government troops are battling forces loyal to the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF), the party of the regional government. The conflict, which has spilled over Ethiopia's borders, threatens to destabilise the wider Horn of Africa region. The latest two-week war has killed hundreds of people. Ethiopia and Eritrea agreed in 2018 to end decades of hostilities, resulting in Ethiopian prime minister Abiy Ahmed winning the 2019 Nobel Peace Prize. However, there is still a deep-seated animosity between Eritrea and the battle-hardened TPLF over the border conflict.

Pray: for the wellbeing and safety of Ethiopian refugees who left everything behind as they fled the massacre in Tigray. Pray for a stable and lasting ceasefire. (Psalm 91:4)

More: www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/11/15/thousands-cross-into-sudan-to-escape-ethiopia-violence

USA: Florida child sex trafficking investigation

There have been 'Save the Children' demonstrations to protest against child sex trafficking and paedophilia at home and abroad. After a two-year investigation into a Florida sex trafficking network, over 170 people have been charged. This has been part of a two-year investigation uncovering a sex-trafficking network in Florida, leading to an 'unprecedented' number of arrests. Among those netted were a local candidate for office, a teacher, and a former chairman of the fundraising arm of Florida State University athletics.

Pray: for federal authorities, NGO's and police as they continue to probe into commercial trafficking of teenage girls and ways of enhancing the quality of life for the vulnerable population. (Mark 9:42)

More: www.christianpost.com/news/over-170-arrested-in-2-year-long-sex-trafficking-investigation.html

Colombia: hidden church in huts, mountains, coffee plantations

For many Christians, times, location and form vary greatly as they seek to worship God safely. On Sunday morning in a village in Colombia Gabriel, an indigenous Christian wakes up to prepare a service which he will lead later that day. Shortly afterwards, he leaves his house and goes to a deserted place, in the middle of the forest, hidden from everyone. In his village, being a Christian results in persecution. Christians do everything to keep the peace by participating in local activities, meetings, and traditional rituals. The latter is an obligation that Christians must fulfil, otherwise they are arrested, questioned, punished and detained until they renounce their faith. They want to stop engaging in traditional rituals that go against Christianity, but it is not easy. They gather in hidden places to pray, sing, and study the Bible.

Pray: for the faithful Christians meeting in houses, huts, the mountains, coffee plantations, farms, forests and wherever they can safely seek God. (Matthew 5:10)

More: www.opendoorsuk.org/news/latest-news/hidden-church-colombia/

UAE: two summits as Bahrain and Israel meet

The kings of Jordan and Bahrain flew to Abu Dhabi for an important meeting with crown prince Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, as Bahrain's foreign minister Abdullatif al-Zayani was in Israel meeting his Israeli and American counterparts. These important and unprecedented meetings illustrate the tectonic changes emerging in the Middle East. The tone was different in Jerusalem and Abu Dhabi. A Gulf Air flight which arrived in Tel Aviv, with Zayani and US envoy Avi Berkowitz on board, was the first of its kind; very likely Gulf Air will soon join Flydubai and Etihad, which have announced regular flights to Israel. Meetings about peace and the brave new world illustrates how Israel and the Gulf States are moving toward. This area improvement has been midwived by the USA.

Pray: for the Biden administration's new secretary of state to continue the work of Mike Pompeo to bring peace to the region. (James 3:17-18)

More: www.jpost.com/arab-israeli-conflict/two-summits-arab-kings-gather-in-uae-as-bahrain-israel-meet-analysis-649531

Armenia hands over liberated territory to Azerbaijan

Armenia has begun handing over liberated territory to Azerbaijan as part of a peace accord that ended six weeks of fierce fighting over the Nagorno-Karabakh region. Residents of Azerbaijan's Kalbajar district have been occupied by Armenian forces for decades. Now they begin a mass exodus of the mountainous province in the days leading up to the official withdrawal day at the end of November. Some set their homes on fire rather than leave them for Azerbaijanis. A Russian peacekeeping contingent has set up checkpoints and positions as part of the terms that Armenia yields territory which Azerbaijan's forces gained in the fighting. Putin told his Azerbaijani counterpart to take care of churches, monasteries and shrines in areas that Azerbaijan gets under this cease-fire agreement. Moscow's peacekeeping mission, which the military said included soldiers who previously were stationed in Syria, comprises some 2,000 troops for a renewable five-year mission.

Pray: for fighting to finish once. and for all and for the homeless to be compassionately cared for. (Proverbs 14:31)

More: www.dailysabah.com/politics/armenia-hands-over-liberated-territory-to-azerbaijan-as-part-of-karabakh-peace-deal/news

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