

Prayer Alert

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You provide a broad path for my feet, so that my ankles do not give way. (Psalm 18:36)

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.

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

[Christian actress talks about Jesus](#)
[Honouring Christ at the Olympics](#)

British Isles

[Afghan citizens' resettlement scheme](#)
[Afghan turmoil repercussions](#)
[Plymouth shooting](#)
[Landline phones replaced by mobiles](#)
[Children: sugary foods](#)
[Don't ignore cancer signs](#)
[PCR testing 'rip-off'](#)

Europe

[France: new wildfires - thousands evacuated](#)
[Spain: Europe's vegetable garden - poverty and plastic](#)
[Malta: not tackling climate change](#)

Worldwide

[Afghanistan: lamenting loss of freedoms](#)
[Haiti: days after the earthquake](#)
[USA: devastating wildfires](#)
[Japan: can the Paralympics bring lasting change?](#)
[Peru: pandemic's secondary impact on children](#)
[Mozambique: persecuted man chose Christ](#)
[Iran's Kabul embassy 'operational' despite Taliban](#)

Praise Reports

[Christian actress talks about Jesus](#)

The Christian actress Letitia Wright speaks out about Jesus in public and has turned down big roles because of her ethics. She starred in Doctor Who, Black Panther and Black Mirror. She took part in a devotional series with the YouVersion Bible app and posted about her faith on Instagram. In an interview ahead of the new drama I am Danielle on Channel 4, she told how her faith sustains her in her career: 'The world is so fickle and there's not much that you can really put your hope in to make you feel whole. Even now I'm going through a new transformative stage with understanding who I am, but with God you can really get through these situations. It's been beautiful to have my faith in Jesus, which is worth more than anything.'

Praise: God for Letitia's openness and honesty about her faith in the public arena. (Proverbs 3:5-6)

More: premierchristian.news/en/news/article/letitia-wright-i-ve-had-people-tell-me-you-should-stop-talking-about-jesus

[Honouring Christ at the Olympics](#)

For Christians there were many precious moments at the Olympics that were little reported by mainstream media. Olympians from across the nations were committed Christians and quick to publicly give glory to the King of Kings. When the Fiji rugby team won a gold medal, they formed a circle in the centre of the field and burst forth in a rendition of a gospel hymn; 'We have overcome by the blood of the lamb in the Word of the Lord, we have overcome'. Also, British swimmer Daniel Jervis, who came fifth in the men's 1500m freestyle, was quick to praise God: 'The thing I'm most proud of in my life is that I'm a Christian, and obviously God was with me tonight, and I'm just really grateful to be representing Him'.

Praise: God for the many Christian testimonies that were broadcast to millions and the prayers mobilised across the world. (Philippians 4:13)

More: prophecytoday.uk/comment/church-issues/item/2292-tokyo-triumphs.html

British Isles

[Afghan citizens' resettlement scheme](#)

Women, girls and minorities considered most at risk in Afghanistan will be prioritised in the proposed resettling of 20,000 refugees (5,000 this year) in the UK. Boris Johnson said Britain owed a 'debt of gratitude to all those who have worked with us to make Afghanistan a better place over the last twenty years. Many of them, particularly women, are now in urgent need of our help. Home secretary Priti Patel said, 'I want to ensure that as a nation we do everything possible to provide support to the most vulnerable fleeing Afghanistan so they can start a new life in safety in the UK.' Christian MP Ian Paisley Jr has asked for all British missionaries to be returned from Afghanistan. He said, 'There are 228 missionaries currently under sentence of death who need to be taken out of Afghanistan, as well as tens of thousands of others.' [See](http://premierchristian.news/en/news/article/mp-asks-for-all-missionaries-to-be-returned-from-afghanistan)

Pray: for God to preserve the lives of all who are under threat in Afghanistan and for Christ's presence to be with all who know Him. (Deuteronomy 31:6)

More: www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/8/18/uk-announces-plan-to-resettle-20000-refugees-from-afghanistan

Afghan turmoil repercussions

Afghan students offered scholarships by the UK government to study here from September will not be able to take up their places this year as the British embassy could not finish paperwork in time. One student said, 'When we really need it, you are taking it away. I don't believe it will be deferred for a year. If you cannot make it this year, how can you make it next year?'. See <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-58219114> Archbishop Justin Welby said, 'The tragic failures we are witnessing in Afghanistan and their devastating impact on men, women and children demand prayer and urgent humanitarian action'. Kitty Chevallier, a British charity worker, said she felt immensely lucky to have escaped on an evacuation flight but it is tragic that some of her Afghan friends are still stuck in the country'. Pray for Afghans whose chances of leaving are small and who have so much more to lose.

Pray: for the resettlement scheme to rescue every student, military translator, missionary and stranded British residents. (Psalm 138:7)

More: www.itv.com/news/2021-08-18/british-charity-worker-feels-immensely-lucky-to-escape-from-afghanistan

Plymouth shooting

Five people, including a three-year-old girl, were killed during a six-minute shooting spree by gunman Jake Davison on 12 August. Two others were injured during the incident before the 22-year-old turned the gun on himself. Tens of thousands of pounds have been raised online for the victims and their families (<https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/loveplymouth>). Pray for the community to have God's comfort and peace as they pull together and support each other in these trying times; pray especially for the relatives and friends of the victims. Churches and schools are open, to give people opportunities to open themselves to God and to each other. Davidson's gun licence was suspended following a criminal charge for assault, but it was returned to him in July. The Government has asked police forces to review procedures for issuing and returning firearms licences, and to check whether it is necessary to revoke any licences already issued.

Pray: for wise decisions that improve policies around allocation of gun licences. (Proverbs 15:22)

More: www.euronews.com/next/2021/08/16/plymouth-mass-shooting-uk-to-check-gun-owners-social-media-after-gunman-kills-five

Landline phones replaced by mobiles

The telecom industry plans a digital shake-up that will axe traditional landline phones by 2025. By then, all households and businesses will need the internet to make calls, which raises concerns for the 1.5 million elderly and vulnerable who rely on landlines. Engineers may need to visit their homes to set them up, and those with older phones may have to buy a new handset. Experts fear millions more do not know how to use a mobile properly. Age UK said, 'Half of people over 75 are not online. Given the threat of fraud, telecom providers need to take steps to prevent the vulnerable from becoming digital scam victims.' This digital shake-up is driven by the telecoms industry, not by the Government.

Pray: for internet providers to prioritise vulnerable telecom customers, and the Government to step in if necessary to ensure all actions are both legal and cost-effective. (Proverbs 31:9)

More: www.express.co.uk/news/science/1477356/uk-axe-landline-phones-digital-shake-up-mobile-internet-broadband-scen

Children: sugary foods

Researchers have found only one in twenty yoghurts aimed at children are low in sugar. They urge the government to impose restrictions on child-friendly packaging and the nutritional claims they make. Action on Sugar found that one toffee yoghurt had five and a half teaspoons of sugar per serving - equal to 16 malted milk biscuits. Out of 100 children's yoghurts, 63% contained a third or more of the maximum daily sugar intake for children between four and six. A 'health halo' was being created around products featuring claims they are healthy while containing added sugar, syrups and fruit concentrates. A nutritionist warned that parents can easily be misled when choosing supermarket tins: 'Often companies try to avert our eyes from seeing the significant amount of sugar listed in the ingredients and nutrition tables, by using healthy-sounding claims and cartoony images on the front of the pack.'

Pray: for food companies to make every effort to reduce the sugar in products targeted so explicitly towards children. (Proverbs 25:27)

More: news.sky.com/story/parents-being-misled-by-yoghurt-packaging-with-one-revealed-to-have-same-sugar-as-16-biscuits-12385067

Don't ignore cancer signs

Thousands of people could be risking their lives by delaying seeking medical help. Tummy pain or a cough that does not go away could be caused by cancer, so these symptoms should be checked out. Cancers detected early can often be treated quickly and easily. But three in five people don't want to bother the NHS, while others are not aware of the common symptoms. NHS chief executive Amanda Pritchard said cancer services were now 'running at full speed with new, innovative ways of working in place'. NHS TV advertisements are warning people not to ignore signs. Over the past year 10% fewer people have started cancer treatment; they are being encouraged to come forward now. Abdominal, throat, stomach, bowel, pancreatic, ovarian, prostate, kidney and bladder cancers account for 44% of all diagnoses, and two in five deaths from cancer in England.

Pray: for people to take notice of the media advertisements and go to the NHS for diagnosis and treatments which were disrupted by the pandemic. (Jeremiah 33:6)

More: www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-58199169

PCR testing 'rip-off'

In April the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) warned the department of health that consumers could be ripped off by the fast-growing Covid PCR testing industry and that the competitions watchdog had not done enough. The Government said it was provided with general market analysis from the CMA on potential implications for the PCR testing market, and that advice informed government approaches on private provider lists. There has been a summer of complaints from travellers who mention tests listed on the government's list of providers that don't exist at the price advertised, and poor service. At the start of August, the health secretary asked the competitions watchdog to investigate 'excessive' pricing and 'exploitative practices' among Covid test firms. In a letter to the CMA, Sajid Javid said it was time for a 'rapid high-level' review to protect consumers. The travel industry also demands action to remove the barriers to passenger recovery.

Pray: for the Government to step into this public health controversy and protect travelers from being scammed by greedy businesses. (Zechariah 7:9)

More: www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-58263523

Europe

France: new wildfires - thousands evacuated

Strong winds and hot weather are making it difficult to quell two fires in Aude and Vaucluse, causing the evacuation of 130 people. 300+ hectares have been burnt, in new breakouts injuring 132 firefighters. Forest fires covering 210 hectares have hit the south of France as a 7,000-hectare blaze near Saint-Tropez continues. People have died and others are missing in the blazes. On 17 August a fire restarted overnight in Beaumes-de-Venise, fanned by strong winds. Over 1,000 firefighters tackled a blaze in Var, where a man died in his house. A woman is reported missing after calling her family while surrounded by fire. Blazes have erupted in Bizanet and Narbonne, with 70-80kph wind gusts threatening more outbreaks.

Pray: for the winds to be still, and for firefighters' safety on the ground, in planes and in helicopters. Ask God to comfort the homeless and those living in fear. Intercede for the bereaved. (Psalm 22:19)

More: www.connexionfrance.com/French-news/Forest-fires-in-Vaucluse-Provence-Alpes-Cote-d-Azur-and-Aude-Occitanie-join-blaze-in-Var

Spain: Europe's vegetable garden - poverty and plastic

Andalusia in Spain attracts foreigners flocking to beautiful beaches, and migrants flocking to harvest fruit and vegetables. While holidaymakers stay at expensive apartments, hundreds of fruit-pickers live in poverty-stricken, plastic shantytowns. 'People come and say they are going to save us,' says Ayoub. 'They take our picture, but nothing changes. Nothing is ever going to change.' 600 immigrants live in hovels, dust alleys are strewn with garbage, a dried-up riverbed is the toilet, and electricity is stolen from overhead lines. Ayoub works in hot greenhouses sprawling for miles, unseen by tourists enjoying long lunches, blissfully unaware of the harsh reality behind their salads.

Pray: for justice for the hundreds of migrants subjected to terrible conditions, fearful of being deported or sacked. Pray for better living and working conditions and fair wages. (Amos 5:24)

More: www.euronews.com/2021/08/12/europe-s-vegetable-garden-is-ridden-with-poverty-plastic-and-perversity

Malta: not tackling climate change

Organisations have hit out against the government for 'cosmetic projects and PR stunts rather than tackling climate change. Policy-makers waste 'precious time' by repeatedly missing targets on greenhouse gas emissions, renewable energy production, and waste management that is damaging Malta's quality of life. This will continue for future generations if activities continue such as private car over-dependency, over-construction that causes 'urban heat island effect', using unsustainable materials, and not addressing water scarcity and food security, while making no real commitment to halt biodiversity loss.

Pray: for Malta to accept responsibility for its global emissions and make changes. (Galatians 6:7)

More: www.maltatoday.com.mt/news/national/111509/climate_change_threat_government_focussed_on_cosmetic_projects_and_gimmicks#

Worldwide

Afghanistan: lamenting loss of freedoms

Previously midwife Nooria regularly discussed treatments for locals with male doctors at the clinic she works in. But now male and female meetings are prohibited by orders of the Taliban. When she goes out she has to wear a burqa, and a male has to accompany her. Men are not allowed to shave their beards - the Taliban says this is against Islam. Barbers are prohibited from giving foreign-style haircuts. Everyone is frightened. The Taliban have taken up positions in most villages. Locals can't escape them. Armed fighters walk through the streets morning and evening, knocking on doors and demanding food. A group within the Taliban, called Amri bil Marof (order the good), is imposing a two-strike rule. First a warning, second a punishment - public humiliations, prison, beatings, lashes.

Pray: for God to reveal Himself to desperate Afghans facing fear and lost freedoms, and for the few Christians in Afghanistan to grow in faith and number. (Psalm 61:3)

More: www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-58191440

Haiti: days after the earthquake

The devastation grows daily following a 7.2 magnitude earthquake killing over 2,000 and injuring 10,000; many are still missing. Tropical storm Grace hovered directly over the quake-ravaged portion of Haiti for two days, adding more misery to displaced survivors. Many hospitals are damaged. Medics attempt to transfer patients to Port-au-Prince. One hospital is treating severely injured victims in tents outside the building. On 18 August people were still arriving with broken limbs. Storm Grace has hindered humanitarian aid or the need to assess the extent of the damage. UNICEF said aid to 1.2 million people, including 540,000 children, will cost \$15 million. 385,000 are most urgently in need; 167,000 are children. Thousands of buildings were destroyed. People camp out in fields where UNICEF distributes blankets, hygiene and kitchen kits, plus shelter repair items for 30,000 people. They need medical staff, supplies, and full access to electricity and water. Dictatorships and natural disasters have left 59% of Haitians living in poverty. Pray for political stability.

Pray: for God to comfort bereaved and injured, protect workers in dangerous structures, bring healing to those in trauma and shock and strengthen consultation between agencies. (Daniel 6:27)

More: www.npr.org/2021/08/18/1028683489/what-we-know-about-the-situation-in-haiti-4-days-after-the-massive-earthquake?t=1629285119551

USA: devastating wildfires

The Dixie Fire is the largest of nearly 100 major wildfires burning across a dozen western US states, including Alaska. Two mountain communities were incinerated, and a utility company blacked out 51,000 customers to prevent new blazes. Two weeks after the fire destroyed Greenville, the Caldor Fire a few miles southeast exploded and ravaged Grizzly Flats, a forest community of around 1,200 people, destroying more than 50 homes. Governor Gavin Newsom proclaimed a state of emergency in El Dorado County. Both fires grew by tens of thousands of acres in two days. Numerous resources were put into the Susanville area, with 18,000 people. Residents were warned to be ready to evacuate. By 19 August over 2.4 million acres were burned in 104 large fires and complexes in twelve states, involving over 25,000 wildland firefighters and support personnel (<https://www.nifc.gov/fire-information/nfn>).

Pray: for God to provide victims with practical aid, emotional strength and hope as they attempt to restore devastated communities, and also deliver caring and counselling services. (Colossians 1:11)

More: www.aljazeera.com/gallery/2021/8/18/photos-dixie-wildfires-northern-california

Japan: can the Paralympics bring lasting change?

The Paralympic Games open in Tokyo on 24 August, with over 4,000 disabled athletes from around the world. Ahead of the event, the International Paralympic Committee is launching a campaign called 'Wethe15'. Wethe15 is sport's biggest ever human rights movement to end discrimination. It aims to transform the lives of 1.2 billion persons with disabilities, representing 15% of the global population. Figures show that many disabled people live in poverty, struggling to access education and employment. Wethe15 plans to initiate change by bringing together the biggest ever coalition of international organisations from sport, human rights, policy, communications, business, arts and entertainment. It will build greater knowledge of the barriers and discrimination persons with disabilities face daily at all levels of society. By doing so it wants to break down these barriers so that all persons with disabilities can fulfil their potential and be active and visible members of an inclusive society.

Pray: for this campaign to successfully remove inequality for the disabled, making them more visible, included and their challenges understood. (Luke 14:13)

More: www.bbc.co.uk/news/av/uk-58260253

Peru: pandemic's secondary impact on children

On 17 August Peru's Covid cumulative death toll rose to 197,487. Peru has the world's highest number of Covid deaths per capita. Poverty, high levels of informal labour, and intergenerational housing have contributed to the high rate of transmission. The secondary impact of the pandemic is children losing their primary and secondary caregivers. Children orphaned by the death of one or both parents or bereft of other caregivers are often more vulnerable to poverty, abuse, institutionalisation, and harmful mental health impacts. Psychosocial support and trauma counselling is a prominent need. As children in Peru and around the world confront death in a unique way, may their perspective and grieving process be shaped by a Godly perspective and the Father's heart.

Pray: for the global church to consider how to care for children under these circumstances and protect the next generation from the destructive secondary effects of the pandemic. (Proverbs 22:6)

More: www.incontextinternational.org/2021/08/18/peru-grapples-with-pandemics-secondary-impacts-on-children/

Mozambique: persecuted man chose Christ

Kidnapping Christians is a tactic frequently used by the jihadists who have been waging an insurgency in Mozambique since 2017. The UN said at least 2,600 people have been killed and more than 700,000 made homeless. Even nuns have been taken hostage. Reports emerge of a Christian man in Mozambique who risked his life by refusing to convert to Islam after extremists seized him and held him captive in the bush. Father Kwiriwi Fonseca said, 'We met a Christian who was asked "Do you want to stay here and become Muslim, or do you want to go home?" It is risky as some people who say they want to go home are slaughtered on the spot. He thought he would be killed but he said it is better to go home. The men decided he could go home; it is very mysterious.'

Pray: for the Christians and displaced people facing famine and persecution to receive God's provision to survive and live in peace. (Jeremiah 29:11-12)

More: acnuk.org/news/mozambique-he-chose-christ/

Iran's Kabul embassy 'operational' despite Taliban

Two days after the Taliban captured Kabul, Iran's foreign ministry said its embassy continues its normal operations. Its consulate in Herat, close to the Iranian border, also remains fully operational. Iran's embassy is among a handful of foreign missions still open, including the embassies of Russia, China and Pakistan. All have signalled possible recognition of an emerging Taliban-controlled Afghanistan. In the midst of the withdrawal of American and foreign troops from Afghanistan, Tehran hosted Taliban and government delegations in an effort to be a key player in the political scene. Iranian officials and state-funded media face accusations of attempting to 'canonise the Taliban'. The move is not welcomed by the Iranian public or pro-reform papers. Iran's social media is inundated with messages of solidarity with the 'betrayed' Afghan people. Individual Iranians are volunteering to adopt abandoned Afghan children.

Pray: for Iran's policy toward a new wave of Afghan refugees to be compassionate. (Proverbs 21:13)

More: www.al-monitor.com/originals/2021/08/irans-kabul-embassy-operational-despite-taliban-takeover

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