

Prayer Alert

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But 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.

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

Answered prayer

On 10 September Prayer Alert reported that government ministers were rejecting Scientists recommendations of Covid jabs [for 12- to 15-year-olds](#) (<https://www.prayer-alert.net/pa-pray/regions/british-isles/item/14540-pupils-return-to-school-covid-spike-concern>). You prayed for the Government to change its mind and step in so that pupils got what was needed according to God's plans for them (Jeremiah 29:11). On 14 September the Government announced that a Covid jab rollout will start in schools in England. Although they are deemed at very low risk from the disease, factors such as disruption to education tipped the balance.

Praise: God for this decision; may it reduce school disruption in the coming months. (Mark 11:24)

More: www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-58552769

Afghanistan: ripe soil for church growth

After raising over \$28 million to rescue Afghan Christians, Glenn Beck shares an update. 'Seven years after the IS blitzkrieg, there is revival in northern Syria. The establishment of Islamic government provides ripe soil for the Church to grow. The Afghan Church is determined to do the same. They are still actively meeting, studying the scriptures together and sharing the gospel. We have heard a report about Christians sharing the gospel with Taliban members who came into their village, and they have actually been engaging in Bible studies and prayer.' While it is often the sensational reports or heroic action that make headlines, Richardson said Afghanistan's Christians are just real people choosing to live out their faith. 'They say they are scared. Many of them are in despair, but it is in that weakness that they're still pushing forward and they are finding sweetness in all of it.' he said.

Praise: God for the wonderful faith and hope of Afghan Christians. May they be in His divine protection as they continue to make disciples of men. (Isaiah 41:10)

More: www1.cbn.com/cbnnews/world/2021/september/seeds-of-revival-in-afghanistan-talibans-oppressive-islamic-governance-creating-ripe-soil-for-church-to-grow

49 Muslim converts baptised

Help the Persecuted (HtP) hosted 100+ Christian converts at a retreat in the Middle East. Most were new converts seeking refuge from war-torn Syria. Others were families HtP helped after the Beirut explosion. All face persecution for their faith. Seif, one of the attendees, said, 'I lost my brother two months ago. Today, in Christ, I have more brothers than I can imagine. I feel like I am home among my family!' HtP are praising God for bringing together a community of former Muslims who now live for Christ, and who have now experienced the community of the Body of Christ personally. The HtP team focused on discipling these new believers, as they sought the Lord for healing and hope, and were overjoyed when 49 Muslim converts stepped forward in faith and were baptised!

Praise: God for equipping HtP as they rescue, restore and help the persecuted Christians to feel enveloped in love and care. (Psalm 99:3)

More: http.org/49-baptized-at-spiritual-retreat

British Isles

Cabinet reshuffle

Christians in Parliament met two days before the cabinet reshuffle and the theme of their service was 'hope in waiting'. Their worship was based on Psalm 86. With this in mind we can base our prayers for our new and established cabinet members on that psalm: 'Father among the gods, there is none like you, Lord; no deeds can compare with yours. You created every nation and have a purpose for each one. You created these islands and raised up leaders through generations. We lift today's leaders to You and pray that each one will bring glory to Your name. Teach each cabinet member Your way forward, help those who are in new offices to humbly learn and quickly grow into the new role you have prepared for them. Lord, inspire their decisions. May the Christians in Parliament continually have Your insights as they rely on You to do marvellous deeds in the coming months and years.'

Pray: for our parliament to function in unity, harmony, perseverance and an undivided heart for the nations. (Psalm 86:12)

More: www.christiansinparliament.org.uk/events/future/songs-of-hope/#more-2234

MI5 boss warns of terrorists

Ken McCallum, MI5's director general, warned that the fall of Afghanistan to the Taliban is likely to have 'emboldened' so-called lone wolf terrorists in the UK. He said that while the terror threat would not change overnight, there could be a 'morale boost' for extremists. 'We need to be vigilant about an increase in inspired terrorism,' he said. In the past four years a total of 31 late-stage attack plots have been foiled in the UK, including six during the pandemic period. While they were largely Islamic extremist plots, there were also a growing number of attacks planned by extreme right-wing terrorists. He also said, 'The terrorist threat to the UK, I am sorry to say, is a real and enduring thing.' Pray for God's plans for the future security of the UK to be established, and for His wisdom and discernment to flow through everyone working in MI5, border security, internet security, antiterrorism, and military.

Pray: for long-term planning and preparation to protect vulnerable targets, and for any plans to bring death or destruction to be thwarted. (Psalm 138:7)

More: www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-58512901

Call for an end to the arms trade

Catholic bishops and organisations voiced their opposition to the arms trade, as the UK hosted one of the world's largest arms fairs on 14-17 September for global governments and military delegations, with over 1,500 companies selling guns, bombs, and other weaponry. A statement from the bishops and other concerned organisations emphasised how conflicts fed by the trade harm the world's poorest communities, forcing people to become refugees. In 2015 Pope Francis said, 'Why are deadly weapons being sold to those who plan to inflict untold suffering on individuals and society? Sadly, the answer is simply for money - money that is drenched in blood, often innocent blood. In the face of this shameful and culpable silence, it is our duty to confront the problem and to stop the arms trade.' Pray for all the voices of those peacefully campaigning against the arms trade to be heard so that leaders commit to ending it in pursuit of peace.

Pray: for Britain to step back from being at the heart of the arms trade. (2 Corinthians 11:14)

More: www.cbcew.org.uk/catholic-bishops-and-organisations-call-for-an-end-to-the-arms-trade/

National day of prayer for schools

The National Day of Prayer for Schools is on 28 September. A few years ago, Scripture Union research found over 95% of UK youth were not connected to a local church. 99% of young people engage in mainstream education. Many believe that if we want to reach the unchurched 95%, we need to learn how to serve our schools and meet these youth where they are. Due to the challenging situation the pandemic created for children, young people, schools, staff and families, church groups across the UK are prayer-walking their communities, praying God's blessing over their local schools, and seeking God for breakthrough in schools. On 28 September Christians will join an online prayer gathering in the morning, with prayer videos released every hour, before they gather to prayer walk in locations across the UK later. For more information [see](#)

Pray: for more Churches to catch the vision to pray for and serve our local schools. (Matthew 19:14)

More: www.eauk.org/news-and-views/reaching-the-99-in-our-local-schools

Warning of 'tsunami' of school-anxiety cases

There are no official data on absence due to school anxiety. Many affected pupils are labelled truants, but support groups are being flooded with calls. An education lawyer says the pandemic has made an unprecedented crisis even worse. Children with school anxiety may experience physical symptoms such as stomach pain, nausea and headaches before school or have immobilising anxiety, panic attacks or something that seems like a tantrum. They may even threaten to harm themselves if parents make them go to school, yet their parents can be threatened with fines and court action. Fran Morgan helps families with this problem and said it is not about refusal, a child that won't do something: It is about a child that physically can't. Parent groups are warning of a 'tsunami' of crippling school-anxiety cases leading to debilitating absence from education. The education department said it was investing £17m in school mental health.

Pray: for the £17m to provide enough clinicians, for parents to easily access mental health services, and for educators to recognise a special educational need that must be addressed. (Ephesians 4:32)

More: www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-58474418

Dirty money

The UK is a hub for dirty money from global criminal activity - bribery, theft of state funds, misuse of public office. It is developed with the aid of companies incorporated in the UK and in its offshore financial centres and invested into luxury UK property, accessing prestigious institutions and privileged lifestyles. An estimated scale of dirty money entering the UK is more than tens of billions of pounds annually. Anonymous companies, where the true owner is hidden, make it difficult to detect the origins of their illicit wealth. The UK is failing to prevent companies registered here being used by money launderers. The secrecy afforded by UK companies - and those registered in offshore financial centres - is facilitating economic crime on a global scale. This must change.

Pray: for the government authorities and organisations to successfully apprehend criminal activity through robust research and targeted advocacy. (Proverbs 25:26)

More: www.transparency.org.uk/corruption-and-uk/Dirty%20Money

Face-to-face teaching in universities

Universities are urged to provide face-to-face teaching when students return this term. Ex-education secretary Gavin Williamson said students should expect to be taught 'in-person and alongside other students', although it would be right to stay online when there's a 'genuine benefit to using technology'. But he warned university leaders, 'I do not expect to see online learning used as a cost-cutting measure.' He said that parents would find it odd if students could go to other social activities but were not allowed back into lecture halls. Record numbers of 18-year-olds will be starting university this autumn, and Mr Williamson, speaking via a video link, said students were craving a 'return to normality'. Teaching students in-person allows them to benefit from the 'conversations you have around the margins', and from the support of other students.

Pray: for Covid safety measures to work alongside starting face to face classes. (Ecclesiastes 7:12)

More: www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-58504263

Europe

France: football star paid for not talking about religion

Paris Saint-Germain (PSG) star Neymar will receive €6.2 million (£5.28 million) a year if he avoids any 'political or religious propaganda that could damage the image and unity of the club'. It is understood that Neymar will receive this money as part of an 'ethical clause' included in his contract with the Parisian club. The 29-year-old has previously made several references to his Christian faith. He grew up going to Peniel Baptist church in his native Sao Paulo, whose lead pastor Newton Lobato has revealed the footballer tithes around €18,000 every year. Neymar once said, 'Life only makes sense when our highest ideal is to serve Christ'. He has received trophies wearing a headband stating '100% Jesus'.

Pray: for God to shield Neymar from confrontations and provide mature Christians to stand by him and encourage him in his walk of faith in the sporting limelight. (Psalm 3:3)

More: premierchristian.news/en/news/article/neymar-gets-paid-half-a-million-euros-if-he-avoids-talking-about-religion

France: Covid deadlines and demos

French healthcare workers now face suspension if they are not vaccinated against Covid-19. The demand affects all medical professionals and those working with vulnerable people (including nursing homes' non-medical staff). 86% of healthcare workers are fully inoculated, suggesting many are risking sanctions. Also a phased roll-out of a Covid pass has been introduced - attesting its holder had either been vaccinated, tested negative or recently recovered from Covid - to visit cultural and leisure venues, bars, restaurants, large events or use long-distance public transport. On 14 September 'Infringement of freedom' protests were held in Paris over these rules. Over 9,000 Covid-related hospitalisations did not deter protesters, whilst others showed up to vent their overall frustration with the tenure of President Emmanuel Macron. Over last weekend, in Paris alone, three different Covid-related demonstrations took place. See <https://www.euronews.com/2021/08/14/infringement-of-freedom-hundreds-protest-in-paris-against-health-pass>

Pray: for France to reduce the surge of Covid cases without further civil action. (Romans 12:18)

More: www.euronews.com/2021/09/15/deadline-looms-for-french-health-workers-to-get-compulsory-covid-jab

Worldwide

Afghanistan: Taliban invite diplomats back

80% of Afghanistan's money comes from foreign donations or aid, and the Taliban cannot afford to be ostracised by the world. Their security commander appealed to diplomats, politicians and businesses: 'Come. Start your work again. No one will hurt you. Diplomatic relations are the right of every country.' But many are sceptical. Two newspaper journalists were tortured by the Taliban for covering women protesting for more freedom. The journalists were held in separate cells and whipped with cables. They both passed out from intense pain. There are huge weals and extensive bruising on their backs, shoulders, thighs and buttocks. Their editor-in-chief said, 'These journalists were beaten and tortured for doing their job. We need the international community to stand with us and insist the Taliban are held to account because this will have a terrible impact on media freedom and everyone's freedoms.'

Pray: for foreign embassies to begin to re-open and for freedom of the press, religious freedom and human rights to be recognised by Afghan's new governing body. (Romans 8:21)

More: news.sky.com/story/why-dont-they-come-back-taliban-occupying-british-embassy-in-kabul-urge-diplomats-return-12403466

USA: churches need help to recover from Ida

Many churches have either been destroyed or severely damaged by Hurricane Ida. The Baptist director of missions said that more than 80 Southern Baptist churches in Louisiana were damaged by the storm. 'We have churches ranging from desperate to recovering, and the desperate ones need help now. Insurance rates are out of this world. It's going to be tough for them. But most of our churches will be okay in the long run. It's just right now, we have a crisis and need all the help we can get.' Thirty of the most severely damaged churches were in Terrebonne and Lafourche parishes. Methodist Bishop Swanson said it is too early to gather damage assessment. New York churches were also severely damaged. A parish pastor describes the damage as 'ten times worse than the last hurricane.'

Pray: for enough funds to be raised to enable the Christian communities to recover quickly and continue their ministries to their neighbourhoods. (2 Corinthians 9:7)

More: premierchristian.news/en/news/article/churches-across-louisiana-mississippi-new-york-recovering-from-hurricane-ida

Nicaragua: prayer points

Volcanic eruptions, earthquakes, and hurricanes, combined with war, conflict, and political struggles, have turned many in Nicaragua towards hope in Christ. Evangelicals grew from 2% in 1960 to 30% today. Pray for them to be a genuine blessing to their nation. Poverty is both the cause and result of many political troubles. This poverty also shaped Nicaragua's spirituality. Liberation theology and prosperity gospel play major roles. There have been years of civil war, and Hurricane Mitch destroyed the economy and infrastructure. Economic wisdom and long-term development are needed. Many in the government are becoming believers: pray that they may have the wisdom and determination to be a righteous influence on the nation. 75% of the population is under the age of 30. Because of war, disaster and distorted political ideologies, stable families are rare. Few churches are equipped or committed to meet their needs. Pray for YWAM and others to impact Nicaragua's youth.

Pray: for God to ignite His Church to grow a strong missionary-sending movement of His Gospel to impact society. (Philemon 1:6)

More: operationworld.org/prayer-calendar/09-17/#nicaragua

North Korea fires more missiles

North Korea launched two ballistic missiles into waters off its eastern coast on 15 September. South Korea and US intelligence are analysing details about the launches. The missiles landed outside Japan's exclusive economic zone, in the waters between Japan and the Korean peninsula. Prime minister Yoshihide Suga called the firings absolutely outrageous, threatening the peace and safety of Japan and the region. He said, 'Our government is determined to step up our vigilance and surveillance to be prepared for any contingencies.' The firings came just two days after North Korea tested a newly developed missile capable of hitting targets 930 miles away. North Korea has ignored Washington's offers to resume negotiations to abandon its nuclear programme.

Pray: for the deadlock in nuclear diplomacy between Pyongyang and Washington to be resolved, and for Japan to step back from volatile comments. (Proverbs 14:34)

More: www.theepochtimes.com/north-korea-fires-ballistic-missiles-into-waters-between-japan-and-korean-peninsula_3998321.html

Lebanon: energy crisis

Some churches in Lebanon cannot turn on the lights or run fans to combat the heat because of extreme fuel shortages. There have been times when they have not been able to meet because people do not have enough fuel to drive their car or cannot access public transport. Some have turned to solar power to keep some lights on. Unfortunately, only wealthy people have access to this technology. Lebanon is ideally situated for solar power, seeing about 300 days of sunshine per year. The power shortages mean Christians lose access to the internet, and therefore to Zoom meetings or Facebook Live which bring services to people unable to attend. After a year's wait Lebanon finally formed a new government, but it remains unclear if the new officials will do much to stop corruption and help the people.

Pray: for Christian ministry to grow regardless of the challenges and for the new government to bring an end to bribery and exploitation. (Nahum 1:7)

More: www.mnnonline.org/news/lights-out-at-many-lebanese-churches-amid-energy-crisis/

Palestine: campaign against political corruption

Deterioration of democratic policies in the Palestinian leadership has caused a coalition of nongovernmental organisations to call it 'political corruption.' For years this coalition, named AMAN, focused on administrative and financial corruption. Now the eroding integrity of the Palestinian leadership has forced Transparency International to tackle a corrupt political system that among other things cancelled a long-overdue national election and ordered its security forces to harm a Hebron critic, that led to his death. They have also violently cracked down on demonstrations calling for accountability. An AMAN manifesto recently called Palestinians to reject the anti-democratic slippery slope and 'fight this political corruption by creating a coalition that can contribute toward a more honest governance structure.' If the current political corruption is not checked, Palestine will move into a dangerous zone.

Pray: for reforms that will address every issue of political and administrative corruption in Palestine, particularly in the Gaza Strip where political corruption is worse. (Micah 4:3)

More: www.al-monitor.com/originals/2021/09/palestinian-ngos-begin-campaign-against-political-corruption

USA and Britain help Australia to thwart China

The USA and Britain announced they would help Australia deploy nuclear-powered submarines (not nuclear-armed), taking a major step in challenging China's broad territorial claims of its exclusive zone in the South China Sea. The announcement is a major step for Australia, which until recent years has been hesitant to push back directly at core Chinese interests. The decision to share technology for naval reactors, even with a close ally, is a major move for President Biden and bound to raise protests by the Chinese and questions from American allies.

Pray: for the pact to inspire negotiations with China and avoid creating a cold war. (Isaiah 2:4)

More: www.nytimes.com/2021/09/15/us/politics/biden-australia-britain-china.html

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