

Prayer Alert

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You will keep in perfect peace those whose minds are steadfast, because they trust in You. (Isaiah 26:3)

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

Pioneering Bible translation

Roughly half of the world's known languages are still without God's Word. Bible Translation Acceleration Kits, or BTAKs, are helping believers in hard-to-reach areas translate God's Word. Wycliffe's CEO says, 'We receive great expressions of thanksgiving from those who are making use of them. One of the pastors we trained in Zambia taught three other language groups how to do Bible translation. Those groups completed their New Testaments and have already started working on OT translations.' Most translators live in isolated regions with no Internet. BTAK has built-in internet connection and provides access to all the Bible translation software a language group needs.

Praise: God for the pioneering tools that are bringing acceleration of Bible translation into languages spoken by unreached people groups. (Romans 10:17)

More: wycliffeassociates.org/projects/bible-translation-acceleration-kits-btaks/

Reaching a million in a young continent

Over 60% of Africa's population is under the age of 25; over half of them are under 16. Christ for all Nations (CfaN) is committed to reaching the children and youth of Africa. In the last few decades, CfaN has built a very strong follow-up system with local churches. During the last 18 months their Bootcamp and CfaN team members have conducted an astonishing number of children's campaigns. They have now produced a special booklet just for children, with the same powerful Gospel message in language that they can understand, read and reread, building the same first steps in faith that adults do. The What's Next? booklet is already in English, Xhosa, Zulu, Congolese French, German, Afrikaans, Haitian Creole and Kirundi. CfaN is moving as fast as possible to translate it into the local language in each place where there will be an evangelistic campaign in 2022. They plan to reach a million children.

Praise: God for the vision and anointed evangelists ready to go and make an eternal difference in these children's lives. May He release the finance needed to complete this outreach. (Matthew 28:19)

More: cfan.org.uk/giving/million-children-jesus

British Isles

UK boat detained by France in fishing rights row

A British trawler was seized by France and another fined, in fishing rights arguments. The French checks on UK trawlers overnight are not part of the range of retaliatory actions announced in the post-Brexit row. But there is no doubt it is a message of what is to come. From 2 November British and Channel Islands fishing boats will not be allowed to offload fish at French ports. There will be intensified controls at Calais and other entry points for UK trade by ferry and tunnel. The French authorities will conduct a 'grève de zèle' (punctiliously looking

for violations) on fish and other imports which will create long tail-backs to remind British subjects of the costs of go-it-alone. The UK government said the threat of sanctions was 'not what we would expect from a close ally and partner'. The boat owner said his fishing activity for scallops was 'entirely legal'.

Pray: for the Government to successfully defend the rights of its fishing fleet while avoiding an escalation of tit-for-tat activities. (Proverbs 21:15)

More: www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-59073715

Northern Ireland hostage over 'fish wars'

France is threatening to block any UK-EU deal over the Northern Ireland Protocol unless the row over post-Brexit fishing licences is resolved in Paris's favour. With presidential elections next year, he cannot afford to sell out his fishermen, as many hail from a stronghold of his rival Marine Le Pen. Macron has trodden this path before. In 2019, he blocked extending Brexit negotiations, risking a no deal to Theresa May's withdrawal agreement. In 2020 he threatened to veto any Brexit trade deal that did not satisfy French fishermen, ratcheting up pressure on London. Judging by the negative reactions of the British fishing industry to the trade deal, the tactic worked. Now he is threatening extremely delicate negotiations over the NI Protocol. There is a greater risk now of the UK triggering Article 16 of the protocol than any time before. France also threatened to block the UK from joining the EU's research programme. See <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/world-news/2021/10/21/france-prepared-block-uk-membership-eu-research-programme-brexit/>

Pray: for the European Commission to bring Paris to heel for being in violation of the Brexit trade deal and making a workable deal on Northern Ireland more difficult. (Amos 5:24)

More: www.telegraph.co.uk/world-news/2021/10/28/analysis-emmanuel-macron-holds-northern-ireland-brexit-talks/

COP26: road closures, strikes, activists, Covid

The COP26 climate conference (31 October - 12 November) is expected to draw 25,000 delegates plus 100,000 protesters to Glasgow. Major road closures will last until 15 November, causing disruption. The biggest disturbance will be on 6 November - the Global Day For Climate Justice. A breakdown in union talks means workers will strike from 1-12 November. Pray for pedestrians, cyclists, drivers, and passengers to have composure and patience as they face difficulties when commuting to work. Also 1,500 refuse collection and cleansing staff are striking over a pay dispute. Concerns are also raised regarding COP26's impact on Covid cases. Many of those attending will not be fully vaccinated, and the magnitude of the event will cause increased cases in an already fragile situation. It could trigger the need for further pandemic restrictions.

Pray: for the government's health and safety measures for the conference to be successfully implemented and monitored. (Psalm 106:3a)

More: www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-glasgow-west-59010196

Budget taxation and spending

The chancellor pledged increasing public spending amid higher than expected economic growth. Whitehall departments will receive a rise of £150bn over the course of this parliament, the largest increase this century. There is extra money for schools, tax cuts for businesses and a cut in air duties for internal flights. A changed alcohol duty will see cheaper sparkling wine and draught beer, and the planned fuel duty rise is cancelled. Amid huge concern over the £20 cut to Universal Credit, changes will be made to let working claimants keep more of their benefits. There is new money for the NHS, a rise in the National Living Wage, and public sector pay rises. The Institute for Fiscal Studies said inflation and higher taxes on incomes would negate small wage increases for middle earners. Low-income households will see the cost of living increase faster than benefit payments. The chancellor acknowledged in his budget that families are under strain: see <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-59076532>

Pray: for improvement to the welfare system to successfully compensate for the recent Universal Credit £20 cut to the poorest in our communities. (Proverbs 31:8-9)

More: www.bbc.co.uk/news/live/uk-59035120

Day of Prayer for the Media - 31 October

Christians in Media is a UK community supporting, encouraging and inspiring Christians working in, and with, media: producers, journalists, photographers, editors, content creators, social media managers, press officers, war correspondents. Through local meet-ups and a flourishing online network, they help, encourage and inspire each other to be disciples whilst meeting the demands of the industry. Their vision is to see Christians in the industry flourish and become key influencers, to see churches engaging positively with the media, and to see the life-affirming Gospel message of faith, hope and love increasingly reflected in the UK media. 31st October is a day of prayer for Christians in the media; a call to churches to set aside time in their meetings to pray for local, regional, national and social media. To inspire this time of prayer, Christians in Media have produced a new short video that can be used as an introduction to prayer. See <https://ctbi.org.uk/christians-in-media-service-and-day-of-prayer/>

Pray: for the day not just to generate prayer but to create a better understanding about Christians working on the media front line. (Psalm 101:3)

More: www.christiansinmedia.co.uk/

Covid: worrying statistics

An estimated one in 60 people in the UK had coronavirus in the week ending 16 October. That figure is one in 45 for Wales, one in 55 for England, one in 90 in Scotland, and one in 130 in NI. Scientists advising the government said they should prepare to trigger stricter Plan B measures now, amid rising cases. The percentage of adults who say they always or often maintain social distancing fell to 39% in mid-October. Although most adults agree measures such as social distancing and mask-wearing to slow the spread of Covid are important, fewer people are still doing it and more than half of working adults are now travelling to work. Young people see the 'hands, face, space' measures and social distancing as less important than older age groups do. Men are less likely than women to view them as important or very important.

Pray: for Boris Johnson and the health secretary to keep the UK healthy. (3 John 2)

More: www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-59009284

Schools anti-vax protests

There have been anti-Covid vaccine protests outside 420 schools up and down the UK. The Association of School and College Leaders said it is not a fringe concern even though most protests stem from just two groups on the messaging app Telegram. One organiser has allegedly visited every secondary school in Hartlepool, and another group is coordinating multiple daily school visits from Kent to Cheshire. Protesters left Gateshead students distressed after showing them pictures of what appeared to be dead children. They target teachers with sham legal documents, and hand children leaflets with QR codes leading to extremist and conspiracy content. Some protesters think it is wrong to vaccinate children, or say the whole pandemic is a hoax. Sir Keir Starmer said it was sickening that protesters were spreading 'dangerous misinformation' to children, and wants exclusion zones set up around school gates.

Pray: for politicians to safeguard children, teachers, and parents from intimidation and harassment, for the sources of misinformation and lies to wither, and the vaccine programme to grow. (Proverbs 12:22)

More: www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-59032991

Europe

Moldova: severe energy crisis

Moldova has made history by buying gas from a source that was not Russia's Gazprom. The one million cubic metres came from Poland's PGNiG. Moldova will need much larger volumes if Russia cuts supplies, as it has threatened to do if they don't agree to increased costs in a new contract. In the absence of a new deal Russia reduced supplies, prompting Moldova to declare a thirty-day state of emergency. Gazprom accused Moldova of 'provoking a crisis' and demanded repayment of a \$709m (£514m) debt, which Moldova disputes. Officials say they would like to sign a new contract with Gazprom, but only if the terms are favourable. Negotiations continue. Moldova said PGNiG's shipment was to test the ability of imported gas from alternative sources, and PGNiG was one of seven offers they had received. Critics accuse the Kremlin of hiking gas prices to punish Moldova for electing a pro-European president, Maia Sandu.

Pray: for Moldova, one of Europe's poorest countries, to negotiate a fair deal for its energy needs. (1 Timothy 2:1-2)

More: www.euronews.com/2021/10/27/moldova-receives-first-non-russian-gas-delivery-as-it-grapples-with-severe-energy-crisis

Italy: flash flooding and hurricane

An official in Catania, Sicily, called the situation 'very critical'. Streets are completely flooded, and a red alert - the highest level warning - has been issued for flooding in northeast Sicily and the southwest region of Calabria. A depression on the Mediterranean is causing disturbed weather conditions in southern Italy. Over two feet of rain fell in half a day - never seen before. While storms continue, a Medicane (rare Mediterranean hurricane producing 5 metre waves) [meanders south](https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/oct/27/southern-italy-braced-for-rare-mediterranean-hurricane) (<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/oct/27/southern-italy-braced-for-rare-mediterranean-hurricane>), with 150mm of rain predicted for Friday with localized areas receiving higher amounts. Schools and businesses are closed, and people are advised to stay indoors and banned from areas prone to landslides. Fire and rescue have had hundreds of callouts in one day. [See also https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-59048809](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-59048809)

Pray: for those struggling with electricity blackouts, submerged cars, damaged homes and businesses, blocked roads, and landslides to have the help they need. (Psalm 69:2)

More: edition.cnn.com/2021/10/26/europe/sicily-flooding-roads-intl-scli/index.html

Worldwide

Israel: a nail in the peace coffin

Joe Biden plans to open a consulate in Jerusalem. This amounts to an actual US embassy to the Palestinians on Israeli territory. Many believe its true purpose is to undermine Israeli sovereignty in its own capital city. It will also jeopardise future prospects for peace between Israel and Palestinian Arabs. As well as betraying Israel, Biden's diplomatic signalling also appeases his hard-left supporters and is a betrayal of the Palestinian people. They have suffered too long and too hard under the hostility of their leadership, which has consistently refused to entertain all proposals for peace with Israel that could lead to the establishment of their own state. Successive Palestinian leaders have been encouraged in their inflexibility by the US and Europe, who have for decades extracted concession after concession from Israel while Palestinians make none. The intended consulate in Israel's capital will encourage greater support for Hamas, currently ruling Gaza.

Pray: for observance of Israel's Basic Law, US law and the 1963 Vienna Convention, which does not allow a consulate to be opened without the host nation's consent. (Numbers 6:24-26)

More: www.gatestoneinstitute.org/17872/us-consulate-jerusalem

Afghanistan: Taliban control - weekly bombings

A large explosion, claimed by IS, tore through a Shi'ite mosque in Kandahar during Friday prayers, killing at least 47 people. That bombing was the third in twelve days, and the deadliest since US forces left in August. It is also the first major IS attack in southern Afghanistan, raising concerns that the group is expanding its reach. Voice of the Martyrs (VOM) says Islamic militant groups do not always support each other; they are all seeking power. US and allied forces withdrew and created a power vacuum that the Taliban want to fill. However, IS wants to take control and plays on the fears of people by creating instability through terrorist attacks. Afghanistan will be unstable as long as there is a power struggle. VOM believes religious freedom underpins all other freedoms. Pray for religious freedom and for the churches to grow and be salt and light.

Pray: for security units to identify threats so that innocent people, whatever their religious affiliation, will live and have a chance to know Christ. May God control the future of Afghanistan. (Isaiah 32:17)

More: www.mnnonline.org/news/weekly-suicide-bombings-test-taliban-control/

Afghanistan: Taliban control - extreme poverty and starvation

Afghanistan is facing the biggest humanitarian crisis in the world. International funds which propped up the country's fragile economy have stopped as the world debates how to deal with the Taliban. The UN has issued a stark warning - millions will die if urgent aid does not reach Afghanistan soon. A BBC video revealed a family forced to sell their baby to feed the rest of the family [and other dire situations](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/av/world-asia-59034650) (<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/av/world-asia-59034650>). 22.8 million people facing acute food insecurity. 3.2 million children under five could suffer acute malnutrition. The Taliban takeover weakened a fragile economy heavily dependent on foreign aid. Western powers, the World Bank, and the International Monetary Fund have suspended aid on this aid-dependent nation.

Pray: for aid to reach the impoverished people before they suffer any more hunger. (Proverbs 22:9)

More: www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-59011501

China: Early Rain Church face ongoing harassment

On 26 October unknown people vandalised the door of preacher Dai Zhichao, filled the keyhole with glue, and cut off the electricity. Another church leader and his family were detained for over ten hours. Other members of Early Rain Church have faced mounting persecution. Officials shut off power and water to one preacher's house for nine months. Keyholes to Christian homes are filled with glue. People are so harassed they have to move. One moved five times in two years. On 18 October police summoned a brother to the police station on a charge of 'organising an evil cult'. In spite of harsh persecution, Early Rain has continued to speak for the persecuted, pray for people, and encourage other house churches to stand firm and walk the way of the cross. They ask fellow believers to pray that God helps and allows them to live in Chengdu in peace.

Pray: for God to watch over and give the persecuted peace and protection as they face dangerous situations. May the Holy Spirit be with them. (2 Corinthians 12:10)

More: www.chinaaid.org/2021/10/dai-zhichao-and-his-family-face-ongoing.html

Sudan: military dissolves government, arrests leaders

The Sudanese military have declared a state of emergency and dissolved civilian rule, an event which many had feared. They have been at odds with civilian leaders since Omar al-Bashir was overthrown two years ago. time. Recently there was a pro-military sit-in outside the presidential palace, then a week later counter-protests were held, supporting the civilian government. Now more protests have been called by pro-democracy groups to 'counter the military coup'. Sudan could be set for yet another period of showdown between the armed forces and the people. The country has made huge strides in normalising ties with the West and unlocking much-needed funding. The promise of democracy has kept many allies hopeful. But that is at risk now. The World Bank and the US have stopped aid to Sudan, and the African Union has suspended Sudan from all its activities. See <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/10/27/african-union-suspends-sudan-over-coup>

Pray: for Sudan to find a workable political system so that coups and coup attempts cease. (Isaiah 5:20)

More: www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-59033142

Burma (Myanmar): 'we work with tears'

A third Covid wave hit Myanmar amid ongoing violence from February's coup. A ministry leader said, 'This morning the wife of one of our workers cried on the phone, "My husband is struggling for breath. We need oxygen." I asked our driver to go as soon as possible for a two-hour drive. The military frequently stop vehicles and confiscate oxygen tanks and medicines. Local missionaries drive for eight to ten hours to provide life-saving medical equipment and food aid. These days are mourning and weeping days. We are fighting the seen enemy, the military coup, and the unseen enemy, Covid. Many die by guns, bombs and Covid. Much violence is random. A pastor's wife was killed in their house, a woman was killed while riding a motorbike toward the hospital. Since we have no government, no hospital, no government doctors and nurses, we search for private doctors and nurses that are available.'

Pray: for the missionaries working in nightmare conditions who are undertaking regular evangelism and aid efforts. (Psalm 34:7)

More: www.mnnonline.org/news/the-tearful-struggle-to-heal-battered-burma/

Pray for the Solomon Islands

Ethnic diversity across six islands creates a divided society across tribes with different languages, cultures and political groups that inhibit Christian work. Denominations divide along tribal lines. Nominalism is a problem even though the islands are 'Christian'. The Church has stagnated; a proper enculturation of the gospel would go a long way in overcoming this. Two different Islamic groups are making inroads on the Baha'i, Jehovah's Witnesses and Unification Church. Counterfeit Christian movements and quasi-Christian cults have also grown, and the old animistic worldview persists in some areas. Many Christians, even committed believers, drift from one group to the next, since most groups compete for members. A new awakening is needed. Pray for the Spirit to reinvigorate the many churches which possess such a strong spiritual heritage. Ministry to young people is vital, due to rapid population growth and the many young nominal Christians who need discipleship.

Pray: for Bible translation, for Christian outreach in schools and for Christian hospitals and clinics as the Islands have one of the highest incidences of malaria in the world. (Psalm 85:6)

More: operationworld.org/prayer-calendar/10-28/

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