

Prayer Alert

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The Lord works righteousness and justice for all the oppressed. (Psalm 103:6)

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!

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

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Praise Reports

[Headteacher fails to stop school worship](#)

A headteacher attempted to invoke a UN convention to ban singing Christian hymns at a religiously diverse infant school. A third of students at Poulner Infant School have Christian parents, but humanist head Jo Conner believes singing hymns infringes on the 'human rights' of non-Christian students. All schools must provide an opportunity for wholly- or broadly-inclusive Christian worship to promote spiritual development: however, they may apply for an exemption in particular circumstances. Ms Conner sought an exemption, saying Christian hymns were inappropriate as only a third of students were Christian. The advisory council for Religious Education said any parent had a right to withdraw their child from collective worship, but no withdrawals had been recorded and no parents had complained about worship music. They rejected her application.

Praise: God for the outcome, and pray for Christian worship in schools to stay for ever. (Matthew 18:20)

More: premierchristian.news/en/news/article/headteacher-tries-to-invoke-un-convention-to-stop-worship-music-in-school

[Young people far more likely to pray](#)

A survey by the Church of England has found that younger people are far more likely to pray than older generations. The rising interest in meditation, spirituality and mindfulness has increased the numbers of those who connect with faith. 1/3rd of 18- to 34-year-olds have prayed in the last month, compared to just 25% of people aged over 55. The younger generation is also more likely to have said a prayer at any time. The Archbishop of York said, 'As Christians, prayer is the bedrock of our faith and deepens our relationship and understanding with God.' The survey shows that many people still long for that connection with something and someone beyond themselves. At this time of uncertainty when we face many pressing issues, reaching out in prayer to the God who loves us and longs to be known to us can bring peace and transform lives.

Praise: God that younger people want to pray; may our churches be places where prayer is taught, experienced and answered. (Jeremiah 33:3)

More: premierchristian.news/en/news/article/church-of-england-survey-finds-younger-people-are-far-more-likely-to-pray-that-older-generations

British Isles

'Black hole' of child suicide

Suicide is the biggest killer of people aged under 35 in the UK. 'However bad you feel, this will pass. You are not alone, things will look different tomorrow.' That is what Pete would have said to his only child, Jamie, if he had been able to read his suicide note before he died. Jamie was one of 1,621 young people under 35 who took their own lives in 2019. After Pete had struggled to cope with his death for two years, he read about three fathers going through the same thing. Known as the 'Three Dads', Andy, Mike and Tim walked 300 miles, in memory of their three daughters, to raise £3,000 for suicide prevention charity Papyrus (<https://www.papyrus-uk.org/aboutus/>). They eventually raised over £800,000. Over 200 school children commit suicide every year. They say we are doing nothing to equip young people with understanding and skills that could allow them to save themselves.

Pray: for local councils, churches, healthcare professionals, and school staff to learn suicide prevention skills and ways to promote positive emotional wellbeing in youth. (Proverbs 3:1-5)

More: www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-leicestershire-62646892

Energy bills

Ofgem says a typical household gas and electricity bill will rise to £3,549 a year from October. Save the Children warned the rise could put young people's health at risk, with families unable to afford to heat their homes. Money expert Martin Lewis predicted grave consequences without more state help. Liz Truss has 'ruled out' further direct support for everybody to help cover the costs of surging energy bills, and was not considering further support like the £400 payment that all households will receive this winter. Rishi Sunak says the government must provide some direct support to everyone (<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-62703858>). Ovo Energy has proposed a ten-point plan for the Government to subsidise soaring gas and electricity bills so that the poorest households get the most support. A key proposal is for energy firms to borrow from a government-backed fund to subsidise bills (<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-62742303>).

Pray: for the new government to be blessed with the compassion and wisdom to deliver a package of financial support for struggling households. (Proverbs 19:17)

More: www.ft.com/content/77c82ab5-5916-4dac-b4e9-12935e3eff5c

Using online teaching to cut costs

Forty schools will use a new virtual messaging tool for pupils to get online help from vetted subject experts in the autumn term to avoid hiring new staff amid a budget crisis. The tool, askOLA, was designed to help pupils study after school but will now be made available during lessons. Over 200 schools are expected to use askOLA by the end of the autumn term, giving 20,000 pupils access during lessons. Pupils connect to an online teaching assistant in less than three minutes, and are coached using a chat box and a virtual whiteboard until they understand. The online teachers start each session by asking the pupil how they are, to assess their mental health and whether they are able to deal with the learning problem.

Pray: for the chat box to be wisely used as schools reduce the number of in-person teaching assistants, and for special educational needs to be successfully catered for. (Proverbs 16:16)

More: www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2022/08/29/pupils-told-use-online-teaching-assistants-help-cut-school-costs/

'If the police won't do their job, we'll do it for them'

Children as young as 11 are being violently attacked by teenagers who film the assaults called 'patterning'. They post the videos across social media to embarrass the victim. One mother got a phone call from her daughter screaming 'Mum, please. They've got me. They've got my hair, it's falling out. They're stomping all over me.' In the background she heard 'Kick her again. She's down, kick her again.' Parents believe the police do not respond fast enough, and have taken the matter into their own hands, asking the BBC to show the seriousness of the attacks by the teenagers. Recently parents gathered outside Chorley police station holding large photos of their children to draw public attention to the violence. One mother was told her daughter was one blow away from losing her life. Mothers claim police foot patrols are non-existent, and when they call 999 nothing happens. Gang members also attack members of the public, bars, and businesses.

Pray: for Lancashire police to take faster and more effective action to rein in the assaults and anti-social behaviour. (Matthew 5:9)

More: www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-62722082

Police crackdown on crime

Merseyside police made 32 arrests, carried out 66 stop and searches, executed 11 warrants, and seized eight vehicles in 24 hours as they cracked down on organised crime after the fatal shooting of Olivia Pratt-Korbel. A total of 202 people have now been arrested. The latest arrests were part of Operation Miller, the force's effort to confront and bring down organised crime in the area. A 31-year-old man was arrested for possession of a lock knife, over £9,000 in cash, a quantity of white powder and cannabis when they searched his home. Another was arrested when they searched his home and found a stolen Rolex watch. Two other men were arrested for stealing a car, dangerous driving, possession of bladed articles, and assaulting police. Officers have also been deployed on major routes in and out of the city targeting suspected criminals.

Pray: for the success of all the efforts to counter crime and provide mental health support for victims. (Psalm 82:3-4)

More: www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-merseyside-62715463

Nadhim Zahawi visits US for talks

The UK chancellor Nadhim Zahawi visited the USA for cost-of-living talks during what could be his final week in the job. The two candidates for PM have signalled they will offer more help when elected, though neither has given details. Mr Zahawi insists he has been working tirelessly to come up with proposals for either leadership candidate to bring in more support. The chancellor met banking chiefs in New York to discuss co-operating on financial services, before heading to Washington DC to discuss support for Ukraine, the global economic outlook, and energy security. He said that global pressures must be overcome through global efforts.

Pray: for the UK and UK's allies to be successful in creating a fair and more robust economy at home and abroad. (Proverbs 15:22)

More: www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-62719525

Sturgeon strike chaos

First minister Nicola Sturgeon has faced scathing criticism over her handling of the chaos caused by binmen striking in over 60% of Scotland's councils until the end of August. Walkouts in a further twenty councils start on 6 September. While piles of rat-infested rubbish line Scotland's streets, Ms Sturgeon is having rubbish collected from her official residence by taxpayer-funded contractors. Teachers are also to ballot for industrial action, which would see primary schools and nurseries shut. Cleaners, janitors, catering staff and pupil support staff will walk out from 6 to 8 September, forcing the closure of a thousand schools and nurseries. Over 80% of Unite members from Scotland's exam board have also voted to walk out following the pay dispute. Mail and train workers will also strike [in September](https://www.glasgowlive.co.uk/news/glasgow-news/strikes-scotland-september-royal-mail-24896203) (<https://www.glasgowlive.co.uk/news/glasgow-news/strikes-scotland-september-royal-mail-24896203>).

Pray: for exam results appeals to be dealt with, for rancid rubbish to be removed before becoming a health crisis, and for the politicians and unions to agree terms. (Amos 5:24)

More: www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2022/08/28/nicola-sturgeons-bins-collected-private-firm-edinburgh-strike/

Europe

Ukraine: UN team inspect Zaporizhzhia

On 1 September, shelling near Ukraine's Zaporizhzhia nuclear plant complex forced a visit by UN experts to be delayed. Earlier, Energoatom said Russian shelling forced the shutdown of one of only two operating reactors, while Moscow said it had thwarted a Ukrainian attempt to seize the plant. There are regular incidents at or near Zaporizhzhia. The plant was recently disconnected from Ukraine's power grid and back-up generators kicked in to supply power after fires damaged overhead power lines, cutting the plant off for the first time in its history. The director of IAEA, Rafael Grossi, said the team had made good progress on the first day of their inspection and would be staying on. Residents near the site were given iodine tablets recently [in case of a radiation leak](https://metro.co.uk/2022/08/27/residents-near-zaporizhzhia-plant-given-iodine-pills-in-case-of-leak-17255328/) (<https://metro.co.uk/2022/08/27/residents-near-zaporizhzhia-plant-given-iodine-pills-in-case-of-leak-17255328/>).

Pray: for the mission to have complete access to every area to assess damage, determine and remove any potential weaknesses or threats that could cause a nuclear accident. (Jeremiah 22:3)

More: www.reuters.com/world/europe/un-team-inspect-ukrainian-nuclear-plant-mission-avert-disaster-2022-09-01/

Exodus of Russian Jews

Following Russia's invasion of Ukraine, 20,500 of Russia's Jews (12.5%) have moved to Israel, where anyone who has at least one Jewish grandparent has the right to citizenship. An estimated 30,000 other dual passport holders have left Russia for Israel since March. Thousands more have moved to other countries. In March Moscow's former chief rabbi Goldschmidt fled to Israel, where he now lives in exile. He said that the Jewish community was pressured to support the war publicly, but did not want to do so. Many believe the security and future of Russian Jews depends on Israel-Russia relations, which currently are extremely precarious, especially after Israeli premier Yair Lapid condemned Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Lapid also made it clear that the threatened closure of the Russian branch of the Jewish Agency would be a 'serious event', potentially endangering bilateral ties.

Pray: for God to work His purposes out in Russia and in Israel. (Isaiah 11:12)

More: prophecytoday.uk/index.php

Worldwide

Pakistan: flood disaster

On 30 August Pakistan and the UN launched a joint appeal for \$160 million to help Pakistan recover from monsoon floods that have put 1/3 of the country under water. On 1 September the UK announced a further £15 million for shelter and essential supplies to over 33 million people. Over 1,100 lives have been lost, whilst roads, crops, homes and bridges have been washed away. Pray for the bereaved to be comforted and the isolated to be rescued. Pray for the immediate needs of water, sanitation, shelter and protection to reach the needy quickly. Pray for help to reach families who must repair their homes and maintain their livelihoods. Pray for communities to be free of diseases carried by polluted water. Pray for the nation to find ways of importing vegetables as it faces serious food shortages in the coming months: it could even consider importing from arch-rival India.

Pray: for Christians to demonstrate the love of Christ to their neighbours, and for the unsaved who cry out for help to meet their Saviour. (Romans 15:13)

More: www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-steps-up-support-for-pakistans-flood-response

Israel: pray for the government

On 1 November Israelis will vote again. Defections, inability to pass legislation, and disagreements with an Arab-Israeli coalition have caused another government to collapse. Pray for a government that will heal the divisions of the pro-Netanyahu vs anti-Netanyahu camps. 1 November is All Saints Day. Pray for only righteous people to be voted into office. Pray for God to work in the hearts of Israelis now, so that they vote in line with His will. Pray for the upcoming high holiday season to show Israelis that they already have a King. Lord, speak to Israel's politicians to do all they can to heal relationships and to humble themselves before each other in respect and love. Lord, please clear out the dross from Israel's political scene and raise up people whom You see as righteous to lead Israel at this time. Expose unrighteousness and prevent political alliances that are not of You. [See also https://www.ifi.org.il/en/prayer/2022-08-26](https://www.ifi.org.il/en/prayer/2022-08-26)

Pray: for God to anoint with His Spirit the people who will be ministers in the new coalition. (Numbers 3:3)

More: www.aljazeera.com/program/inside-story/2022/6/22/will-a-new-vote-in-israel-make-a-difference

Nicaragua: Church being silenced

Aid to the Church in Need (ACN) is urgently calling for prayers for Nicaragua amid an escalation of efforts to silence the Church. The expulsion of the country's Apostolic Nuncio was followed by the abduction of Bishop Rolando, the Apostolic Administrator of a vacant diocese, along with three priests, two seminarians, a deacon and a photographer. Bishop Álvarez is under house arrest after he criticised the closure of Catholic radio stations. ACN said, 'These events represent further escalations in an attempt to silence the Nicaraguan Church. There is no easy solution. We need to support them as much as possible and pray for a peaceful solution and no further increase in hostilities. This crisis is critical. In less than four years, the Catholic Church has suffered over 190 attacks, including a fire in the Cathedral of Managua.' Street processions are prohibited, religious celebrations are interrupted, and the police intimidate worshippers at churches.

Pray: for God to strengthen the imprisoned priests, comfort their families and congregations, and encourage every church as they face persecution. (Romans 15:13)

More: acnuk.org/news/nicaragua-the-church-is-being-silenced/

Oman: 91% are unreached

Oman's economy is heavily dependent on declining oil reserves. It has begun focusing on tourism as a new source of economic growth. Diverse untouched landscapes of coastlines, deserts, and mountains are unique destinations for travellers. The Oman Arab Bank recently sponsored their third tourism forum to train young adults in the tourism industry. While this boosts Oman's economy, it is also an opportunity for the Gospel to reach five million people who have never heard the good news of Jesus' love and gift of salvation. Proselytising is illegal, and those in active Christian ministry experience pressure to leave the country. But as tourism increases, creative access to new people groups will become more feasible. Pray for successful expansion of current Oman ministries: relief and water projects, media, literature, business as ministry, urban evangelism, and church planting. As tourism meets the financial needs of Oman, may the Church go forth to meet the spiritual needs.

Pray: for the Christians in Oman to be as creative as the Omani government. (Matthew 5:16)

More: www.prayercast.com/oman.html

Iraq: political dysfunction and violence

Moqtada al-Sadr won most parliamentary seats last October, but he refused to negotiate with Iran-backed Shia groups to form a government, causing a year of political instability. When he announced his retirement from politics on 29 August it caused an eruption of street fighting overnight, as fighters exchanged gunfire. Tracer rounds illuminated the night sky in some of the worst violence to hit Baghdad in recent years, including using heavy weaponry such as rocket-propelled grenades. Some fighting was between the Peace Brigades, a militia loyal to Mr Sadr, and members of the Iraqi military. Some fighters Iran closed its borders with Iraq amidst the fighting, and Kuwait urged its citizens to leave immediately. A UN spokesperson has called for 'immediate steps' to de-escalate the situation. Iraq's caretaker prime minister has declared a nationwide curfew after unrest in several other cities, and suspended cabinet meetings. By 31 August most violence had stopped, but the country's crisis has only deepened. See <https://www.aljazeera.com/opinions/2022/8/31/iraqs-political-dysfunction-just-got-worse>

Pray: for Iraq's tortured political journey to end and for the Sunni and Shia parties to agree so that the people have peace and security. (Titus 3:9)

More: www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-62719497

China: torturing critics in psychiatric hospitals

In the Chinese ankan (peace and health) system detainees are strapped onto beds, pumped full of drugs, receive electric-shock therapy, and are left to lie in their own excrement. Some are confined for their entire lifetimes. The system is grounded in the Communist Party's optimistic totalitarian notion that medical treatment can make people obedient. Medics administer drugs that damage prisoners' central nervous systems, intentionally overdosing them, apply extreme-strength electroacupuncture, and brutally force-feed them. This abuse of psychiatry has continued for seven decades in the People's Republic of China. The Communist Party has changed the organisational structures and the methods of how it destroys people in psychiatric institutions, but the destruction of life continues. Safeguard defenders, and the international community, must finally acknowledge that the Party is inherently murderous. The only way to end the abuse of psychiatry in China as well as the Party's other horrific crimes is to end its rule.

Pray: for the international community to bring to an end the torture and killing of critics, petitioners, activists, dissidents, and religious adherents in psychiatric hospitals. (Psalm 82:3)

More: www.gatestoneinstitute.org/18843/china-torture-psychiatric-hospitals

Syria: pray for the persecuted

Zaina is just one of the thousands of Christians who suffer for their faith. After she was married her brother-in-law attempted to rape her. She fled to her parents, but they sided with him, enraged at the shame she had brought on the family. She fled to her aunt, but her father found her and beat her unconscious - leaving only when he thought she was dead. Her aunt asked her to leave. During this desperate time Zaina heard about the love and mercy of Jesus and received him as her Saviour. Her family continued to threaten her. She relocated several times, and finally her husband divorced her. She found a church and a job, but when her boss discovered she was a Christian convert he fired her, fearing retribution from the predominantly Muslim community. Her brother ultimately convinced her to come home, but he deceived her and once there he tried to kill her. She has relocated again and is now dealing with several health issues.

Pray: for Zaina and the many other converts to Christianity who continue to pursue their faith despite persecution. (Hebrews 12:3)

More: http.org/

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