

Prayer Alert

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Great are the works of the Lord; they are pondered by all who delight in them. Glorious and majestic are His deeds, and His righteousness endures for ever. (Psalm 111:2,3)

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

Pray with us for the Mozambique presidential and parliamentary elections taking place on 9 October: [Insight Guide](#).

Invitation - to serve with the PA team!

How would you like to join our Prayer Alert team? We are a group of volunteers based in different parts of England. If you appreciate what we do and are confident with browsing the internet, discovering relevant articles and basic editing, we would love to hear from you! Please hit 'reply', introduce yourself, and we will be in touch.

In the meantime, because the team is currently short of personnel, please be aware that there may be occasions when Prayer Alert contains fewer articles than usual.

Thank you for partnering with us in praying for the nations.

May God bless and encourage you this year,

David Fletcher and the Prayer Alert team.

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Praise Reports

[USA: victory for pastor arrested for public Bible reading](#)

Pastor Damon Atkins was arrested earlier this year while reading Bible verses aloud on a sidewalk outside a Pride event in Reading, Pennsylvania. A police officer confronted him, accusing him of trying to provoke the crowd. Despite Atkins asserting his First Amendment rights, he was quickly handcuffed and removed from the scene. The charges against him were later dropped, and he received a full acquittal in court along with compensation. His legal defence was taken up by attorneys who argued that his arrest was a clear violation of his constitutional right to free speech and religious expression. 'Police have been put on notice that, if someone is speaking peaceably, you need to acknowledge those rights,' the attorney said. Atkins remains resolute in his mission to share God's truth, viewing this experience as part of the growing hostility toward biblical values in society. His story has become a rallying point for Christians concerned about freedom of religion and speech in America.

Praise: God for the victory in Pastor Atkins' case and the defence of religious freedom. Pray for boldness and protection for others who are witnessing on the streets of their cities. (Matthew 5:10)

More: www.faithwire.com/2024/09/16/pastor-terrorized-arrested-for-reading-the-bible-aloud-scores-complete-victory/

Global Day of Prayer for America - 22 September

The Global Day of Prayer for America is scheduled for 22 September, with the goal of sparking a nationwide revival. Participants are invited to join an online prayer meeting from 7:00 to 10:00 am (EST), featuring leaders from around the globe. This event focuses on uniting believers to seek a Christ-awakening, where the Holy Spirit ignites a passion for Jesus and spiritual transformation sweeps across the country. Dr Jason Hubbard emphasises the urgent need for revival in American churches, communities, and families, highlighting the spiritual stagnation and division currently present. The call is for extraordinary prayer and intercession, recognising that true revival brings societal transformation and comprehensive change. The event underscores that revival is not merely a series of meetings but a deep, God-driven movement marked by humility, repentance, and a hunger for God's presence. It is a call for America to be saturated with the power and glory of God, bringing revival from coast to coast.

Praise: God for calling the USA to revival and for uniting believers worldwide in powerful, transforming prayer. (Psalm 85:6)

More: www.gdop-america.org

British Isles

New safe zones outside abortion clinics

From 31 October, safe zones around abortion clinics in England and Wales will take effect, prohibiting protests within 150 metres of these facilities under the Public Order Act. The new law, which received royal assent in May last year, aims to prevent harassment, intimidation, or obstruction of women seeking abortion services, as well as clinic staff. It is now illegal to engage in behaviour that intentionally or recklessly influences someone's decision regarding abortion services. Silent prayer may also fall under this ban, a contentious point raised by anti-abortion groups who argue it infringes on their rights to freedom of expression and religious belief. Campaigners advocating for the ban, such as the British Pregnancy Advisory Service, argue that it is necessary for ensuring the safety and dignity of women. The maximum penalty for violating the law will be an unlimited fine. [See <https://premierchristian.news/en/news/article/silent-prayer-nationwide-buffer-zones-around-abortion-clinics>](https://premierchristian.news/en/news/article/silent-prayer-nationwide-buffer-zones-around-abortion-clinics)

Pray: for God's protection over freedoms of expression and faith as these new laws are enforced. Pray for wisdom for the Christian organisations advocating and campaigning in this arena. (Psalm 18:2)

More: news.sky.com/story/safe-zones-outside-abortion-clinics-to-come-into-effect-in-england-and-wales-13217012

Poor maternity care becoming 'normalised', watchdog warns

The Care Quality Commission (CQC) has warned that poor maternity care in NHS hospitals could become 'normalised' without urgent action. A report based on 131 inspections between August 2022 and December 2023 found that 48% of maternity units were rated as 'requires improvement' or 'inadequate', while only 4% were rated as 'outstanding'. The report highlights systemic issues across NHS services, echoing previous high-profile investigations, such as the Ockenden Review into over 200 baby deaths at Shrewsbury and Telford Hospital. The CQC emphasised that the problems identified are widespread and not limited to a few hospitals. The lack of proper equipment, space, and safety measures raises significant concerns about the potential normalisation of serious harm in maternity care. Health secretary Wes Streeting expressed his dismay, stating that childbirth should not be an experience women fear or look back on with trauma. The report stresses the need for immediate reforms to ensure the safety and dignity of women and newborns.

Pray: for urgent reforms in maternity care, ensuring safety, dignity, and compassionate care for every mother. Pray for the families who are grieving or have suffered as a result of poor care. (Isaiah 40:11)

More: www.itv.com/news/2024-09-18/action-needed-to-avoid-poor-maternity-care-becoming-normalised-watchdog-warns

Pharmacists balloted over 'work-to-rule' action amid funding row

Pharmacists in England are being balloted for potential 'work-to-rule' action due to a growing funding dispute. The National Pharmacy Association (NPA) has called for a £1.3 billion increase in funding, warning that pharmacies are being pushed to the brink by a decade of real-terms funding cuts. The ballot could lead to actions such as shorter operating hours, reduced services, and ending free deliveries of medications. The NPA emphasised that pharmacies are struggling to provide safe care, with 1,500 closures over the past decade. While the NPA is not a trade union, meaning that the ballot is advisory, the result could lead to action starting before Christmas if the majority supports it. The department of health acknowledged the strain on pharmacies, stating they are essential to making healthcare more community-focused. It also promised to accelerate the rollout of independent prescribing to improve access to care.

Pray: for fair provision and guidance for pharmacists as they seek adequate funding to serve communities. Pray for the Government as it handles this and other pay disputes in the health sector. (Philippians 4:19)

More: www.dailymail.co.uk/health/article-13866623/pharmacists-balloted-work-rule-action-GPs.html

Man 'pretended to be white' to stir up hatred during UK riots

Ehsan Hussain, a 25-year-old from Birmingham, has been sentenced to two years and four months in prison for inciting racial hatred during the UK riots. Posing as a far-right extremist, he used a Telegram chat group with over 12,000 members to incite violence against Muslims in Birmingham. His messages called for disorder in areas with large Muslim populations, such as Alum Rock and Bordesley Green. The court heard that his posts, filled with racist language, contributed to escalating tensions that led to violent unrest in Birmingham, including attacks on an Islamic centre, hospitals, and public transport. Hussain admitted to distributing threatening and abusive material intended to stir racial hatred. West Midlands Police praised the public for helping to identify Hussain's posts, emphasising that such incitement would not be tolerated.

Pray: for healing in communities torn by hatred, and for peace and reconciliation across racial divides. (Matthew 5:9)

More: www.express.co.uk/news/uk/1950304/uk-riots-latest-court-news-birmingham

Axing winter fuel payments will hurt everybody, warns pensioner

Millions of pensioners in the UK are facing a challenging winter after the Government voted to cut automatic winter fuel payments to pensioners. The decision, supported by nearly 400 Labour MPs, addresses a £22 billion funding gap. Rachel Reeves defended the move, assuring that the payment will still be available to those receiving Pension Credit. However, many pensioners, including Francis Moore, expressed shock and disappointment, warning that this will lead to a bleak winter for the elderly. Moore highlighted the severe impact of rising energy costs on pensioners who already struggle to make ends meet. He criticised the Government for not doing more to support elderly citizens, stating that warmth is essential for survival. Pensioners will have to budget carefully for basic necessities while rising electricity bills threaten to worsen their financial hardship. There is widespread criticism of the Government's handling of pensioner welfare; many are accusing it of neglecting a vulnerable generation.

Pray: for compassion and provision for the elderly facing hardship this winter due to fuel cuts. Pray for foodbanks and other initiatives serving those in need. (Isaiah 46:4)

More: www.gbnews.com/politics/keir-starmer-accused-dismissing-pensioners-winter-fuel-payment

Bishop blocks retired priest's 'permission to officiate' after climate protest arrest

The Bishop of Bristol, Rt Revd Vivienne Faull, has declined to grant Permission to Officiate (PTO) to retired priest Revd Sue Parfitt, who is facing trial for criminal damage after a climate protest. PTO allows retired or non-stipendiary clergy to perform ministerial duties such as leading services, preaching, and conducting weddings or funerals. Parfitt, 82, is accused of damaging the glass protecting the Magna Carta at the British Library during a May 2024 protest. She and a fellow activist broke the glass and glued themselves to the display, holding a sign accusing the government of breaking the law. Parfitt said that while the Bishop's decision is painful, her greater priority is raising awareness about the climate crisis. The Diocese of Bristol said that while it supports environmental action, it emphasises the need for peaceful and lawful methods of protest.

Pray: for wisdom and peace for church leaders in navigating justice, ministry, and advocacy during times of moral conflict. (Amos 5:24)

More: premierchristian.news/us/news/article/bishop-blocks-retired-priest-officiating-after-climate-protest-arrest

Europe

Central Europe: Storm Boris causes widespread devastation

Central Europe has been severely affected by Storm Boris, bringing heavy rain and snow and causing flooding across Poland, the Czech Republic, Romania, and Austria, with at least 24 reported deaths. In Poland, the town of Nysa has seen the evacuation of 40,000 residents, and other towns face severe damage after rivers overflowed. A state of natural disaster has been declared, with Wroclaw expecting more flooding. Meanwhile, rivers like the Oder and Danube are rising, with Slovakia, Hungary, and Croatia also preparing for potential floods. Emergency services, aided by the military, are working tirelessly across the region to protect communities. On 19 September, Storm Boris reached northern Italy, with similar reports of devastation: [see \(https://efe.com/en/latest-news/2024-09-19/storm-boris-causes-severe-flooding-in-northern-italy/\)](https://efe.com/en/latest-news/2024-09-19/storm-boris-causes-severe-flooding-in-northern-italy/) Extreme rainfall is becoming more frequent and intense across central Europe, as across much of the world.

Pray: for protection, relief, and swift recovery for all those affected by these devastating floods. (Isaiah 43:2a)

More: www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/ckgmrnwgm7zo

Portugal: firefighters die battling wildfires

To date, seven Portuguese firefighters have died while battling over fifty wildfires ravaging the country's central and northern regions. Portugal has mobilised around 5,300 firefighters and has also called for EU help. The fires have forced the closure of major motorways and disrupted train services in the north. Though authorities describe the situation as 'calmer but still worrying', many villages remain under threat. The hardest-hit area, Aveiro district, has lost dozens of homes, with four deaths reported. The fires, which have already burned through more than 10,000 hectares (24,710 acres) of forest and shrubland, could engulf a further 20,000 hectares. Portugal and Spain have so far recorded fewer fires than usual this year, but both remain vulnerable to the increasingly hot and dry conditions caused by global warming.

Pray: for comfort for the bereaved. Pray for strength for those fighting the fires, and for success in curbing them. (Psalm 9:9)

More: www.reuters.com/business/environment/death-toll-climbs-four-portugal-battles-wildfires-2024-09-17/

France: husband admits drugging his wife and allowing others to rape her

Dominique Pélicot, 71, has admitted in court to repeatedly drugging and facilitating the rape of his wife Gisèle for nearly a decade. In a case that has shaken France, he confessed his role in the assaults, which involved fifty men who are also on trial. His wife, who divorced him following his arrest in 2020, has become a symbol of resilience for rape survivors in France for being willing to waive her anonymity in the case, and to appear openly in front of the media. Pélicot's confession is pivotal for the trial's outcome, as many co-defendants claim they were unaware or manipulated into participating. He has said that childhood sexual abuse and family trauma led him down this path, and expressed regret for his actions. In contrast, Gisèle told the court she felt utterly betrayed after fifty years of marriage. The trial has drawn public attention to the horrors of domestic sexual violence and the importance of justice for victims.

Pray: for healing and peace for all victims of sexual violence and their families. Pray that Gisèle's case will inspire and encourage others to seek justice. (Psalm 103:6)

More: apnews.com/article/france-rape-trial-drugged-pelicot-943400b83a8b111bcd42a0fb23a1cfd

Worldwide

Lebanon: exploding Hezbollah pagers and hand-held radios

A series of explosions rocked southern Lebanon on 18 September, as hand-held radios used by Hezbollah were remotely detonated, marking the deadliest day since cross-border fighting with Israel began nearly a year ago. The explosions killed at least twenty people and injured over 450. On the previous day many Hezbollah pagers exploded, killing twelve and injuring many more. Israeli officials have not confirmed involvement, though security sources link the attacks to Mossad. Hezbollah called it the worst security breach in its history. These events are fuelling fears of a wider Middle East war which could drag in the United States and Iran: a full-scale war could devastate Lebanon. Both sides have engaged in fighting along the border since the Gaza conflict erupted in October 2023. Hezbollah has vowed further retaliation, and tensions remain high. **BREAKING NEWS:** Israel launched a series of air strikes on southern Lebanon on 19 September, while Hezbollah's leader Hassan Nasrallah said that this week's incidents 'could be called a declaration of war'. See <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/middle-east/lebanon-israel-hezbollah-war-beirut-nasrallah-b2615819.html>

Pray: for peace and protection amidst escalating violence. Pray that leaders will have wisdom in making future plans. (Psalm 11:5)

More: www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/israel-planted-explosives-hezbollahs-taiwan-made-pagers-say-sources-2024-09-18/

USA: Biden and Harris call Trump after second assassination attempt

Both Joe Biden and Kamala Harris have spoken briefly to Donald Trump, following a second apparent assassination attempt against him on 15 September. Harris expressed relief over Trump's safety, while Biden focussed on safety and protection measures. Speaking later, Harris reiterated her stance against political violence, emphasising the importance of democracy and peaceful discourse. While Trump was playing on a Florida golf course, Secret Service agents spotted a man armed with an AK-style rifle near the perimeter. The suspect, Ryan Wesley Routh, had reportedly lain in wait for twelve hours. He fled from the scene, but was later arrested after a car chase. Trump's immediate reaction was to blame Biden and Harris for inciting violence against him through their rhetoric.

Pray: for the candidates' safety and for peace amidst political tensions in the nation. (Romans 14:19)

More: thehill.com/homenews/campaign/4884564-trump-assassination-attempt-harris-biden-routh/

Philippines / China: standoff in South China Sea

After a five-month standoff with China over Sabina Shoal in the South China Sea, the Philippines have had to withdraw a coastguard vessel from the area because of bad weather, crew health issues and damage due to a collision with a Chinese vessel in August. Some commentators have warned that China could seize control of the shoal, repeating an incident in 2012 at Scarborough Shoal, but not everyone agrees. Manila insists it hasn't abandoned Sabina, which is vital for resupplying troops at Second Thomas Shoal. Analysts have urged the Philippines to maintain a consistent presence, given its limited patrol capacity. Though tensions remain high, both nations are working to de-escalate the situation. The Philippines have said they are planning to send a replacement vessel, but have not given details.

Pray: for peace and wisdom as leaders navigate rising tensions in disputed waters. (Romans 12:18)

More: asianews.network/philippines-in-race-against-time-to-stop-potential-china-takeover-of-disputed-shoal/

Ecuador: proposal to allow foreign military bases again

President Daniel Noboa has proposed changing Ecuador's constitution to allow foreign military bases, a move aimed at combating transnational crime and drug trafficking. He argues that Ecuador needs international military assistance to address escalating gang violence. This proposal comes fifteen years after former president Rafael Correa banned foreign military bases, ending the US presence in the country. It would have to pass through the constitutional court, the national assembly, and a public referendum. Noboa, facing declining approval ratings due to ongoing violence, hopes this reform will bolster his security policies ahead of his 2025 re-election campaign. Gang-related violence has surged in Ecuador's port cities, with murder and kidnapping rates skyrocketing.

Pray: for wisdom and guidance for Daniel Noboa's government as it confronts rising violence and seeks to restore peace. (Psalm 82:3)

More: www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cn0ed8vg5x9o

Cameroon: devastating floods

In recent weeks, heavy rains have devastated Mayo Danay in the far north of Cameroon, with Yagoua particularly affected. The unprecedented flooding has caused at least ten deaths, submerged entire neighbourhoods, and damaged 185 primary schools and 13 high schools. Over a thousand livestock have been lost, and more than 200,000 people have been impacted, with 8,000 homes destroyed. Many are struggling to meet basic needs, having lost everything. There are temporary camps for the displaced, and the destruction of a crucial bridge has worsened the isolation of the region. The government has promised a temporary bridge solution and 350 million CFA francs (£450,000) in aid. However, many consider this amount insufficient, given the scale of the crisis, and for now canoes are the only means of transport.

Pray: for relief and restoration for the flood victims, and for effective governmental aid. (Psalm 46:2)

More: www.africanews.com/2024/09/15/devastating-floods-in-cameroon-thousands-displaced-infrastructure-destroyed/

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