

# Prayer Alert

ISSUE 40-2024 | Friday 04 October 2024

[www.prayer-alert.net](http://www.prayer-alert.net) | [editor@prayer-alert.net](mailto:editor@prayer-alert.net)

-----

**I will praise You as long as I live, and in Your name I will lift up my hands. (Psalm 63:4)**

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.

## Praise Reports

[Omar found the truth after watching forbidden video](#)  
[Basketball star quits NBA to follow Jesus](#)

### British Isles

[PM goes to Brussels, eyes closer UK-EU cooperation](#)  
[Most wanted man jailed over '£100m' cocaine smuggling](#)  
[Treasury asking ministers to prepare huge infrastructure cuts](#)  
[Teenager seriously hurt in acid attack at school](#)  
[People told to read meters as energy bills rise](#)  
[Christians rally for free speech as court hears appeal of sacked school worker](#)

## Europe

[Ukraine: Russia captures strategic town](#)  
[Russia: journalists associated with Navalny put on trial](#)

## Worldwide

[Lebanon: Israeli airstrikes alongside ground offensive](#)  
[Brazil: 'If these fires continue, we indigenous people will die'](#)  
[Nigeria: president defends his reforms, protests continue](#)  
[Haiti: nearly half the population face acute food shortages](#)  
[Nepal: latest disaster exposes government's lack of preparedness](#)

## Praise Reports

### Omar found the truth after watching forbidden video

After Omar, from Morocco, risked watching a video entitled 'The Koran is NOT the Word of God', he found himself questioning the authenticity of Islam. After weeks of research, he became convinced the Bible was the true Word of God and embraced Christianity. He shared the videos with his coworker Ali, and both men eventually accepted Jesus into their hearts. Though his newfound faith brought joy, it also led to hardship: his brother-in-law, an extremist, separated him from his wife, Fatima, labelling him an infidel. After a year, Fatima, disobeying her brother, returned to Omar. However, she remained unconvinced about Christianity. When she needed surgery, it was the local church that cared for her, not her friends. Over time, seeing the love of Christ in action led her to accept Jesus. Christianity in Morocco, despite societal pressures, continues to grow as more people seek truth in Christ amidst disillusionment with Islam and its institutions.

Praise: God for Omar's story. Give thanks for those who risk everything to follow Jesus and bring the light of Christ to others. (Matthew 5:10)

More: [www.godreports.com/2024/09/moroccan-man-found-the-truth-after-watching-forbidden-video/](http://www.godreports.com/2024/09/moroccan-man-found-the-truth-after-watching-forbidden-video/)

### Basketball star quits NBA to follow Jesus

After two years in the NBA, former Atlanta Hawks forward AJ Griffin Jr announced his retirement to follow Jesus full-time. Griffin, 21, shared his decision in a heartfelt YouTube video after being released by his current club following the NBA Summer League, where he averaged 11.6 points per game. Griffin expressed excitement for this new season, saying, 'I'm not here to please man but only my Father in Heaven'. Quoting Hebrews 11:6, he hopes his decision inspires others to trust God fully. Griffin's family, including his father (who also played in the NBA), has supported his faith journey. His walk with Christ deepened after the tragic passing of his two-year-old nephew Jayce a year ago. During a worship service, Griffin prayed with his family as they mourned. Now, feeling called to leave basketball, he looks forward to sharing the Gospel and pursuing God's plan for his life.

Praise: God for AJ's bold decision to leave behind worldly success to pursue Jesus wholeheartedly. Pray for many more young people to 'earnestly seek Jesus'. (Hebrews 11:6)

More: [www.christianpost.com/news/aj-griffin-quits-nba-to-follow-jesus.html](http://www.christianpost.com/news/aj-griffin-quits-nba-to-follow-jesus.html)

## British Isles

### PM goes to Brussels, eyes closer UK-EU cooperation

Sir Keir Starmer made his first visit to Brussels this week, aiming to rebuild UK-EU relations post-Brexit. His visit focused on strengthening cooperation in defence, security, energy, climate change, and tackling irregular migration. While Starmer's message of 'sensible leadership' was welcomed, the EU remains cautious, particularly regarding Labour's call to reduce trade barriers. The EU reminded Starmer that these barriers stem from the UK's decision to leave the single market and customs union, which he reaffirmed will not be renegotiated. Discussions on migration found some agreement, particularly regarding stopping people-smuggling gangs. However, European leaders remain divided on migration policy, with some calling for the UK to open more legal pathways for asylum-seekers. Other negotiations include easing trade restrictions on UK exports and a proposed youth mobility scheme. The EU wants the UK to comply with existing agreements before opening new negotiations, signalling that while cooperation may improve, trade-offs will be required on both sides.

Pray: for wisdom and cooperation as UK and EU leaders work toward peaceful and just international relations. (Romans 12:18)  
More: [www.bbc.com/news/articles/cgk7zjdy34xo](http://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cgk7zjdy34xo)

### Most wanted man jailed over '£100m' cocaine smuggling

Jamie Stevenson, one of the UK's most wanted men, was sentenced to 20 years in prison for masterminding a plot to smuggle nearly a tonne of cocaine from Ecuador to Scotland, hidden in a banana shipment. Known as 'Iceman,' Stevenson pleaded guilty to directing the drug operation, which was intercepted by Border Force at Dover in 2020. The cocaine, valued between £76 million and £100 million, was addressed to a Glasgow fruit merchant. Stevenson was also involved in producing and supplying the drug etizolam. His arrest was part of Operation Pepperoni, which targeted criminal activities on the encrypted communication platform EncroChat. Stevenson fled the UK but was arrested in the Netherlands in 2022 and extradited. Authorities praised the investigation that brought him to justice, emphasising the harmful impact of his criminal activities on communities. His conviction highlights the ongoing battle against organised crime in the UK: others involved in the crime were also sentenced.

Pray: for protection over communities impacted by drug trafficking, and for the dismantling of organised crime networks. (Romans 12:21)  
More: [news.sky.com/story/one-of-uks-most-wanted-men-jailed-over-plot-to-smuggle-cocaine-worth-100m-in-banana-boxes-13225861](https://news.sky.com/story/one-of-uks-most-wanted-men-jailed-over-plot-to-smuggle-cocaine-worth-100m-in-banana-boxes-13225861)

### Treasury asking ministers to prepare huge infrastructure cuts

The Guardian reports that the Treasury has asked ministers to prepare for cuts of up to 10% in infrastructure spending, targeting projects such as hospital upgrades, road construction, and defence initiatives. Despite Chancellor Rachel Reeves' recent commitment to increased investment to stimulate growth, the government still faces a £22 billion financial shortfall. Economists warn that cutting capital investments could harm the economy and exacerbate the country's deteriorating public infrastructure. Reeves, set to deliver her first budget on 30 October, is expected to outline tax increases to fund public services, while also addressing departmental spending limits established before inflation and rising asylum costs worsened the deficit. However, some ministers argue that short-term cuts will hinder long-term economic progress.

Pray: for wise stewardship of national resources and for decisions which prioritise long-term stability and growth over short-term fixes. (Proverbs 15:22)  
More: [www.theguardian.com/politics/2024/oct/01/treasury-asking-ministers-to-draw-up-billions-of-pounds-of-infrastructure-cuts](http://www.theguardian.com/politics/2024/oct/01/treasury-asking-ministers-to-draw-up-billions-of-pounds-of-infrastructure-cuts)

### Teenager seriously hurt in acid attack at school

A 14-year-old girl has sustained serious, potentially life-changing injuries after an acidic substance was thrown at her and another teenager outside Westminster Academy in Westbourne Park, London. The incident, which took place after school hours, also injured a 16-year-old boy and a staff member who attempted to help. The suspect, described as a tall black male riding an e-scooter, fled the scene after the attack. The injured girl remains hospitalised, while the teenage boy's injuries are not life-threatening. The school was closed following the incident, with lessons moved online, and counselling support is being provided to students. The local council has also offered psychological support to the school community. Westminster City Council leader Adam Hug called the attack 'truly shocking': he said that the council would work with police to offer reassurance and assistance during this traumatic time.

Pray: for healing and protection for this girl and other victims of violence, and for the man responsible for this brutal attack. Pray for peace and safety across our schools and communities. (Psalm 34:18)  
More: [www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cjd51x9yr89o](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cjd51x9yr89o)

### People told to read meters as energy bills rise

Energy bills are to rise in England, Wales, and Scotland; households using typical amounts of gas and electricity will now pay about £149 more, bringing the average bill to £1,717 a year. Experts are urging billpayers to submit accurate meter readings to avoid being charged for estimated energy use at the new, higher rate. This price increase comes as winter approaches, but without extra cost-of-living payments or universal winter fuel payments for pensioners, causing concern for many. The price cap, set by energy regulator Ofgem, has been adjusted, raising gas and electricity unit prices and standing charges. Energy debts have also risen, with households collectively owing £3.7 billion to suppliers. Support for vulnerable customers is available through initiatives by energy companies, and pensioners on low incomes may be eligible for pension credit. Forecasters are predicting a slight drop in prices in January, providing some relief, but many fear these increases will exacerbate financial difficulties for households already struggling with high costs.

Pray: for provision and relief for families struggling with rising energy bills, and for compassionate action from leaders and suppliers. (Philippians 4:19)  
More: [www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c7v6l26v585o](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c7v6l26v585o)

## Christians rally for free speech as court hears appeal of sacked school worker

Christians gathered in London to rally for free speech as the Court of Appeal heard the case of Kristie Higgs, a Christian school worker who expressed concerns in 2019 about LGBT+ education at her son's CofE primary school. Higgs was dismissed from the school for 'gross misconduct' after sharing Facebook posts criticising the 'No Outsiders in Our School' programme, which introduced topics such as gender identity and same-sex relationships. Following an anonymous complaint, Higgs was subjected to a disciplinary hearing and subsequently dismissed for allegedly bringing the school into disrepute. Supported by the Christian Legal Centre, she argued her dismissal violated her rights to religious freedom and free speech. Though a tribunal initially ruled against her, a successful appeal led to a rehearing. Now, Higgs seeks a final ruling from the Court of Appeal to prevent another tribunal and protect Christian employees' free speech rights. The hearing's outcome could significantly impact religious expression in the workplace.

Pray: for the protection of free speech and religious freedom. Pray for wisdom and just outcomes in this and similar legal decisions impacting Christian rights. (Galatians 5:1)

More: [premierchristian.news/us/news/article/christians-rally-for-free-speech-as-court-hears-appeal-of-sacked-school-worker](https://premierchristian.news/us/news/article/christians-rally-for-free-speech-as-court-hears-appeal-of-sacked-school-worker)

## Europe

### Ukraine: Russia captures strategic town

Russia has captured the strategic eastern Ukrainian town of Vuhledar, a significant blow to Ukraine as it faces its third wartime winter. Russian soldiers have raised their flag over the devastated town, once home to 14,000 people but now reduced to just over a hundred. Ukraine's military confirmed their withdrawal, citing the threat of encirclement as Russian reinforcements arrived: their manpower advantage had finally broken Ukraine's fierce resistance. The town sits at a crucial junction of Ukraine's eastern and southern fronts: Ukraine now has to fight to stop the Russians advancing further west, making the prospect of retaking territory even more remote. This comes just after Volodymyr Zelensky's return from the USA, where he secured aid but not the security guarantees he sought. With Ukraine's energy infrastructure still under attack, the coming winter will test its resilience even further.

Pray: for strength, protection, and peace for Ukraine in its darkest hours. (Psalm 46:1)

More: [edition.cnn.com/2024/10/02/europe/vuhledar-russia-ukraine-war-capture-intl/index.html](https://edition.cnn.com/2024/10/02/europe/vuhledar-russia-ukraine-war-capture-intl/index.html)

### Russia: journalists associated with Navalny put on trial

Four Russian journalists have gone on trial in Moscow, accused of involvement in an 'extremist' group linked to FBK, an organisation set up by the late dissident Alexei Navalny. The defendants face up to six years in prison if convicted. The trial, which closed to the public after a brief open session, underscores the worsening climate for press freedom in Russia. The prosecutors allege that the journalist contributed to content for the YouTube channel run by FBK, which has been labelled an extremist organisation. As Russia tightens its grip on the media, 34 journalists and six other media workers are currently in detention, according to Reporters without Borders. Russia has intensified pressure on both domestic and foreign reporters since the start of its war in Ukraine.

Pray: for the protection and freedom of journalists facing persecution for truth-telling. (John 8:32)

More: [www.reuters.com/world/europe/behind-closed-doors-russia-tries-four-journalists-links-navalny-team-2024-10-02/](https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/behind-closed-doors-russia-tries-four-journalists-links-navalny-team-2024-10-02/)

## Worldwide

### Lebanon: Israeli airstrikes alongside ground offensive

An Israeli airstrike on central Beirut, targeting a building connected to Hezbollah's health unit, has killed at least six people and wounded seven more. On 28 September another airstrike on the city resulted in the death of Hezbollah's leader, Hassan Nasrallah, and Israel has now launched a 'limited' ground offensive in southern Lebanon against Hezbollah. The two forces are currently engaged in fierce combat, with casualties on both sides. Caretaker prime minister Najib Mikati has said that about 1.2 million Lebanese have been displaced by Israeli attacks. Meanwhile, on 1 October Iran launched [180 missiles against Jerusalem](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c9dyxxgv1jo) (<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c9dyxxgv1jo>), with remarkably few casualties, and Yemen's Houthis and armed groups in Iraq have launched attacks in the region in support of Hamas in its war with Israel in Gaza.

Pray: for peace and protection for innocent civilians caught in the crossfire of conflict. Pray for restraint, that the conflict will not escalate even further. (John 14:27)

More: [www.aljazeera.com/news/2024/10/3/israeli-attacks-heart-of-beirut-as-hezbollah-pushes-back-in-south-lebanon](https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2024/10/3/israeli-attacks-heart-of-beirut-as-hezbollah-pushes-back-in-south-lebanon)

### Brazil: 'If these fires continue, we indigenous people will die'

The Amazon is experiencing a huge environmental crisis; fires have ravaged over 62,000 square kilometres of forest, exacerbated by Brazil's most severe drought. The fires, usually deliberately started by loggers, miners, and farmers seeking land, are decimating the region. Raimundinha, who leads an indigenous firefighting brigade, has warned: 'If these fires continue, we indigenous people will die'. Respiratory issues are already affecting her family, and the fires are increasingly encroaching on lands which in theory are protected by the government. The drought has not only fuelled these fires but also drained rivers, making daily life for some nearly impossible. With dwindling resources and rising temperatures, the situation in the Amazon highlights the fragile balance between human activity and environmental conservation, as well as the catastrophic effects of climate change.

Pray: for protection and restoration of the Amazon, and strength for its defenders. (Psalm 24:1)

More: [www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cvgxv8n7wd0o](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cvgxv8n7wd0o)

### **Nigeria: president defends his reforms, protests continue**

On 1 October, in a televised speech to mark Nigeria's 64 years of independence, President Bola Tinubu acknowledged the financial struggles and search for meaningful employment faced by many people. He listed security gains and investments in farm machinery among achievements which would help ease economic pressures, and also announced a national youth conference, known as 'the 30-day Confab', whose recommendations would be considered and implemented. The president stressed that the government is mindful of future generations and their potential to contribute to the nation's progress. However, protests against the current economic hardships have taken place in several states, reflecting [discontent among citizens](https://www.africanews.com/2024/09/30/new-cost-of-living-rallies-planned-in-nigeria/) (<https://www.africanews.com/2024/09/30/new-cost-of-living-rallies-planned-in-nigeria/>). Some expressed disappointment with the lack of concrete measures to reduce inflation and improve living standards. Tinubu defended his economic reforms, which have pushed the inflation rate to a 28-year high.

Pray: for the president and his government to make decisions in the best interests of the country. (Jeremiah 29:11)

More: [www.africanews.com/2024/10/01/nigeria-turns-64-tinubu-vows-end-of-tunnel-is-near-some-protest-economic-hardship/](https://www.africanews.com/2024/10/01/nigeria-turns-64-tinubu-vows-end-of-tunnel-is-near-some-protest-economic-hardship/)

### **Haiti: nearly half the population face acute food shortages**

According to the IPC, a world hunger watchdog, nearly 48% of Haiti's population faces acute food shortages. Over five million people are enduring 'high levels of acute food insecurity' from August 2024 to February 2025. Armed gang violence, rampant across Haiti, is a major factor contributing to the crisis. Despite international interventions and the appointment of a new government, the gangs currently control 80% of Port-au-Prince and key roads leading to the north and south of the country. The difficulties have led to high inflation, with food costs now consuming up to 70% of household expenses. The lingering impacts of natural disasters like Hurricane Matthew and the 2021 earthquake further exacerbate the situation. A UN-backed mission led by Kenya has made some progress, but the IPC has warned that the overall crisis will likely worsen in the next eight months.

Pray: for God's protection and provision for the suffering people of Haiti. (Psalm 9:9)

More: [www.aljazeera.com/news/2024/10/1/half-of-haitians-facing-hunger-as-violence-persists](https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2024/10/1/half-of-haitians-facing-hunger-as-violence-persists)

### **Nepal: latest disaster exposes government's lack of preparedness**

A devastating monsoon downpour in Nepal has led to severe flooding and mudslides, claiming over 200 lives, injuring 127, and leaving 56 missing. Rescue operations successfully saved over four thousand stranded people. However, despite warnings of more heavy rains, the prime minister admitted that he had not anticipated such flooding in Kathmandu. One critic has said that the government 'miserably failed to not only protect people's lives but also, according to its admission, to coordinate the resources and manpower to save them'. Even the mayor of Kathmandu struggled to mobilise resources effectively. Critics have called for a more robust disaster management strategy by revitalising the national disaster management authority, allocating resources, and involving experts. Disaster prevention and management must be a top priority, transcending political lines, to protect the nation from future crises.

Pray: for God's mercy and wisdom in improving Nepal's disaster preparedness and response. (Psalm 18:2)

More: [asianews.network/natural-disasters-does-nepal-ever-learn/](https://asianews.network/natural-disasters-does-nepal-ever-learn/)

Please feel free to distribute Prayer Alert to anyone you feel will benefit from its ministry. All we ask is that you do not edit or change it in any way or charge for its use without contacting us first for written permission

Prayer Alert is produced in partnership with

C/O World Prayer Centre, 167 Newhall Street, Birmingham, B3 1SW

The views expressed in Prayer Alert and on our website are those of the authors, organisations and websites named, and are not necessarily those of the Prayer Alert Editorial Team, the Prayer Alert Steering Group or the World Prayer Centre or any of its employees or trustees. While we try to ensure that the information we provide is correct, mistakes do occur and we cannot guarantee the accuracy of our material. If you do notice any mistakes then please let us know.