

# Prayer Alert

ISSUE 42-2024 | Friday 18 October 2024  
[www.prayer-alert.net](http://www.prayer-alert.net) | [editor@prayer-alert.net](mailto:editor@prayer-alert.net)

---

**And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people. (Ephesians 6:18)**

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

Pray with us for the elections in Japan and Uruguay taking place on 27 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

'Average Joe': [story of a praying football coach](#)  
Hurricane Helene: ['Can you tell mommy I'm safe now?'](#)

## Europe

France: [cement firm goes on trial for financing terrorism](#)  
Serbia: [hundreds protest against proposed lithium mining](#)  
EU: [von der Leyen calls for tougher migrant deportations](#)

## British Isles

[Surprise fall in inflation paves way for interest rate cuts](#)  
[London mayor: Brexit 'disaster' cost 40,000 finance jobs](#)  
[Charities: end-of-life care must be fixed before changing legislation](#)  
[Alex Salmond's body to be flown home from North Macedonia](#)  
[Newcastle: boy dies, six injured by house explosion](#)  
[Police apologise to arrested pastor after destroying street preaching signs](#)

## Worldwide

[Global: starvation as a weapon, thousands dying every day](#)  
[Cuba: president leads march to support Gaza](#)  
[USA: Georgia judge overturns changes made by election board](#)  
[USA: prosecutors target those using AI for sex abuse images](#)  
[Sri Lanka: police arrest 230+ Chinese for cybercrime](#)  
[Kenya: elephants relocated to ease overcrowding](#)

## Praise Reports

### 'Average Joe': [story of a praying football coach](#)

The movie 'Average Joe' tells the remarkable story of coach Joe Kennedy, whose silent prayer at a high school football game led to a US supreme court case defending religious freedom. Raised in foster homes and expelled from several schools, Kennedy struggled with anger toward life and God. His journey of faith began after serving in the Marine Corps, eventually finding strength in Christ. After his games, he knelt for a thirty-second prayer at the 50-yard line, joined voluntarily by players. The school district ordered him to stop, and when he refused, they sacked him. The case reached the Supreme Court, which ruled in his favour, citing his First Amendment rights. Despite marital strain and death threats, Kennedy and his wife, Denise, reconciled, inspired by the film 'Facing the Giants'. His story highlights God's ability to use unlikely individuals for historic impact, illustrating his belief in a personal relationship with Jesus.

Praise: God for using Coach Joe Kennedy's public witness. Pray for those working to defend religious freedom for all believers. (Psalm 27:1)

More: [www.godreports.com/2024/10/average-joe-movie-supreme-court-praying-football-coach-backstory/](http://www.godreports.com/2024/10/average-joe-movie-supreme-court-praying-football-coach-backstory/)

### Hurricane Helene: ['Can you tell mommy I'm safe now?'](#)

The heartbreaking story of Meghan Drye's loss during Hurricane Helene took a miraculous turn. Meghan, her son Micah, and her parents were swept away by floodwaters in North Carolina. Meghan survived, but Micah, her parents, and their dog Bella were lost. In his final moments, Micah called out to Jesus, and his faith became a source of strength for his grieving mother. Shortly afterwards, Christian artist Elizabeth Londen, unaware of the tragedy, was moved by God to create a painting and poem entitled 'Can you tell my mommy I'm safe now?' The poem, written as if spoken by a child in Heaven, brought profound comfort to Meghan and her family, and they discovered that the painting referenced specific details from Micah's life, including his dog and favourite blanket. Elizabeth reached out to the family, offering the artwork and peace in their sorrow. This story exemplifies God's intimate presence and reassurance, even in the deepest grief.

Praise: God for His comforting presence, bringing hope and peace to grieving hearts through unexpected miracles. (Psalm 34:18)

More: [www.godreports.com/2024/10/can-you-tell-mommy-im-safe-now/](http://www.godreports.com/2024/10/can-you-tell-mommy-im-safe-now/)

## British Isles

### Surprise fall in inflation paves way for interest rate cuts

In September, UK inflation unexpectedly fell to 1.7%, the lowest rate in 3.5 years, down from 2.2% in August. Lower airfares and petrol prices were the main factors behind this slowdown. The inflation rate now stands below the Bank of England's 2% target, opening the door for potential interest rate cuts. The bank, which has already lowered interest rates once this year, is expected to cut them again in November by 0.25%, with another cut likely in December. While lower inflation is good news for many, economists warn that inflation could rise again due to increased household energy bills. The drop in inflation will also impact the rise of benefits like universal credit, though this will be lower than the expected 4.1% rise in the state pension. Despite the positive signs, the cost of living remains challenging, particularly for low-income families struggling to balance essential expenses like food and heating.

Pray: for God's provision and relief for families struggling with the rising cost of living pressures. (Philippians 4:19)

More: [www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/czxde3779lxo](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/czxde3779lxo)

### London mayor: Brexit 'disaster' cost 40,000 finance jobs

Brexit has had a significant impact on London's financial sector, with an estimated 40,000 finance jobs lost since the UK's departure from the EU, according to Michael Mainelli, the Lord Mayor of the City of London. This figure is at odds with previous estimates, including a 2022 assessment which put the job loss at around 7,000. While cities like Dublin, Milan, Paris, and Amsterdam gained positions from the migration of jobs, London's financial centre has continued to grow, adding roles in insurance and data analysis, bringing the total workforce to 615,000. Mainelli's remarks come as Britain seeks to restore relationships with Europe amid a broader economic slowdown. Although many had hoped Brexit would reduce immigration and deregulate industries, it has proven difficult to disentangle regulations, and the economic slowdown has persisted. Keir Starmer is attempting to rebuild ties with the EU, focusing on improving business relations but ruling out rejoining the single market.

Pray: for God's guidance in restoring economic stability and forging constructive relationships with Europe post-Brexit. (Proverbs 15:22)

More: [www.msn.com/en-gb/money/other/city-of-london-chief-says-brexit-disaster-cost-40-000-finance-jobs/ar-AA1sm35O?ocid=finance-verthp-feeds](http://www.msn.com/en-gb/money/other/city-of-london-chief-says-brexit-disaster-cost-40-000-finance-jobs/ar-AA1sm35O?ocid=finance-verthp-feeds)

### Charities: end-of-life care must be fixed before changing legislation

As Parliament debates assisted dying legislation, several charities stress the urgent need to fix the country's struggling end-of-life care system. Hospices provide vital palliative care, but funding shortages mean that care quality varies across the UK. Tim Daly, who has learning disabilities and cancer, relies on hospice care to remain at home with his mother Valerie. His nurse, Phoebe Mooney, provides essential support, but working in such emotionally demanding roles is challenging. Many hospices rely on charitable donations, with only a third of their funding coming from the government, creating a 'postcode lottery' for care. One commentator has said that people need assurance of symptom control and support before any changes in the law around assisted dying. Hospice UK's Charlie King warns that the healthcare system is already under significant stress; introducing assisted dying without fixing end-of-life care could exacerbate the situation. Sustainable funding is essential for quality care. See also [Justin Welby's comments](#):

Pray: for compassionate palliative care, increased funding, and support for families facing end-of-life challenges across the UK. (Matthew 5:4)

More: [news.sky.com/story/end-of-life-care-must-be-fixed-before-any-assisted-dying-legislation-charities-say-13234097](https://news.sky.com/story/end-of-life-care-must-be-fixed-before-any-assisted-dying-legislation-charities-say-13234097)

### Alex Salmond's body to be flown home from North Macedonia

The body of 69-year-old Alex Salmond, Scotland's former first minister and champion of Scottish independence, will soon be flown back from North Macedonia, where he died suddenly. He passed away from a suspected heart attack at a lake resort after participating in a forum. A spokesman for the forum confirmed that repatriation procedures for his body are nearly complete, with a special flight scheduled in the coming days. Salmond was leader of the Scottish National Party (SNP) and served as first minister from 2007 to 2014. He led the push for Scottish independence, bringing the country to a referendum in 2014, where independence was narrowly rejected (55% to 45%). He then resigned, to be succeeded by Nicola Sturgeon, his long-time ally turned political rival. His death marks the end of a significant chapter in Scottish political history.

Pray: for comfort for Alex Salmond's family and friends as they grieve. (Revelation 21:4)

More: [apnews.com/article/alex-salmond-scotland-independence-death-north-macedonia-b8cbfc267e9809269400d21b67d8998b](https://apnews.com/article/alex-salmond-scotland-independence-death-north-macedonia-b8cbfc267e9809269400d21b67d8998b)

### Newcastle: boy dies, six injured by house explosion

A devastating explosion in Newcastle has claimed the life of a seven-year-old boy and injured six others. The blast, on 16 October, destroyed several homes, leaving the community in shock. Neighbours described the explosion as sounding like a bomb, with rubble and flames covering the area. Anthony Usher, who witnessed the destruction, heroically rescued his friend's partner and newborn from the wreckage. Emergency services, including firefighters and a specialist search team, arrived within minutes and worked to ensure no one else was trapped in the rubble. The community has rallied to support the displaced, with a local community centre offering shelter. Authorities are continuing their investigation into the cause of the explosion, and residents are being urged to avoid the area.

Pray: for comfort and healing for the grieving family and all affected by this tragic explosion. (Psalm 145:18)

More: [www.itv.com/news/tyne-tees/2024-10-16/emergency-services-at-the-scene-of-large-fire-in-benwell-area-of-newcastle](http://www.itv.com/news/tyne-tees/2024-10-16/emergency-services-at-the-scene-of-large-fire-in-benwell-area-of-newcastle)

## Police apologise to arrested pastor after destroying street preaching signs

Avon and Somerset police have issued an apology to Pastor Dia Moodley, who was arrested while street preaching in Bristol. Moodley, a grandfather and pastor, was detained for thirteen hours after being accused of 'racially or religiously aggravated harassment without violence'. The arrest followed an incident where Moodley answered a question contrasting Christianity with Islam and expressed his belief in binary gender. During the confrontation, he was pushed from his stepladder, and his signs were damaged. One of the signs, which contained a Bible text, was destroyed by university staff when instructed to do so by the police. Moodley, represented by the Alliance for Defending Freedom (ADF), sustained a soft tissue injury during the altercation. His counsel called the treatment 'appalling' and urged the strengthening of free speech laws to protect peaceful, lawful expression of beliefs. Although the police dropped their investigation, the event highlights concerns over discriminatory policing and the freedom to share Christian beliefs publicly.

Pray: for protection and boldness for Christians sharing their faith and for fairness in public discourse. (Matthew 5:10)

More: [premierchristian.news/en/news/article/police-apologise-arrested-bristol-pastor-street-preaching](https://premierchristian.news/en/news/article/police-apologise-arrested-bristol-pastor-street-preaching)

## Europe

### France: cement firm goes on trial for financing terrorism

Cement maker Lafarge, part of Swiss-based Holcim, will face trial in France for financing terrorism and violating European sanctions to keep a Syrian plant operational. The investigation, ongoing since 2016, is one of France's most significant corporate criminal cases. Lafarge's Syrian subsidiary is accused of making payments to militant groups, including IS, to protect staff and maintain operations during the Syrian civil war. Judges ordered the trial after earlier attempts by the firm to dismiss charges of complicity in crimes against humanity were rejected. The charges also relate to breaching European sanctions that prohibit financial dealings with Islamist militant groups. In a related US case, Lafarge admitted in 2022 to paying terrorist-designated groups, including IS, to secure safety at its factory. Anti-corruption group Sherpa, which brought the complaint, continues to push for accountability.

Pray: for truth and justice in holding corporations accountable for actions that harm communities. (Proverbs 14:31)

More: <https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/french-cement-maker-lafarge-face-trial-terrorism-funding-charges-2024-10-17/>

### Serbia: hundreds protest against proposed lithium mining

Hundreds of protesters in Loznica, Serbia, have rallied against a planned lithium mining project by Rio Tinto in the region. This followed the ruling Serbian Progressive Party's rejection of a draft law banning lithium and borate mining. Demonstrators carrying Serbian flags and banners announced one-hour road blockades, vowing to escalate their actions if necessary. Environmentalists argue that the mine could pollute local land and water, threatening agriculture in the region. Lithium, vital for electric vehicle batteries, is a critical material for the EU and the USA. The \$2.4 billion project, if realised, could meet 90% of Europe's lithium needs. In 2022, after mass protests, the government revoked Rio Tinto's licences for the project. However, president Mr Aleksandar Vucic has now said that mining could start by 2028, arguing that it would significantly boost the economy.

Pray: for wise stewardship of natural resources and protection of communities from environmental harm. (Psalm 24:1)

More: [www.reuters.com/world/europe/serbian-protestors-rally-oppose-rio-tintos-lithium-mine-project-2024-10-16/](https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/serbian-protestors-rally-oppose-rio-tintos-lithium-mine-project-2024-10-16/)

### EU: von der Leyen calls for tougher migrant deportations

European Commission president Ursula von der Leyen has suggested that the EU could learn from Italy's controversial new policy of processing migrants offshore in Albania. She has proposed new legislation to increase deportations, noting that only 20% of irregular migrants ordered to leave EU countries actually do so. Italy's scheme, which began on 15 October when sixteen migrants were transferred to Albanian processing centres, has sparked criticism from opposition parties and NGOs for being costly and potentially harmful to human rights. The €650 million project excludes vulnerable groups like pregnant women and children. Prime minister Giorgia Meloni defended the scheme as a courageous approach which 'perfectly reflected the European spirit'. Recently Germany, France, and Poland have tightened their borders and immigration laws, driven in part by security concerns following violent incidents involving failed asylum seekers.

Pray: for just and humane solutions to address migration challenges and protect vulnerable individuals. (Exodus 22:21)

More: [www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cx2mzv4051o](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cx2mzv4051o)

## Worldwide

### Global: starvation as a weapon, thousands dying every day

A new report by Oxfam reveals that hunger caused by global conflicts has reached unprecedented levels, with an estimated 7,000 to 21,000 people dying every day. The report, *Food Wars*, shows that nearly all of the 281.6 million people facing acute hunger live in countries experiencing conflict. Oxfam accuses warring parties of weaponising food, targeting vital infrastructure, and blocking aid deliveries. Conflict also drives record-high displacement, with 117 million people forcibly displaced. In areas like Sudan and Gaza, food aid is critically limited, exacerbating starvation. Oxfam points to the economic liberalisation model (focused on foreign investment and exports) as a key factor worsening inequality and instability in these regions. In particular, extractive industries, like mining in Sudan, have displaced people and degraded environments, creating unlivable conditions. The report calls on global leaders to address the root causes of this problem, and to hold perpetrators of 'starvation crimes' accountable under international law.

Pray: for world leaders to find ways to address the root causes of hunger and hold warring groups to account. (1 John 3:17)

More: [www.aljazeera.com/news/2024/10/16/global-conflicts-driving-up-to-21000-deaths-daily-from-hunger-report](https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2024/10/16/global-conflicts-driving-up-to-21000-deaths-daily-from-hunger-report)

### **Cuba: president leads march to support Gaza**

Cuba's president, Miguel Diaz-Canel, has led thousands of protesters in Havana to show solidarity with Palestinians in Gaza. The march included around 250 Palestinian medical students and featured a large banner declaring, 'Long live free Palestine'. The president and other leaders wore keffiyeh scarves as a symbol of solidarity. Participants expressed their support for Palestinian sovereignty and condemned Israel's actions in Gaza. The march, originally scheduled for 7 October to mark the first anniversary of Israel's war on Gaza, was delayed due to Hurricane Milton. In June, Cuba joined a lawsuit filed by South Africa at the International Court of Justice against Israel's military actions in Gaza.

Pray: for justice and peace to prevail in areas affected by conflict and oppression. (Romans 14:19)

More: [www.aljazeera.com/gallery/2024/10/15/cuban-president-leads-pro-palestinian-march-in-havana](http://www.aljazeera.com/gallery/2024/10/15/cuban-president-leads-pro-palestinian-march-in-havana)

### **USA: Georgia judge overturns changes made by election board**

A judge has overturned changes made by Georgia's Republican-controlled state election board in August, which a conservative group argued would disrupt voting rights ahead of the presidential election on 5 November. His ruling followed a lawsuit by the conservative group Eternal Vigilance Action, which claimed the board overstepped its authority. The changes included empowering county election officials to investigate discrepancies in vote counts before certifying results. The move drew bipartisan criticism; one official warned that it would undermine voter confidence and burden election workers. Democrats, who filed a separate lawsuit, argued the rules aimed to delay certification, a mandatory part of election outcomes. The judge's ruling follows a similar decision to block a rule requiring ballots be counted by hand, which Democrats said was another attempt to impede certification. Georgia is expected to be a key battleground state in the presidential race between Kamala Harris and Donald Trump.

Pray: for transparency, fairness, and integrity in the election process and its results. (Proverbs 31:9)

More: [www.msn.com/en-us/news/politics/georgia-judge-blocks-elections-rules-backed-by-pro-trump-republicans/ar-AA1soKub](http://www.msn.com/en-us/news/politics/georgia-judge-blocks-elections-rules-backed-by-pro-trump-republicans/ar-AA1soKub)

### **USA: prosecutors target those using AI for sex abuse images**

Federal prosecutors are increasing efforts to target suspects who use artificial intelligence (AI) tools to create or manipulate child sex abuse images, fearing that the technology could lead to a surge in illegal content. The Justice Department has initiated two criminal cases against individuals accused of such crimes. A department official has voiced concerns over the potential normalisation of such images, as AI makes it easier to create and distribute them. Prosecutors worry that AI-generated content will complicate the identification of real victims and make the task of law enforcement more difficult. These cases are likely to break new legal ground, especially when real children are not depicted. Convictions may face appeals as courts navigate the evolving legal landscape around AI and child exploitation.

Pray: for protection over children from the misuse of technology and for wisdom for law enforcement handling these complex cases. (Psalm 82:4)

More: [www.reuters.com/technology/us-prosecutors-see-rising-threat-ai-generated-child-sex-abuse-imagery-2024-10-17/](http://www.reuters.com/technology/us-prosecutors-see-rising-threat-ai-generated-child-sex-abuse-imagery-2024-10-17/)

### **Sri Lanka: police arrest 230+ Chinese for cybercrime**

Sri Lankan police have arrested more than 230 Chinese nationals suspected of executing online scams targeting international banks. They seized 250 computers and 500 mobile phones involved in the fraudulent activities, with investigations continuing into the scale of the financial theft. They were helped by a special team sent from China; the biggest raid, on 12 October, netted 126 Chinese men. China's crackdown on cybercriminals at home may have driven some to seek illegal activities abroad. The Chinese embassy expressed its readiness to strengthen law enforcement cooperation with Sri Lanka, which has had advanced 5G telecommunications infrastructure since 2019. In June the police arrested over two hundred suspects, primarily from India, for similar financial fraud operations.

Pray: for authorities everywhere to have discernment in combating growing cybercrime networks. (Isaiah 1:17a)

More: [www.straitstimes.com/asia/south-asia/sri-lanka-arrests-over-230-chinese-in-cybercrime-raids](http://www.straitstimes.com/asia/south-asia/sri-lanka-arrests-over-230-chinese-in-cybercrime-raids)

### **Kenya: elephants relocated to ease overcrowding**

Fifty elephants have been relocated from the overcrowded Mwea National Reserve to a larger national park, 75 miles away, to reduce environmental strain and human-wildlife conflict. The reserve, which ideally could support 47 elephants, had a population of 156. The tourism minister, Rebecca Maino, noted that the rising elephant population is a sign that poaching is under control, but the overcrowding had resulted in elephants straying into nearby farms in search of food. Local residents expressed relief that the animals had been moved, as their presence had become a growing problem. The elephants arrived safely in their new home, and the \$93,000 project is set to enter a second phase, with plans to relocate another fifty elephants soon.

Pray: for similar peaceful solutions elsewhere to preserve wildlife and protect human communities. (Proverbs 12:10a)

More: [www.africanews.com/2024/10/16/kenya-relocates-50-elephants-to-larger-park-to-ease-overcrowding/](http://www.africanews.com/2024/10/16/kenya-relocates-50-elephants-to-larger-park-to-ease-overcrowding/)

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.