

Prayer Alert

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Praise the Lord. How good it is to sing praises to our God, how pleasant and fitting to praise Him! (Psalm 147:1)

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

Please pray for elections taking place in Poland (1 June), South Korea (3 June) and Burundi (5 June). See also the [2025 elections prayer guide](#).



We invite the Prayer Alert community to join us on the free online Interseed House of Prayer app where we are praying and sharing thoughts on the weekly prayer guide issues and themes.

Interseed is available on the Android and iOS platforms. More info [HERE](#).

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.

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

David Fletcher and the Prayer Alert team.

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Praise Reports

Christian singer and pastor calls on us to rethink joy

Tauren Wells, Grammy-nominated artist and pastor, is challenging Christians to rethink joy - not as fleeting emotion, but as intentional focus rooted in the unchanging character of God. In his debut book *Joy Bomb*, Wells explores biblical happiness, inspired by the Sermon on the Mount, where 'blessed' translates to 'happy'. Wells maintains that holiness and joy are deeply connected, saying, 'God is holy, and God is joy'. In 2024, Wells and his wife launched Church of Whitestone in Austin, aiming to build authentic community over crowd size. He sees ministry as a new assignment, not a career shift, maintaining his identity in Christ while continuing to make music. His upcoming album *Let the Church Sing* reflects his evolving theology shaped by Bible college and pastoral life. *Joy Bomb* aims to guide readers, especially those struggling with anxiety or despair, towards lasting joy through Christ - not through circumstance, but through God's presence. 'Joy,' he says, 'is spelled J-E-S-U-S.'

Praise: God for Tauren's testimony. Pray for a revival of joy rooted in Jesus, especially in weary hearts. (Psalm 16:11)

More: www.christianpost.com/books/from-grammy-stage-to-pulpit-tauren-wells-talks-evolving-theology.html

Twenty years on, his near-death experience still inspires him – and others

Colton Burpo, whose near-death experience when aged three inspired the best-selling book and film *Heaven Is for Real*, continues to share his testimony over two decades later. At nearly four, Burpo's appendix ruptured after being misdiagnosed for five days, leading to emergency surgery. During the operation, he believes he had a supernatural encounter - witnessing his parents praying from outside his body, then finding himself on Jesus's lap, comforted by angels. His vivid recollections of heaven and meeting deceased relatives moved millions and sparked deeper conversations about the afterlife and faith. Now 25, a husband, father, worship pastor, and electrician, Burpo sees his experience not just as a vision of what is to come, but as a call to mission. He focuses on living a life that honours Christ and encourages others to seek salvation. He continues to share the hope of heaven with new generations.

Praise: God for Colton's testimony. Pray that stories like his draw many to faith in Christ. (Colossians 3:2)

More: www.faithwire.com/2025/05/27/boy-who-says-he-nearly-died-visited-heaven-speaks-out-decades-after-heaven-is-for-real-journey/

British Isles

Liverpool tragedy: 79 injured, driver charged with multiple offences

Police have been continuing to question a 53-year-old man from West Derby, Liverpool, after a car ploughed into a crowd during Liverpool FC's victory parade on 26 May. Authorities were granted extended time to hold the suspect until 29 May. The incident, which occurred on Water Street, left seven people hospitalised in stable condition and 79 identified as injured. Eyewitness Daniel Everson recounted the terrifying moment his baby son was thrown 15 feet in his pram and his partner run over. Keir Starmer visited Liverpool to meet with police and officials, describing the incident as a tragic turn from celebration to horror. Messages of support poured in, including from King Charles, who praised Liverpool's community spirit, and the Prince and Princess of Wales, who expressed deep sadness over the tragedy. Breaking news: the driver has now been charged with attempted manslaughter and dangerous driving.

Pray: for healing, justice, and comfort for victims and the grieving Liverpool community. (Psalm 34:18)

More: www.standard.co.uk/news/uk/liverpool-merseyside-police-keir-starmer-prime-minister-police-b1230188.html

Government plans to invest £1 billion in advanced cyber warfare

The Government plans to invest over £1 billion in advanced cyber warfare capabilities, including a new 'digital targeting web' and a dedicated cyber command, as part of its strategic defence review. Defence secretary John Healey announced the initiative in response to escalating cyber threats, citing over 90,000 state-linked attacks on the UK's defence systems in the past two years. The new command, led by General Sir Jim Hockenhill, will coordinate both defensive and offensive cyber operations with the National Cyber Force and manage tactics such as signal jamming and communications disruption. The digital targeting web, expected by 2027, will allow real-time coordination between sensors, drones, aircraft, and cyber tools to neutralise threats swiftly. Healey highlighted the rising global cyber conflict and warned that 'the keyboard has become a weapon of war'. The move aims to defend against hostile states like Russia and China, while equipping the UK with cutting-edge technological warfare capabilities.

Pray: for discernment, restraint, and righteousness in the wielding of digital power. (Isaiah 54:17a)

More: www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14759625/Britain-set-splash-1billion-army-hackers-target-likes-Putin.html

Drug use: Sadiq Khan calls for personal cannabis use to be decriminalised

London mayor Sadiq Khan has endorsed a recommendation to decriminalise the possession of small amounts of natural cannabis, based on findings from the independent London Drugs Commission (LDC). The commission, chaired by former Lord Chancellor Charlie Falconer, found current cannabis laws to be disproportionate to the drug's harms and criticised their enforcement as unfairly targeting ethnic communities. Rather than full legalisation, the report advocates moving natural cannabis (currently a Class B drug) to the Psychoactive Substances Act, effectively legalising personal possession while maintaining bans on manufacturing and distribution. The LDC also calls for expanded addiction services and stronger education on cannabis risks. The mayor cited the need for fresh thinking on drug-related crime, while Lord Falconer stressed the importance of targeting dealers, not users.

Pray: for godly wisdom in knowing whether decriminalising cannabis is the right way forward. Pray for those who are seeking to protect youth and curb illegal usage. (Psalm 32:8)

More: news.sky.com/story/sadiq-khan-says-some-cannabis-possession-should-be-decriminalised-13375719

Social housing: ombudsman warns of growing frustration about poor conditions

The housing ombudsman, Richard Blakeway, has warned that growing public frustration over substandard social housing could escalate into wider social unrest. Complaints about poor living conditions have surged 474% since 2019/20, with 45% related to repairs. Despite a record £9bn spent on maintenance in 2023/24, landlords were ordered to pay £3.4m in compensation due to poor practices, including extreme delays in fixing serious issues like asbestos and mould. Nearly half of England's social homes were built before 1964, and damp-related complaints have risen sharply. Blakeway criticised outdated maintenance standards and 'rationing' of services, calling current housing policies detached from modern living expectations. He urged a 'transformative overhaul', including a national tenant body and predictive maintenance systems. While Awaab's Law (named after a toddler who died from mould exposure) is set to force landlords to make immediate emergency repairs from October, Blakeway said it remains too reactive. He warned that without urgent reform, the Government's housing ambitions could collapse under the weight of a failing system.

Pray: for justice, dignity, and safe housing for all vulnerable families and individuals. (Psalm 33:5)

More: www.theguardian.com/society/2025/may/29/housing-ombudsman-for-england-warns-of-simmering-anger-over-living-conditions

Prison overcrowding: senior police express concerns over early release plans

Senior police and intelligence leaders, including Met Police commissioner Sir Mark Rowley, have raised concerns over the Government's plan to release some prisoners early to ease overcrowding. They have warned that the proposals could harm public safety and confidence. While supportive of reform, they cautioned against early release for high-risk and national security offenders, highlighting challenges such as increased police workload, costs of electronic tagging, and community justice undermining deterrence. The Government recently accepted a sentencing review recommending community management for some offenders and early release after serving one-third of sentences, [excluding serious criminals](https://www.prayer-alert.net/en/pa-pray/regions/british-isles/item/53827-more-inmates-released-early-to-stop-prisons-running-out-of-space) (<https://www.prayer-alert.net/en/pa-pray/regions/british-isles/item/53827-more-inmates-released-early-to-stop-prisons-running-out-of-space>). Justice secretary Shabana Mahmood and her ministry claim concerns were addressed in the final policy, promising tighter controls and increased probation funding. Critics across the political spectrum argue for tougher sentencing and greater investment in prison infrastructure to restore justice and security.

Pray: for discernment in justice reform which safeguards both mercy and public protection. Pray that the concerns raised will be addressed. (Isaiah 1:17a)

More: www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c8e6y8ryg1eo

Norovirus warning: stay at home for 48 hours

The UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) has issued a strong public warning about norovirus, urging anyone affected to remain at home for 48 hours after symptoms cease, as individuals can still be infectious. Known as the 'winter vomiting bug', norovirus causes vomiting, diarrhoea, and severe discomfort. While typically seasonal, England has seen an alarming spike in cases, with 14,959 reported between 31 March and 27 April - more than double the five-year average. Hospital outbreaks are also up 43.3% above historical norms. Though recent weeks show a slight decline, infection levels remain significantly high. Norovirus spreads easily via contaminated food, surfaces, or close contact, and can be transmitted even before symptoms begin. The UKHSA stresses the importance of staying home, avoiding hospitals or GP visits while symptomatic, and refraining from cooking for others until 48 hours after recovery. Parents are advised not to send children to school during this period, and all should practice vigilant hygiene to prevent spread.

Pray: for health, healing, and protection for communities facing this outbreak. Pray that cases will rapidly diminish. (Jeremiah 30:17a)
More: www.express.co.uk/news/uk/2060986/nhs-warns-brits-stay-home

Europe

Ukraine: increasing use of a deadly new weapon

In Rodynske, Ukraine, devastation and fear hang in the air after a Russian glide bomb destroyed the town's administrative centre and residential blocks. Russian attacks have surged, with Rodynske now facing direct strikes and drone assaults. Journalists encountered deadly surveillance and attack drones, evidence of Russian advances. Russia's increasing use of fibre optic drones - immune to electronic jamming - gives it a tactical edge, making troop movements perilous. Ukrainian forces are racing to develop similar technology. Soldiers have described the extreme mental and physical toll, with deployments now stretching to months due to constant drone threats. Front lines are no longer clearly defined; infiltrations occur with motorcycles and quad bikes, creating fragmented, shifting battle zones. Civilians, returning to destroyed homes, bear witness to worsening conditions. With diplomatic efforts stalled, this evolving conflict grows more deadly by the day. Meanwhile, Volodymyr Zelensky, on a visit to Germany (where chancellor Friedrich Merz has promised more financial and military help), has warned that 50,000 Russian troops are massing on Ukraine's eastern border, preparing for a massive new offensive. [See](#)

Pray: for protection, endurance, and divine strength for Ukraine's defenders and civilians. (Psalm 18:2)
More: www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/ckgn47e5qyno

France: surgeon jailed for abusing 299 patients

Joel Le Scouarnec, once a respected surgeon, has been sentenced to twenty years in prison after admitting to sexually abusing 299 patients, mostly children, between 1989 and 2014. The judge said he took into account the fact that he targeted sedated and vulnerable victims. Although sentenced to the maximum term, Le Scouarnec has already served seven years and may be eligible for parole by 2030. Victims and their advocates expressed anger over the perceived inadequacy of the sentence. One survivor noted the lifelong trauma endured by victims while Le Scouarnec might eventually regain his freedom. The 74-year-old, already serving a 15-year sentence from 2020 for prior assaults, did not appeal the new ruling. His handwritten diaries documented the abuse in detail, aiding police in identifying victims - many of whom were unaware they had been assaulted. In court, Le Scouarnec acknowledged his crimes and expressed remorse, though survivors have questioned the justice system's ability to match the gravity of such heinous acts.

Pray: for deep healing, justice, and restoration for every wounded soul. (Psalm 9:9)
More: www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cvgdkyge198o

EU / USA: Trump backs away from extra tariffs – for now

Donald Trump has paused a proposed 50% tariff on EU goods, extending the negotiation deadline to 9 July after a phone call with EC president Ursula von der Leyen. She requested more time to reach a deal, which Trump agreed to, calling the EU 'willing to negotiate'. While both sides seek a resolution, the USA remains firm on maintaining a 10% base tariff, rejecting the EU's recent offer to eliminate industrial tariffs and boost cooperation in AI and energy. Trump's stance stems from concerns over the EU's significant trade surplus and regulatory barriers. Meanwhile, the EU has approved retaliatory tariffs worth billions, set to begin on 14 July if talks fail. The escalating tensions risk sparking a costly trade war, which the IMF warns could shrink GDP on both sides. EU and US officials are set to meet next month in Paris to seek resolution. In preparation for these, the EU has requested firms to give details of their dealings with US companies: [see https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/brussels-asks-european-companies-detail-us-investment-plans-sources-say-2025-05-27/](https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/brussels-asks-european-companies-detail-us-investment-plans-sources-say-2025-05-27/)

Pray: for both sides to act with clarity, fairness, and responsibility in economic decisions. (Psalm 106:3)
More: www.aljazeera.com/news/2025/5/27/why-are-the-us-and-eu-struggling-to-reach-a-trade

Worldwide

Gaza: desperate crowd storms UN warehouse, food aid still a trickle

A UN warehouse in Gaza has been stormed by desperate civilians amid growing hunger and aid shortages, resulting in two deaths and several injuries. The World Food Programme warned of impending famine, urging immediate aid expansion. Though Israel has lifted an eleven-week blockade, only limited aid has entered via the UN and the US-backed Gaza Humanitarian Foundation (GHF). The UN criticised Israel's aid efforts as grossly inadequate, likening them to 'a lifeboat after the ship has sunk'. Ongoing Israeli strikes, including the killing of Hamas leader Mohammad Sinwar, killed at least thirty people on 28 May. Israel, facing international pressure, is insisting aid be routed through the GHF, but the UN and other charities are refusing to do so because they do not see it as neutral. The GHF has so far distributed over 840,000 meals; reports say that at one site 47 people were injured in a rush for food. Humanitarian groups continue to warn of systemic deprivation and the collapse of basic aid infrastructure in Gaza.

Pray: for mercy, peace, and provision for the suffering and displaced in Gaza. (Psalm 146:7a)
More: www.jpantimes.co.jp/news/2025/05/29/world/un-warehouse-food-aid-gaza/

North Korea: strong criticism of proposed new US missile defence system

North Korea has strongly condemned the US plan to develop a futuristic 'Golden Dome' missile defence system, warning it could trigger a nuclear arms race in space. The system, promoted by Donald Trump to counter next-generation threats such as hypersonic and cruise missiles, is viewed by Pyongyang as a provocation that would undermine its nuclear deterrent. North Korea's foreign ministry described the plan as arrogant and dangerous, while China has called it a threat to global stability, saying the USA is 'obsessed' with its own security. Analysts note the system could compel North Korea to advance its missile capabilities. While many experts agree that US defence infrastructure needs updating, critics point to the potential geopolitical fallout and high costs - estimated at up to \$500 billion long-term. Strategic tensions over space militarisation continue to grow as nations grapple with balancing national defence and global security.

Pray: for peace, restraint, and wise leadership in global military advances. (Psalm 46:9)
More: www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cd0l4e0mr1o

Peru: farmer's lawsuit against polluting German firm

A German court has dismissed a lawsuit by Peruvian farmer Saul Luciano Lliuya against energy giant RWE, rejecting his claim for damages over flood risks in his hometown linked to climate change. Lliuya argued that RWE's historic carbon emissions contributed to the melting of Andean glaciers threatening his town of Huaraz. Though the court found no immediate threat to his property, it acknowledged that major emitters may bear proportional costs for preventative climate measures. This ruling, while unfavourable to Lliuya, is seen as a landmark in climate litigation, particularly as it came from a plaintiff in the global south against a global north corporation. The court also said that RWE should have foreseen the effects of its emissions. Although RWE argues that climate change cannot be blamed on a single emitter, legal observers view the case as a potential turning point for holding polluters accountable globally.

Pray: for climate justice that upholds truth, stewardship, and protection of the vulnerable. (Psalm 82:3)

More: www.aljazeera.com/news/2025/5/28/german-court-rejects-peruvian-farmers-climate-case-against-rwe

USA: federal court blocks Trump's tariffs

A federal court has blocked Donald Trump's broad use of tariffs, ruling that the Constitution grants Congress - not the president - authority to regulate foreign commerce. The decision challenges Trump's use of the 1977 International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA) to impose sweeping import taxes, a cornerstone of his 'America First' agenda. Two lawsuits, one by small businesses and another by a coalition of US states, sparked the ruling. The court also blocked tariffs on China, Mexico, and Canada, imposed under immigration and drug control claims. However, tariffs on specific goods like steel and cars were not addressed. Markets responded positively, with global stocks rising and the dollar strengthening. If the ruling is upheld, affected businesses may receive tariff refunds with interest. Legal experts suggest the decision may constrain executive power over trade, sending a strong constitutional message. The White House has vowed to appeal, calling the ruling a judicial overreach. In another development, the Trump administration has asked the supreme court to overturn a judge's ban on deporting migrants without giving them a chance to seek legal relief: [see \(https://www.reuters.com/world/us/trump-asks-us-supreme-court-intervene-deportations-third-countries-2025-05-27/\)](https://www.reuters.com/world/us/trump-asks-us-supreme-court-intervene-deportations-third-countries-2025-05-27/) Breaking news: the ban on tariffs has been temporarily [paused by an appeal court \(https://www.ft.com/content/9c5f1108-6733-4333-86a5-eb5cfe6cf4e0\)](https://www.ft.com/content/9c5f1108-6733-4333-86a5-eb5cfe6cf4e0).

Pray: for justice, accountability, and restraint in economic decisions that affect many. (Proverbs 11:1)

More: www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c8xgdj9kyero

China: five killed in massive chemical explosion

At least five people were killed and six remain missing after a powerful explosion rocked the Shandong Youdao Chemical plant in Gaomi, eastern China. Occurring just before noon, the blast sent a massive plume of grey and orange smoke into the sky, shattered nearby windows, and triggered a major rescue operation. Nineteen others sustained minor injuries. Emergency teams dispatched 55 vehicles and over 230 personnel to the scene, while the ministry of emergency management sent reinforcements. Social media videos showed smoke blanketing the area, with some structures visibly damaged. Witnesses from nearby businesses reported hearing a loud bang and experiencing a strong gust of wind, which caused structural damage and panic. The cause of the explosion has not been released. Shandong Youdao Chemical, founded in 2019 and employing over 300 people, produces pesticides and pharmaceutical chemicals. The tragedy, reminiscent of the deadly 2015 Tianjin warehouse explosions which killed over 100 people, has revived concerns over industrial safety in China.

Pray: for healing, rescue efforts, and reform in industrial safety measures. (Philippians 2:4)

More: edition.cnn.com/2025/05/27/china/china-shandong-chemical-plant-blast-intl-hnk

USA: Trump cracks down on international student visas

Donald Trump's administration has ordered US embassies to halt new student visa appointments as it prepares to expand social media vetting of international applicants. The move is part of a broader crackdown on US universities, which Trump accuses of harbouring left-wing and antisemitic sentiment amid pro-Palestinian campus protests. Embassies are directed to cancel unscheduled interviews, with warnings of 'significant implications' for visa processing. Critics say this threatens the rights and futures of international students, who often pay higher fees and significantly fund the universities. The administration has frozen millions in university funding, revoked thousands of visas, and moved to deport foreign students - many actions now under legal challenge. Harvard University, a prime target, recently had its ability to host international students suspended, though a federal judge blocked the decision: for a view on how much its international students contribute, [see \(https://theconversation.com/trump-v-harvard-why-this-battle-will-damage-the-uss-reputation-globally-257512\)](https://theconversation.com/trump-v-harvard-why-this-battle-will-damage-the-uss-reputation-globally-257512) Critics argue the social media screening policy infringes on free speech, while Trump insists it protects national security and combats extremism.

Pray: for justice, discernment, and protection for students and truth-seeking institutions. (Exodus 22:21)

More: www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cy75eenl46eo

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