

Prayer Alert

ISSUE 34-2025 | Friday 22 August 2025
www.prayer-alert.net | editor@prayer-alert.net

Be unceasing and persistent in prayer. (1 Thessalonians 5:17, AMP)

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

We are all invited to join the World Prayer Centre, Birmingham's weekly Revival Prayer Hour each Wednesday morning at 9.30am. If you share our calling to pray into issues affecting our nation and a heartfelt desire to see revival in the British Isles - do join us! [More Info and Sign-up Here](#)



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.

Praise Reports

[Poll reflects 'quiet revival' as more young people embrace belief in God](#)
[Iran: 'unimaginable joy' for an undercover believer](#)

British Isles

[More councils consider asylum hotel legal challenges](#)
[Far-right link taints 'patriotic' grassroots flag movement](#)
[Students receive GCSE and BTec results](#)
[Rachel Reeves' 'mansion tax' plan](#)
[UK signs deal with Iraq to speed up migrant returns](#)
[Former CofE priest found guilty of 17 indecent assaults](#)

Europe

[Ukraine: Trump stirs more controversy, hopes for trilateral meeting](#)
[Europe: increasing number of mosquito-borne diseases](#)

Worldwide

[Pakistan: devastation and deaths caused by monsoon floods](#)
[Gaza: Hamas agrees to Qatar's latest ceasefire proposal](#)
[Hong Kong: UK and Australia each grant asylum to a pro-democracy activist](#)
[Venezuela: Maduro announces mass mobilisation in response to US threats](#)
[Malaysia: urgent action needed to combat school bullying](#)

Praise Reports

[Poll reflects 'quiet revival' as more young people embrace belief in God](#)

A new YouGov survey has revealed a marked increase in young adults believing in God, signalling what many church leaders describe as a 'quiet revival'. Among 18- to 24-year-olds, 37% now affirm belief in God—up sharply from just 16% in 2021. Although down from a January peak of 45%, the figures still indicate a significant generational shift. By comparison, belief among 25 to 49-year-olds stands at 25%, while older age groups remain steady, with around 27% of 50- to 64-year-olds and 32% of those over 65 continuing to express faith. Notably, disbelief in any spiritual power among younger adults has dropped from 19% in 2022 to 12% today. Bishop Jill Duff of Lancaster welcomed the findings, noting a clear openness to God, Christianity, and the supernatural among younger people. She described this as evidence of a growing spiritual awakening which is already being observed in churches across the nation.

Praise: God for this rising spiritual openness among young people; may many encounter Christ personally and be transformed. (Psalm 110:3a)

More: premierchristian.news/en/news/article/more-young-people-embrace-belief-in-god

Iran: 'unimaginable joy' for an undercover believer

Bitā's life in Iran was marked by abandonment, abuse, and despair. Raised in hardship, forced into servitude, and married at 14 to an unfaithful addict, she endured decades of rejection and loneliness. Broken and suicidal, she was rescued by a friend, then invited to a secret house church. There she first heard of Jesus' love for the brokenhearted, and for the first time she felt truly seen. That night she surrendered her shattered life to Christ. Immediately, her children noticed a change: her burdens lifted, and joy began to replace despair. Later, at a women's conference for persecuted believers, she testified that God had wiped away bitterness and given her 'unimaginable joy.' Though she must still worship in secret, hiding her Bible and whispering prayers, Bitā's faith is unshaken. She longs to help other women find the same freedom and healing in Jesus. Her story mirrors numerous Iranian women who, despite persecution and rejection, are discovering the beauty of Christ's redeeming love.

Praise: God for Bitā's transformation; may countless Iranian women discover Jesus' love and lasting joy in secret places. (Isaiah 61:3a)

More: www.opendoorsuk.org/news/latest-news/iran-undercover-joy/#msdynmkt_trackingcontext=4e901864-cf5c-4377-8fe9-08604ed70200

British Isles

More councils consider asylum hotel legal challenges

A landmark High Court ruling has opened the way for local councils to challenge the use of hotels for housing asylum seekers. The judgement came after Epping Forest District Council successfully argued that protests around a hotel in Essex, earmarked for 140 asylum seekers, had caused 'evidenced harms' including violence and arrests. Conservative leader Kemi Badenoch hailed the ruling as a 'victory for local people', encouraging other Tory-run councils to pursue similar action. At least four more Conservative councils are now exploring legal challenges, and two Labour-controlled authorities are reassessing their options, in light of the precedent. Reform UK has also urged its councils to follow suit. Hotel use for asylum seekers peaked during the Covid pandemic, housing over 56,000 people in 2023. Current figures show a 15% decline, with 32,345 still accommodated in March. The Government has pledged to phase out asylum hotels by 2029, pledging alternative housing through faster asylum decisions and reduced small-boat crossings.

Pray: for just, compassionate policies which balance community concerns while treating asylum seekers with dignity and care. (Exodus 23:9a)

More: www.bbc.com/news/articles/cwy0j9n4qzwo

Far-right link taints 'patriotic' grassroots flag movement

A grassroots campaign called 'Operation Raise the Colours' has seen activists in over a dozen English towns hoisting hundreds of Union and St George's Cross flags on lampposts. Organisers claim the movement aims to restore national pride and community spirit, with some £13,000 raised to buy flags. However, its credibility has been damaged by links to far-right groups. Britain First donated 250 flags, and organiser Andy Saxon has publicly supported its leader Paul Golding and activist Tommy Robinson. Britain First, with roots in the BNP, is notorious for promoting 'remigration' and anti-Muslim rhetoric; its leader has criminal convictions for religiously aggravated harassment. Critics warn that what is presented as patriotism risks being hijacked by extremist groups. Councils in Birmingham and Tower Hamlets have removed flags, citing safety and political concerns, while twelve Reform UK-controlled councils have pledged not to take them down, calling removals 'shameful'. The controversy highlights how national symbols can be co-opted into culture wars, deepening division rather than fostering unity.

Pray: for discernment in Britain. Pray that patriotism will not be corrupted by extremism but expressed with unity and respect. (Ephesians 4:3)

More: www.thetimes.com/uk/politics/article/far-right-link-taints-patriotic-grassroots-flag-movement-5k03bbck

Students receive GCSE and BTec results

On 21 August pupils across England, Wales and Northern Ireland received GCSE, BTec and other Level 2 results. The GCSE pass rate is similar to last year, which saw a third consecutive decline after the Covid pandemic. With more 16-year-olds in the population and rising demand for sixth form places, competition is fierce. Some colleges have expanded capacity, but others warn they will have to turn students away. Concerns over possible VAT on private school fees may also drive more families toward state provision. Education secretary Bridget Phillipson praised pupils' resilience but condemned entrenched inequalities, noting that only 19% of white British working-class children achieved strong passes in maths and English in 2024 - virtually unchanged from 2017. About 170,000 students have received BTec results and 110,000 Cambridge Nationals, while in Scotland exam pass rates have risen. For many students who began secondary school during lockdown, these results mark the culmination of years of disrupted learning, testing both their determination and the system's ability to provide equal opportunity.

Pray: for young people receiving results, that hope, resilience, and God's guidance will shape their next steps. (Jeremiah 29:11)

More: www.bbc.com/news/articles/c4g64qedynlo

Rachel Reeves' 'mansion tax' plan

Reports suggest Chancellor Rachel Reeves may extend capital gains tax (CGT) to primary residences above a set threshold, sparking debate over a potential 'mansion tax'. Currently, homeowners pay no CGT when selling their main residence, but proposals would remove this exemption for higher-value properties. The Times estimates a £1.5m threshold could affect around 120,000 households, with bills reaching hundreds of thousands for long-term owners. Critics say it punishes older homeowners downsizing, discourages market mobility, and risks pushing wealth abroad. Many argue it unfairly double-taxes families already burdened by stamp duty. Property experts warn it could freeze the housing market, reducing sales and Treasury income. Supporters say it could help fill the £51bn fiscal shortfall while targeting wealthier households. Reeves has already cut CGT allowances in recent budgets and raised rates on shares and property. An announcement could come in the autumn Budget. Opponents argue re-banding council tax would be more effective and less disruptive.

Pray: for justice and fairness in tax policy, protecting families while ensuring wise stewardship of national finances. (Proverbs 3:9)

More: www.thisismoney.co.uk/money/mortgageshome/article-15017233/Rachel-Reeves-mansion-tax-plan-capital-gains-tax-pays-change.html

UK signs deal with Iraq to speed up migrant returns

The Government has signed a new agreement with Iraq to accelerate the return of migrants who have no legal right to remain. Home office minister Dan Jarvis finalised the deal with Iraq's deputy foreign minister, expanding cooperation on security, migration, and tackling smuggling networks - many run by Iraqi Kurds. While small-boat crossings overall remain at record highs, Iraqi arrivals have declined to 1,900 in the year to March 2025, down from 2,600 the previous year. The government argues this drop demonstrates the effectiveness of earlier cooperation. However, critics, including Conservative shadow home secretary Chris Philp, dismissed the new deal as 'measly', pointing out that most small-boat arrivals are now from other nations. Not all Iraqis will be returned; about 26% have successfully claimed asylum on grounds of persecution. The agreement follows similar deals with Albania and Vietnam and a recent UK-France accord. Ministers insist such measures strengthen border security, while critics argue that crossings remain unacceptably high.

Pray: for compassionate yet firm border policies that uphold justice, protect the vulnerable, and dismantle smuggling networks. (Psalm 82:3)

More: www.bbc.com/news/articles/c1w85yrer81o

Former CofE priest found guilty of 17 indecent assaults

Chris Brain, a former CofE priest and founder of the Nine O'Clock Service (NOS), has been convicted of 17 counts of indecent assault against nine women. The NOS, active between 1986 and 1995, blended rave culture with worship but was later exposed as a manipulative, closed environment in which Brain exploited his authority. Prosecutors told the court that some victims, recruited to a 'homebase team' to care for Brain and his family, were pressured into sexual favours and treated as servants. The group referred to some of these women as 'Lycra lovelies' or 'Lycra nuns'. Several assaults occurred during massages, which Brain admitted but insisted were consensual, describing them as 'no big deal'. The court heard, however, that Brain abused his influence, creating a controlling culture that enabled systematic exploitation. Now 68, he was removed from ministry in 1995. Jurors continue to deliberate on four further indecent assault charges and one rape charge. Brain denies wrongdoing on all counts.

Pray: for justice, healing, and restoration for survivors of abuse, and protection of integrity within Christ's Church. (Ephesians 5:11)

More: premierchristian.news/us/news/article/former-rave-priest-found-guilty-of-17-indecent-assaults

Europe

Ukraine: Trump stirs more controversy, hopes for trilateral meeting

Donald Trump has stirred controversy by suggesting Ukraine is to blame for confronting a nation 'ten times' its size, despite Russia being the aggressor in the ongoing war. He downplayed Russia's responsibility for the invasion, instead criticising former presidents Joe Biden and Barack Obama for their handling of the conflict. He argued that Biden 'started' the war and accused Obama of 'giving away' Crimea in 2014. He also asserted that Ukraine had only been able to resist due to American weapons and aid. His comments followed the White House meeting on 18 August with Volodymyr Zelensky, European leaders, and NATO officials, at which he pledged US support for Ukraine's future security. Trump also touted his 'good relationship' with Vladimir Putin, saying that he had spoken to him about arranging a trilateral meeting with Zelensky. While he presented this as an early step toward peace, the question now is how Putin will respond.

Pray: for wisdom and courage for leaders seeking peace, justice, and protection for Ukraine's people. (Isaiah 1:17)

More: www.independent.co.uk/news/world/americas/us-politics/trump-ukraine-russia-putin-zelensky-fox-and-friends-b2810752.html

Europe: increasing number of mosquito-borne diseases

The European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) has warned that Europe is entering a 'new normal' of longer and more intense mosquito-borne disease transmission. Rising temperatures, extended summers, milder winters, and shifting rainfall patterns have created conditions for mosquitoes to spread viruses more effectively. The chikungunya-carrying mosquito is now established in 16 European countries and 369 regions, compared to just 114 a decade ago. This year, Europe has recorded 27 chikungunya outbreaks, the highest on record, including a case in Alsace, France - an unusual event for such a northern latitude. Meanwhile, West Nile virus has infected 335 people across eight countries, causing 19 deaths, with Italy hardest hit. Officials caution that more Europeans will face risk in the coming years. The ECDC has urged stronger public health coordination and personal prevention measures, including insect repellent, protective clothing, window screens, and bed nets to reduce exposure.

Pray: for protection from mosquito-borne diseases in Europe, and wisdom for leaders strengthening prevention efforts. (Jeremiah 30:17a)

More: www.france24.com/en/live-news/20250820-record-number-of-mosquito-borne-disease-outbreaks-in-europe-health-agency

Worldwide

Pakistan: devastation and deaths caused by monsoon floods

The village of Bishnoi in northern Pakistan has been devastated by a sudden flash flood, leaving entire homes buried beneath rocks and debris. On 15 August, torrential rains triggered a surge of water that swept through the village, destroying nearly every house. Locals described the scene as catastrophic, with families trapped under stones and crops flattened across the valley. Rescue operations continue with limited equipment, as survivors search desperately for missing loved ones. The area has suffered over 300 deaths, making it the hardest-hit region in Pakistan's monsoon season, which has claimed more than 500 lives nationwide; there have also been many deaths in India and Nepal. Climate experts warn that melting glaciers, accelerated by global warming, are worsening the impact of heavy rains and landslides. Amid tragedy, there were moments of heroism, such as a school principal in the Swat valley who ordered the evacuation of 900 children only minutes before floods destroyed the building. In Bishnoi, families mourn as relief and recovery efforts continue.

Pray: for comfort and strength for flood survivors in Pakistan, and wisdom for leaders addressing climate challenges. (Psalm 31:2)

More: www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/ce3jeed2798o

Gaza: Hamas agrees to Qatar's latest ceasefire proposal

Qatar has emphasized the urgent need for a ceasefire in Gaza, highlighting what it called a 'positive response' from Hamas to a new truce proposal. The plan, similar to an earlier US-brokered offer previously accepted by Israel, calls for a sixty-day pause in fighting, the release of some hostages in exchange for hundreds of Palestinian prisoners, expanded humanitarian aid, and negotiations toward a lasting settlement. Israel, however, is maintaining its stance that the war will continue until Hamas disarms and all hostages are freed. Foreign minister Israel Katz says that fear of Israel's plans to occupy Gaza city is bringing Hamas back to the negotiating table. Meanwhile, conditions in Gaza remain dire. The UN has warned that the minimal aid entering Gaza is far from sufficient, with hunger-related deaths increasing. Officials blame Israeli restrictions on humanitarian supplies, warning of imminent famine. Breaking news: Israel is calling up 60,000 reservists in preparation for its planned invasion of Gaza. [See https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c7417pl3ddpo](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c7417pl3ddpo)

Pray: that Israel will agree to a new ceasefire in Gaza and allow urgent humanitarian relief to flow more freely. (Psalm 106:3)
More: www.euronews.com/2025/08/20/israel-under-pressure-to-respond-to-ceasefire-proposal-as-strikes-on-gaza-continue

Hong Kong: UK and Australia each grant asylum to a pro-democracy activist

Australia and the UK have each granted asylum to a prominent Hong Kong pro-democracy activist. In 2020, lawmaker Ted Hui threw rotten plants on the floor of the legislative council chamber to protest against the sweeping new national security law. Facing arrest for leading anti-government protests, he fled with his family to Australia, where they have now been granted protection visas. Student leader Tony Chung left in 2023, citing 'enormous stress' from constant police scrutiny. He was later convicted under the national security law for calling for Hong Kong's secession, but has now received refugee status and a five-year residence permit in the UK. The Hong Kong government has strongly condemned the UK and Australia for 'harbouring offenders', stating that its arrests are based on 'facts and evidence' rather than politics. Critics, however, maintain that the law is being used to silence dissent and spread fear.

Pray: that these two, and others seeking refuge from persecution, will find safety, healing, and strength in their new homes. (Psalm 10:17)
More: www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c206472k823o

Venezuela: Maduro announces mass mobilisation in response to US threats

Nicolás Maduro has announced the mobilisation of more than four million civilian militia fighters, responding to what he describes as escalating threats from the USA. He pledged to arm and activate militias across the country, reinforcing national sovereignty against US actions. His remarks followed the Trump administration's decision to double its bounty for his arrest to \$50 million. While US officials accuse Maduro of leading a cocaine smuggling network known as the Cartel de los Soles, no direct evidence has been publicly presented. Venezuela's militia system, created under former president Hugo Chávez, claims millions of members, though analysts question the figures. Meanwhile, the US military has dispatched three destroyers to the southern Caribbean as part of an expanded campaign against drug cartels in Latin America. The standoff reflects years of strained relations between Caracas and Washington, marked by sanctions, contested elections, and allegations of corruption.

Pray: that peace will prevail in Venezuela, protecting its people from violence, exploitation, and political turmoil. (Psalm 46:9a)
More: www.aljazeera.com/news/2025/8/19/venezuelas-maduro-vows-to-deploy-militias-as-us-steps-up-military-threats

Malaysia: urgent action needed to combat school bullying

Bullying remains a pervasive and deadly problem in Malaysia's schools, with thousands of cases recorded annually and incidents escalating to violence and even death. Despite public outrage, policy gaps and weak enforcement allow abuse to persist, including in elite institutions. Victims suffer long-term psychological harm, while perpetrators may develop behavioural problems and criminal tendencies. Research shows nearly 80% of Malaysian students have been involved in bullying, often as both victims and aggressors. Teachers, while crucial for prevention, can sometimes contribute to the problem, highlighting the need for systemic reform. Unlike many Asian neighbors, Malaysia lacks comprehensive anti-bullying laws. Experts recommend strict legislation, independent investigations, national reporting systems, whistleblower protections, school-based mental health support, educator training, and transparent accountability. Without decisive reform, tragedies like the recent death of Form One student Zara Qairina will continue to erode public trust and student safety.

Pray: that schools, both in Malaysia and in other countries, will become safe spaces where every child is protected, valued, and nurtured in dignity. (Proverbs 3:27)
More: asianews.network/from-outrage-to-action-closing-malaysias-loopholes-on-school-bullying/

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.