

Prayer Alert

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I will give thanks to You, Lord, with all my heart; I will tell of all Your wonderful deeds. (Psalm 9:1)

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

Please pray for elections taking place in Honduras & Kyrgyzstan (30th Nov), Saint Lucia (1st Dec) and Egypt (3rd-4th Dec) - See the Prayer Alert 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.

Praise Reports

Malaysia: [court confirms state involvement in Pastor Koh's abduction](#)
[Street preacher acquitted after being accused of hate speech](#)
[Mitzvah Day demonstrates the power of inter-faith cooperation](#)

British Isles

[Budget: the main headlines](#)
[North Sea energy: Government allows some new licences](#)
[Justice system: Lammy wants to restrict the right to a jury trial](#)
[Man arrested in connection with huge pile of waste](#)

Europe

[Italy: parliament passes law defining femicide](#)
[Ukraine: differing signals about peace proposals](#)

Worldwide

[Global: one woman killed by a partner or relative every ten minutes](#)
[Nigeria: mass kidnapping from a Catholic school](#)
[Nigeria: danger of mass starvation in 2026](#)
[Hong Kong: at least 83 dead in devastating tower block fire](#)
[Malawi: faith leaders challenge high court decision on abortion](#)
[Mali: abuses by former Wagner mercenaries](#)
[Sudan: RSF announces humanitarian truce after army rejects ceasefire proposals](#)

Praise Reports

Malaysia: court confirms state involvement in Pastor Koh's abduction

A landmark ruling in Malaysia has recognised state involvement in the disappearance of Pastor Raymond Koh, who was abducted in broad daylight in February 2017 and has not been seen since. The high court has ordered the government and police to pay RM 37 million (about £6.8 million) in compensation for wrongful acts. Justice Su Tiang Joo allocated RM 33 million for the enforced disappearance and a further RM 4 million in damages to Pastor Koh's wife, Susanna Liew, with RM 250,000 awarded for costs. Importantly, the funds must be held in trust until Koh's whereabouts are known, highlighting the ongoing search for truth. Koh's abduction, which was captured on camera, involved three SUVs and fifteen men and was completed within forty seconds. While the ruling offers a measure of closure and vindication, his wife expressed deep concern that authorities have failed to act on the findings of previous inquiries or take any action against police officers who are confirmed as taking part in the abduction. Calling on the government to hold an enquiry about what happened to Pastor Koh and his present whereabouts, CSW's president Mervyn Thomas said, 'This is a landmark decision which demonstrates the judiciary's independence by holding state actors accountable, and setting a legal precedent for cases involving enforced disappearance'.

Praise: God for this admission. Pray for the full truth to be revealed, and for Pastor Koh to be found. Continue to uphold Susanna and her family in prayer. (Luke 8:17)

More: www.csw.org.uk/2025/11/05/press/6658/article.htm

Street preacher acquitted after being accused of hate speech

A Christian street preacher in Swindon has been acquitted of charges related to comments he made in a public space, a case which sparked wider debate about free speech and the policing of perceived hate incidents. Shaun O'Sullivan, 36, was accused of religiously aggravated intentional harassment after a Muslim family claimed his remarks about Jews and Palestine were directed personally at them because they wore hijabs. However, the prosecution case rested largely on their testimony, and CCTV footage showed only a very brief

encounter with no sustained confrontation. In court, one complainant acknowledged she had not heard the full message and that her perceptions were influenced by distress over the Gaza conflict. The defence argued O'Sullivan was preaching a general Christian message - not using abusive language - and warned that criminalising public evangelism threatens long-standing freedoms. Supporters described the verdict as a vital affirmation of the right to share Christian beliefs openly in the public square.

Praise: God for this outcome. Pray for continuing protection of free expression, wise policing, and bold yet respectful Christian witness in public places. (2 Corinthians 3:17)

More: premierchristian.news/en/news/article/christian-street-preacher-acquitted-after-hate-claim-trial

Mitzvah Day demonstrates the power of inter-faith cooperation

The twentieth Mitzvah Day in the UK demonstrated the power of shared service to strengthen interfaith relationships at a time when tensions have risen nationwide. Volunteers from Jewish, Christian and Muslim communities joined together in more than 200 projects, including preparing food for night shelters and refugee support at Alyth Synagogue in Golders Green. Organisers emphasised that practical cooperation builds trust where dialogue alone can struggle, particularly following strained relations linked to conflict in the Middle East. Founder Laura Marks, who also co-created the Nisa-Nashim network for Jewish and Muslim women, celebrated ongoing friendships and urged continued collaboration beyond the annual event. Leaders, including Rabbi Josh Levy and Bishop Anderson Jeremiah, noted that initiatives like Mitzvah Day help to deepen community bonds and provide resilient foundations for future peacebuilding. Participants said that acts of kindness reflect religious responsibility to seek the good of others, even amid political or social division.

Praise: God for this example of inter-faith cooperation. Pray for renewed trust across faiths, and for friendships which heal division in communities. (1 John 3:18)

More: www.churchtimes.co.uk/articles/2025/28-november/news/uk/interfaith-leaders-join-forces-for-20th-mitzvah-day-of-shared-social-action

British Isles

Budget: the main headlines

Rachel Reeves has delivered her second Budget against a backdrop of weak economic growth, high inflation and tightening household finances. Seeking to raise revenue without triggering an inflation spike, she avoided the previously signalled rise in income tax rates and instead relied on a wide mix of indirect tax changes and frozen thresholds. Measures include new or higher taxes on wealth, property, tourism, gambling and high-sugar drinks, along with a future per-mile charge for electric vehicles. A major welfare change will see the two-child benefit cap scrapped in April 2026, while benefits rise in line with inflation. Business incentives are also adjusted, including changes to capital allowances and dividend taxation. She has also raised the basic living wage significantly: [see https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cn41v89xq4go](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cn41v89xq4go) Critics warn the strategy adds complexity and prolongs record-high tax levels, raising concerns that further tax rises may still be needed. Reeves positioned the Budget as a necessary step to stabilise public finances while supporting workers and the most vulnerable during economic uncertainty.

Pray: that the economy will benefit from this budget, and that the Government will in future be able to give more help to those who are struggling. (Proverbs 30:8)

More: www.bishopfleming.co.uk/insights/autumn-budget-2025-summary-what-you-need-know

North Sea energy: Government allows some new licences

The Government has announced a shift in its North Sea energy policy, allowing limited new oil and gas licences - but only where developments connect to existing fields and infrastructure without further exploration. The move marks a softening of Labour's previous pledge to halt new licensing entirely as part of efforts to reach net-zero emissions by 2050. Britain's oil and gas production has sharply declined since the early 2000s, and further reductions are expected over coming decades. At the same time, the Government confirmed it will keep in place the windfall tax introduced during the energy price surge until 2030, despite strong lobbying from industry leaders who argue it deters investment and threatens jobs. Ministers maintain the tax remains essential to raise funds for the transition to clean energy, and a replacement price-linked mechanism is planned once the levy expires. The debate highlights the complex balance between economic security, climate responsibility and workforce stability.

Pray: Pray: for wise stewardship of natural resources, sustainable energy progress, and protection for workers and communities reliant on the industry. (Psalm 24:1)

More: <https://www.reuters.com/business/energy/uk-government-allows-some-new-oil-gas-fields-holds-firm-taxes-2025-11-26/>

Justice system: Lammy wants to restrict the right to a jury trial

Major changes to the justice system in England and Wales are being considered as justice secretary David Lammy proposes restricting the right to a jury trial for many criminal cases. Only those accused of the most serious offences - such as rape, murder, and manslaughter - would be guaranteed a jury; all other defendants facing serious charges would be tried by a judge alone. The proposals aim to address record delays and a backlog of more than 78,000 Crown Court cases, which could rise to more than 100,000 by 2030 without intervention. Supporters say urgent reform is needed to ensure timely justice for victims, but the chair of the Criminal Bar Association, which represents criminal barristers, has said: 'Their actions will destroy a criminal justice system that has been the pride of this country for centuries, and destroy justice as we know it. Juries are not the cause of the backlog. The cause is the systematic underfunding and neglect that has been perpetrated by this government and its predecessors for years.'

Pray: for wise reforms that uphold fairness, protect historic freedoms, and deliver timely justice for all involved. (Isaiah 1:17)

More: www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cy7vdvrnnvzo

Man arrested in connection with huge pile of waste

Authorities in Oxfordshire are working to tackle one of the most serious fly-tipping incidents the region has seen, after a massive illegal waste pile - around 150 metres long and up to six metres high - was discovered on farmland near Kidlington. The Environment Agency has declared the situation a critical incident due to public safety and environmental risks, particularly with the site's proximity to the River Cherwell. Following months of overnight dumping by organised criminals, a court order secured in late October halted further tipping, and the location remains sealed off as a live crime scene. A 39-year-old man from the Guildford area has now been arrested as part of a major investigation. Officials are monitoring potential contamination, though no signs of hazardous waste breakdown have been detected so far.

Keir Starmer said that 'all available powers' would be used to make those responsible pay for the clean-up: a similarly huge amount of illegally dumped waste, in Kent, will probably take up to a year to remove.

Pray: for protection of creation, justice for affected communities, and wisdom for the authorities who are combating such environmental crime. (Isaiah 24:5)

More: www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cvg1k15xw10o

Europe

Italy: parliament passes law defining femicide

Italy has taken a major and symbolic step in addressing gender-based violence by unanimously passing a law that defines femicide - the killing of a woman because she is a woman - as a distinct crime punishable by a mandatory life sentence. Symbolically, the vote came on the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, following intense national debate sparked by the murder of 22-year-old Giulia Cecchettin in 2023. Her sister's call for society to confront deep-rooted patriarchy propelled public demand for change. Under the new law, cases motivated by control, discrimination, or retaliation for ending a relationship will be formally recorded as femicides. Supporters say this recognition exposes the true motivations behind such murders and encourages broader cultural reform. Critics argue that legislation alone cannot solve inequality, and that the definition of femicide is too vague and will prove difficult for judges to implement. Yet many believe this marks a vital shift - a country full of stereotypes about women and notions of male superiority finally naming and confronting a long-hidden crisis. See also World article 1, about the global instances of femicide.

Pray: for transformed attitudes toward women, stronger protections, and healing for families shattered by gender-based violence. (Psalm 72:14)

More: www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c1dzp050yn2o

Ukraine: differing signals about peace proposals

Hopes of a swift peace agreement to end Russia's invasion of Ukraine have been tempered after the Kremlin cautioned against assuming a deal is close. Spokesman Dmitry Peskov said it was 'premature' to suggest a resolution may soon be reached, adding that outside actors - including the USA - might try to derail progress. His remarks followed more optimistic comments from Kremlin aide Yuri Ushakov, who confirmed Moscow had received a revised US-backed proposal developed with Ukrainian officials. Transcripts of leaked conversations suggest Russian negotiators believe the final document could align closely with their demands, while Steve Witkoff is expected to meet Vladimir Putin for further talks. Donald Trump has repeatedly highlighted what he calls strong momentum, claiming major points of disagreement have already been resolved. Yet elements reportedly included in draft proposals, such as Ukraine relinquishing the Donetsk region and abandoning NATO ambitions, remain deeply contentious for Kyiv. Diplomatic negotiations continue amid uncertainty and conflicting public signals.

Pray: for a just peace which will safeguard Ukraine's sovereignty and protect innocent lives on every side. (Psalm 34:14)

More: www.cbsnews.com/news/kremlin-premature-to-say-peace-deal-ukraine-close/

Worldwide

Global: one woman killed by a partner or relative every ten minutes

Violence against women remains a deadly global crisis, with more than 50,000 women and girls killed in 2024 by intimate partners or family members - an average of one life taken every 10 minutes. A new joint report from UNODC and UN Women, released for the 2025 International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, warns that femicide persists at alarming levels with no sign of meaningful progress. The figures almost certainly underestimate the true scale due to underreporting, legal gaps, stigma, and lack of accurate data. Experts say economic instability, conflict, displacement and inadequate access to safe housing increase the risks for those trapped in abuse. Digital harassment can escalate into deadly violence, showing how danger often begins with controlling behaviours. Africa recorded the highest rate, followed by the Americas, Oceania, Asia, and Europe. UN Women says coordinated efforts involving schools, workplaces, public services and local communities are needed to spot early signs of violence. The campaigners also called on governments to increase funding for shelters, legal aid and specialist support services.

Pray: for strengthened protection and swift intervention so that vulnerable women and girls can escape danger before harm occurs. (Psalm 147:3)

More: www.aljazeera.com/news/2025/11/25/partners-family-members-killed-137-women-each-day-in-2024-un

Nigeria: mass kidnapping from a Catholic school

On 21 November, at St Mary's Catholic School in Niger state, more than three hundred students were abducted in a mass kidnapping - the worst such attack recorded against a Catholic school in the region. Although fifty children managed to escape and have been reunited with their families, 253 students and twelve staff members remain captive. Parents of missing children are traumatised, anxiously searching for any sign of their loved ones. This kidnapping follows several recent attacks, including the abduction of over two dozen schoolgirls in Kebbi and of 38 people attending a church service in Kwara state (though these have now been rescued). These incidents come only a few weeks after Donald Trump spoke of 'Christian genocide', which the government denied (see <https://www.prayer-alert.net/en/pa-pray/regions/worldwide/item/54332-nigeria-trump-s-military-threats-over-christian-genocide>) President Bola Tinubu has reassigned VIPs' bodyguards to core policing duties and ordered the recruitment of 30,000 new police officers, acknowledging that 'many parts of Nigeria' are not adequately policed. Church leaders and global voices, including the Pope, have called for urgent action to rescue the hostages and restore safety for Nigeria's citizens. Many feel that the West doesn't seem to care about this ongoing level of terrorism: see <https://www.spectator.co.uk/article/nigerias-mass-school-abduction-is-its-worst-yet-but-the-west-doesnt-seem-to-care/>

Pray: for the safe rescue of every kidnapped child and adult, and for the government to do more to prevent similar attacks in future. (Psalm 46:1)

More: www.abc.net.au/news/2025-11-24/nigerian-students-escape-kidnappers-st-marys-school/106043750

Nigeria: danger of mass starvation in 2026

Northern Nigeria is facing a rapidly escalating hunger emergency as militant attacks make it too dangerous for farmers to work their land. According to a new World Food Programme (WFP) report, Nigeria is on track to experience the worst-ever food crisis in Africa next year,

with an estimated 35 million people expected to suffer severe hunger. In Borno state, the centre of ongoing insurgencies, at least 15,000 people are projected to face catastrophic hunger including famine-like conditions, as it is now classified at the highest level of food crisis severity. Violence from armed groups has spread, including recent kidnappings and the arrival of an al-Qaeda-linked faction claiming attacks in Nigeria for the first time. The crisis has been intensified by a major reduction in humanitarian aid following Donald Trump's decision to withdraw US funding from the WFP. Without renewed support, millions may be left without critical food assistance, deepening instability and human suffering across the region.

Pray: for restoration of safety, renewed access to farmland, and urgent aid to prevent widespread famine. (Isaiah 58:10)
More: www.africanews.com/2025/11/25/wfp-sounds-alarm-as-nigeria-braces-for-severe-hunger-in-2026/

Hong Kong: at least 83 dead in devastating tower block fire

A devastating blaze has engulfed a residential development in Hong Kong's Tai Po district, rapidly spreading across multiple tower blocks despite the efforts of more than a hundred fire engines. The alert was raised to the highest emergency level as reports emerged of residents trapped inside or stranded on rooftops. At least 83 people have lost their lives, including a firefighter who died while attempting rescue, and over 270 others remain unaccounted for. Many tenants said fire alarms failed to sound, leaving them unaware of the danger until smoke and flames were already advancing. The fire began on bamboo scaffolding surrounding the buildings and intensified quickly as burning debris fell and structures ignited. Nearby roads were closed and shelters opened as emergency crews worked into the night to contain the fire and care for displaced families. Officials have urged the public to stay away from the area while investigations continue into the cause and building safety systems. Latest news: three construction company executives have been arrested on suspicion of manslaughter connected to inflammable materials, which may have allowed the fire to spread quickly. See <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cvgjnlx1g6yo>

Pray: for comfort for grieving families, protection for those still missing, and strength for exhausted rescue workers. (Isaiah 40:29)
More: www.thesun.co.uk/news/37442158/fire-engulfs-high-rise-residents-trapped-hong-kong/

Malawi: faith leaders challenge high court decision on abortion

A recent High Court decision in Malawi has ignited significant national debate by ruling that a 14-year-old girl, pregnant due to rape, must be granted access to a safe abortion. The judgment held that denying such care violates protection under the Gender Equality Act, and that girls impregnated through sexual offences automatically qualify for legal abortion services. Faith leaders, including Catholics, Protestants and Muslims, have warned that the ruling could set a far-reaching precedent in a country where abortion remains almost entirely criminalised except to save the mother's life. They argue that expanding legal access risks reshaping national policy without public consensus, and intend to challenge the decision through legal and governmental channels. Meanwhile, advocates for reform say restrictive laws force vulnerable women and girls toward unsafe procedures, contributing to maternal deaths, though data on abortion-related mortality remains contested. As both sides mobilise, Malawi faces a pivotal moment in balancing the protection of life with urgent concerns for justice, safety and healthcare for survivors of sexual violence.

Pray: for compassion, protection and healing for survivors, and wise leadership that upholds justice and the dignity of every life. (Psalm 10:17)
More: www.christiandaily.com/news/malawi-faith-leaders-challenge-high-court-abortion-ruling-as-worrying-precedent

Mali: abuses by former Wagner mercenaries

Testimonies from refugees in Mauritania reveal severe human rights abuses committed during counter-insurgency operations in Mali involving Russian mercenaries formerly associated with the Wagner Group. Witnesses describe arbitrary detentions, torture, and extrajudicial killings as civilians were accused of aiding jihadist insurgents. One former shopkeeper recounted being detained, threatened, and mistreated before later fleeing the country with his family. Others reported loved ones killed without explanation or being beaten while performing everyday tasks like herding livestock. Human rights monitors say these actions have spread fear and driven tens of thousands to flee across the border. Although Wagner has formally withdrawn, many of its operatives are now part of Russia's Africa Corps, and concerns remain that abuses continue under a new name. Calls are growing for accountability and justice for victims, as communities struggle with trauma, displacement, and the loss of safety in their homeland.

Pray: for protection and healing for the displaced, justice for victims, and an end to violence and oppression. (Psalm 10:17)
More: www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/crmx7x3jyko

Sudan: RSF announces humanitarian truce after army rejects ceasefire proposals

The devastating civil war in Sudan continues, with renewed international pressure for a ceasefire. The RSF, locked in conflict with the army since April 2023, has announced a three-month humanitarian truce. It says the move is in response to global diplomatic efforts, including initiatives from the Quad mediators (the USA, Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and Egypt). However, deep distrust remains. Army chief Abdel Fattah al-Burhan rejected the US-backed proposal, calling it biased due to the UAE's involvement and accusing the mediators of favouring the RSF. There are persistent allegations that the UAE is secretly arming the RSF, though it denies the claims. The conflict's political roots remain unresolved: proposals have suggested transitions toward civilian rule without either military faction holding power - an idea the army has strongly opposed. In October the RSF seized the key Darfur city of El-Fasher after a relentless siege which sparked warnings of crimes against humanity and genocide. The warring parties have so far violated every ceasefire agreement.

Pray: that the army will agree to the RSF proposal for a truce. Continue to pray for a just peace and lasting stability grounded in truth and reconciliation. (Psalm 140:1,2)
More: www.rfi.fr/en/international-news/20251124-sudan-s-rsf-declares-truce-after-army-rejects-us-plan

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