



# barnabasprayer

**Barnabas Aid** - bringing hope to suffering Christians

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To help you  
pray for suffering  
Christians

**May/June 2024**

**[barnabasaid.org](https://barnabasaid.org)**

Thank you for your prayers for our persecuted brothers and sisters in Christ, which make such a difference to them. We sometimes have to change or omit their names for security reasons, and we have only limited space to share their stories. But the Lord knows the people and places we are praying about. Please do not feel limited by the specific prayer requests, but pray as you feel led. On each Sunday we have provided a set prayer; please feel free to use these in their current form, to adapt them as you prefer, or to use the information they contain to frame your own prayers.

## May

**WEDNESDAY 1** “They are burning the church buildings, targeting the pastors and kidnapping church members. Choir members and groups have been attacked and others kidnapped either during choir practices or evening prayers,” wrote a Nigerian church leader to Barnabas Aid. Actions like this are forcing church buildings to close in parts of Nigeria. In Kaduna State over 200 churches had to shut down in a recent four-year period. Many Christians now meet for worship in homes or under trees in their villages. These attacks on church buildings are in addition to an estimated 45,000 Christian people killed in Nigeria since 2009. Pray that the Lord will have mercy on His people in Nigeria and bring their suffering to an end.

**THURSDAY 2** Thirty people were killed by suspected Fulani extremists, armed with guns, who attacked a group of Christian villages in Mangu Local Government Area, Plateau State, Nigeria, shortly after midnight on 24 January. Many other attacks occur that are never reported to the wider world. Pray that grieving Nigerian believers will be strengthened by remembering that their sorrow and wretchedness

are known to God, who sees and values every tear they shed (Psalm 56:8).

**FRIDAY 3** Nambam’s husband, whose name was Barnabas, was killed in an anti-Christian attack in Nigeria in 2023. Barnabas Aid has provided her with a simple three-room house for her and her children, with some land around it where she can grow food. She says, “After my husband was killed, I lost hope. I didn’t know that God will bring comfort and hope from our Christian family through Barnabas Aid.” Pray that the Lord will guide Barnabas Aid as we seek to provide houses for other families made homeless by anti-Christian violence in Nigeria.



Widowed Nambam and her children now have a proper home in a safer location in Nigeria

**SATURDAY 4** Presidential elections in Chad are scheduled for the day after

tomorrow, 6 May. The poll was thrown into doubt after the main opposition candidate Yaya Dillo Djérou was shot dead in a clash with government forces on 28 February. Pray that the election will be conducted in peace and safety and that whoever is elected will govern wisely and fairly for all citizens. Christians in Chad, just over a third of the population, often suffer discrimination from the Muslim majority, which dominates Chadian politics, civil service, armed forces and business. Pray for protection for Christians in this desperately poor country.

**SUNDAY 5** We bring to You today, dear Father, our Christian brothers and sisters in Vietnam. We know that some face difficulties because they are Your children, while others do not, but we pray that all will be built up in their faith. We pray for those who are denied basic documents and therefore cannot get healthcare or schooling. We pray for those who are kept under surveillance, intimidated, beaten or imprisoned. We pray for those who are summoned to “criticism sessions” where they are criticised publicly to try to make them deny Christ. In His Name we ask that You will give them endurance, courage and perseverance in abundant measure.

**MONDAY 6** “This is a green area,” said the local government leaders to Y, who was church-planting in Java, Indonesia. Green is the colour of Islam, so this statement meant that they did not want any Christians or Christian activities in their area. Y reduced her ministry activities but

did not stop. She reached the point where a building was needed for the Christians to meet, but Indonesian law requires approval from 60 non-Christian local households for a new church building. The Christians prayed and fasted, and, gathering her courage, Y began trying to collect the necessary signatures, even from the local government leaders who seemed to hate her. Much to her surprise they all signed their agreement to the proposed Christian “house of prayer”. Praise God for this and ask for His continued blessing and guidance on the growing congregation.

**TUESDAY 7** The vast country of Indonesia elected a new president in February after Joko Widodo completed the two terms in office allowed by the constitution. He was succeeded by Prabowo Subianto, a 72-year-old former general and defence minister. Subianto’s path to victory was helped with the support of Joko Widodo whose son Gibran Rakabuming Raka was appointed as Subianto’s vice-presidential candidate. Joko Widodo did much to combat Islamist extremism and to help Indonesian Christians during his tenure. Pray that President Subianto will serve the country that has more Muslims than any other with wisdom, compassion and justice.

**WEDNESDAY 8** Tuncer Cihan (aged 52) was shot dead by two masked gunmen during a church service on Sunday 28 January in Istanbul, Turkey. It was apparently a targeted assassination, and no one else in the congregation (which included European Christians) was shot at. Tuncer was a Turkish convert from Islam to Christianity. Islamic State (IS

– also known as ISIS, ISIL, Daesh) later claimed responsibility for the attack, saying it was in response to calls by its leaders to target Jews and Christians. President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan of Turkey sent condolences to the church leaders and the police were quick to make arrests. Pray for the protection of all Christians in Turkey, especially those who are converts from Islam.

**THURSDAY 9** From this month onwards the ancient church building of St Saviour in Chora, Istanbul, Turkey will be used as a mosque. Dating from the fourth century, the church was first converted into a mosque after the Ottomans conquered Istanbul (then called Constantinople) in 1453. The building was repurposed as a museum in the mid-20th century, by which time Turkey was a secular republic. The plan to use it as a mosque again dates from 2020 when President Erdoğan issued a decree that also ordered Istanbul's renowned Hagia Sophia cathedral to be used as a mosque from that year. Pray that Christians in Turkey will not be disheartened and that the day will come when it is used again for Christian worship.

**FRIDAY 10** Nearly 120,000 Armenian Christians from Nagorno-Karabakh fled to Armenia seven months ago when Azerbaijan seized control of Nagorno-Karabakh. Pray for them as they re-start their lives, trying to find new ways to earn a living and permanent homes instead of church halls or spare rooms of distant relatives. Barnabas is sending help. Ask that the Lord will comfort them in the sudden loss of their beloved homeland, which is full of ancient

Armenian churches and *khachkars* (intricately carved stone crosses).



Armenian Christian refugees from Nagorno-Karabakh

**SATURDAY 11** Azerbaijan is systematically destroying the Armenian Christian history of Nagorno-Karabakh. Some Christian buildings have been knocked down and the stones removed, so it appears that nothing has ever stood there. Others have been converted for non-Christian uses. In still other cases, Azerbaijan writes a new history for the buildings or the *khachkars* (cross-stones), claiming that the Armenian inscriptions are “forgeries” added to the original work of a vanished tribe of “Caucasian Albanians”. All this is continuing despite a prohibition from the International Court of Justice. In effect, Azerbaijan is ethnically cleansing not only the land but also the historical record. It is as if they are trying to persuade the world that Armenians, who became the first Christian nation in 301, never existed. Pray that Azerbaijan will cease this destruction.



**SUNDAY 12** Thank You, Lord Jesus, for the courage and perseverance of Your followers in North Korea. Protect them as they meet together to worship You, knowing that they will be terribly persecuted if they are caught doing this. Be with them as they read Your Word in a country where Christians have been executed just for owning a Bible. Strengthen those in labour camps, where they are starved, tortured and worked almost to death. Although North Korea is cut off from the rest of the world, may its Christians rejoice to know that, through persecution, they are part of a great company of prophets and martyrs who have gone before (Matthew 5:12).

**MONDAY 13** Since 1 January 2024 a new Patriotic Education Law has been in force in China. The law applies not just to schools but also to religious groups and all sectors of Chinese society. Guidelines on how religious groups should follow the law have been issued by the Chinese Communist Party. The main gist is that the thoughts of Xi Jinping, the president of China, must be learnt, thought and practised by religious groups. Pray for all Christians in China, especially church leaders, that the Holy Spirit will give them wisdom and courage to continue faithful to Christ in this increasingly difficult environment.

**TUESDAY 14** Today is the 21st birthday of Leah Sharibu, a Nigerian Christian who has been held captive by Boko Haram terrorists since she was 14 years old. She was kidnapped with other pupils from her school, but

all the others were soon released. Leah was kept because she refused to deny Christ and convert to Islam. While in captivity she has been forced into marriage with a Boko Haram commander and had at least two children. Lift up Leah in prayer to the God who rescues (Daniel 3:29), asking Him to keep her Christian faith strong and to restore her soon to her loving parents who long to see her again.

**WEDNESDAY 15** Christian girls or women who have been held captive by Boko Haram and then released/escaped are not always accepted back by their local community. Sometimes they are labelled as “annoba” (a Hausa word meaning “plagues”) and “Boko Haram wives”. This is because the community fears that the girls were turned into radical Muslims during their years of captivity. Even their children can be viewed with suspicion as possible future terrorists. Pray for a loving, trusting, welcoming attitude to these young women who have endured so much for so many years.

**THURSDAY 16** Christianity in Hindu-majority Nepal has grown fast since the 1950s, mainly by the evangelistic efforts of the early converts. However, it is still seen as an “alien faith” not belonging in Nepal. Those who leave Hinduism to follow Christ are viewed as having abandoned not just their religion but also their family, culture and community. They may face persecution, especially if they were high-caste. Christians may find themselves facing discrimination, for example being barred from public jobs. The media tend to be negative towards Christians. Pray that Nepali Christians

will “consider it pure joy”, whenever they face trials of many kinds, because they know that the testing of their faith produces perseverance which will make them mature believers (James 1:2-4).

**FRIDAY 17** Christians in Nepal can face persecution not only from the community but also from the authorities. Since 2018 it has been illegal to attempt to convert a Hindu or a Buddhist or to “hurt religious sentiment”. With this vague wording, almost any Christian activity could potentially be deemed illegal. At the end of last year, Nepali pastors were facing nine court cases on fabricated charges under this law. There is a possible punishment of five years in prison. Lift up these pastors in prayer to our God, who in all things works for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to His purpose (Romans 8:28). Nepali Christians believe it is because the Church is growing so fast that they are being persecuted.

**SATURDAY 18** “Seeing our people in our church excited to learn and discuss makes us feel blessed. This has brought a huge change in our lives,” exclaimed Asmita, a member of a local church in Nepal, who have been built up together by a training ministry fondly nicknamed “Bible college at home”. The members of Asmita’s church range from women who are barely literate to students doing university degrees. The range of the different courses helps Christians wherever they may be in their faith and whatever their level of education. Some courses are used to prepare new converts for baptism, others to equip experienced church leaders. Pray that each of the 5,473 students, of all ages and walks of life,

will grow in their faith and be better able to face pressure and persecution. Barnabas helps to fund this training.



Asmita says her life has been hugely changed by “Bible college at home”

**SUNDAY 19** Thank You, heavenly Father, for sending the Holy Spirit to be our Comforter and Counsellor. We ask that our brothers and sisters who are suffering for the sake of Christ, who are hungry or frightened, sick or grieving, in prison or on trial, injured or tortured, will know the presence of Your Spirit. May He guide their thoughts to Your promises and our eternal hope. May He put the right words in their mouths as they respond to their persecutors. May He remind them of Jesus’s teachings, especially those who have no access to a Bible in their suffering. May He fill them with overflowing peace and joy.

**MONDAY 20** Please pray for a just and lasting peace in the Holy Land and for all who have suffered there so terribly since 7 October 2023. Remember especially the Christians of Gaza, who number about 900 people within a Gazan population of some 2 million. At least 20 have been

killed. At the time of writing they are mostly sheltering in the compounds of two churches in Gaza City; this is in northern Gaza where food aid has been even scarcer than in the south. At the end of February, the Christians were saying that they had heard of other groups being given food by the UN and Red Cross but had not received anything themselves despite their pleas.

**TUESDAY 21** The Holy Land violence is also affecting the West Bank, where there is a substantial Christian minority. Many Christians there used to have jobs in the tourist trade, but the conflict is keeping tourists away and therefore those jobs are disappearing. “Lack of income and resources in the city is truly devastating,” wrote one Christian from Bethlehem to Barnabas Aid. Pray that our brothers and sisters, living where the Prince of Peace was born but facing such an uncertain future, will have His peace in their hearts, whatever happens around them.

**WEDNESDAY 22** The conflict in the Holy Land has spilled over into southern Lebanon. By mid-February around 90,000 Lebanese had left the south to seek safety in Beirut and other areas. Most of the Christians in the south are amongst them. “They all hope to go back to their homes and villages, so we are praying for a truce, for peace and the fighting to stop,” wrote a church leader in Lebanon to Barnabas Aid in February. Add your prayers to those of Lebanese Christians.

**THURSDAY 23** Syria continues in the turmoil of civil war and the deprivation caused by international sanctions. Humanitarian needs are huge. Ask the Lord to have mercy on this suffering

country, which has in the past welcomed so many Christians seeking refuge there. Many Christians are now leaving Syria because they “have no more hope of peace, security and resources to enable them to live and survive”, writes a Syrian Christian leader. Pray that the Lord will guide each family and give them hope.

**FRIDAY 24** Praise God for the zeal of hundreds of young Middle Eastern Christians in Germany, who meet weekly in groups of 50 to 100 to study the Bible together. Most of them are second-generation immigrants, whose parents fled to Germany from countries such as Syria, Iraq and Turkey to escape persecution. Having grown up in Germany, they find German easier than their parents’ language, Aramaic, and Barnabas has provided them with German-language Bibles. Pray that their faith will not grow dim as they live in a safe and secure country where there is much less to test them than their parents endured.

**SATURDAY 25** It is now 13 years since Christian children in Tajikistan were banned by law from going to church. Pray that those now approaching adulthood, who can probably not remember being in a Christian worship service or prayer meeting, may look forward with enthusiasm to their 18th birthdays because after that they may go to church. Ask that they will be filled with a deep desire and longing to worship the Lord with His people. Ask too for wisdom and guidance for all Christian parents in Tajikistan, teaching their children the faith at home.

**SUNDAY 26** Dear Lord, we bring before Your throne today our

**Christian brothers and sisters in Turkmenistan, whose lives are hemmed in with many restrictions and dangers. We pray that You will touch the hearts of the Turkmen authorities to allow more Bibles to enter their country. We pray that You will prompt them to allow more churches to be registered so that Christians can gather for worship legally, instead of being arrested for meeting illegally in homes. We pray that, as the state authorities approve the appointment of all church leaders, You will work through them to raise up the leaders of Your choice to pastor Your suffering people in Turkmenistan. We ask it all in the Name of Christ.**

**MONDAY 27** “All the events that take place around us – catastrophes, natural disasters, wars, persecution of Christians and much more – are signs of the end times,” wrote some believers in a Central Asian republic. “But despite all this, the Lord keeps us in His hand and strengthens us in service. We haven’t had any serious disasters so far. Although minor earthquakes occur quite often, avalanches occur very often in mountainous areas, floods occur, and there are persecutions in places, but in general we have very favourable conditions for evangelism.” They invite us to praise the Lord with them for peace in their country and that Christian ministry is able to take place, praying also for His continued guidance and provision.

**TUESDAY 28** A growing consciousness of national identity is developing in Kazakhstan, especially in the south

and west. Because Islam is part of the Kazakh identity, this is leading to greater hostility towards Christians, not only Kazakh converts from Islam but also the many Russian Christians who have never been Muslims. Another problem for the Russian Christians is that some in Kazakhstan are becoming increasingly anti-Russian. In the 2021 census about 17% of the population declared themselves Christian (down from 26% in 2009); they are mainly Russians (and Ukrainians). Pray that all Christians in Kazakhstan will “live such good lives” among the non-Christians that hostility and false accusations will melt away and the Lord will be glorified (1 Peter 2:12).

**WEDNESDAY 29** A congregation in Kazakhstan is running special activities to strengthen its members in the face of persecution and hostility as Kazakh consciousness of national identity grows. Most of the congregation are first-generation Christians, a mixture of converts from Islam and former atheists. Pray for wisdom for those who are teaching them and that the Holy Spirit will make them strong, firm and steadfast in their faith (1 Peter 5:10).



In this church building in Kazakhstan, new believers are being strengthened in their faith to withstand growing persecution. Barnabas Aid helped fund renovations that strengthened the building itself, with a metal roof to withstand heavy snow and a seismic belt to withstand earthquakes



**THURSDAY 30** The authorities in Kazakhstan often invite Protestant pastors to events or consultations. For example, one was invited to the mayor's office of his city and asked to take part in the city's work with youth and families. Some pastors rejoice over these unexpected opportunities, while others mistrust the intentions of the authorities and wonder if there is a hidden agenda. Pray that all the pastors may have the spiritual gift of discernment and may know how to be as wise as serpents and innocent as doves (Matthew 10:16).

**FRIDAY 31** Iman Golzar was arrested from his home in Dezful, Iran, by plainclothes agents at midnight on 16 January. They also seized his computer and CCTV. He was released on bail on 7 February, to the tremendous relief of his parents, who are both deaf and had not known where he was being held. At the time of writing, it is not known whether he has been charged with anything, but Iranian converts from Islam like Iman are typically charged with "acting against national security" or similar offences. Ask the Lord, who knows Iman's exact situation today, to protect Iman, whatever he is accused of.

## June

**SATURDAY 1** Please continue to pray for Esmail Narimanpour, another Iranian Christian from a Muslim background, who goes to the same church as Iman Golzar (see above). Esmail was arrested on Christmas Eve 2023 and is still in detention at the time of writing. He had previously been acquitted of "propaganda" charges in 2021. Our Lord Jesus said, "Blessed are you when people

insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me" (Matthew 5:11). Pray that Esmail will experience the very real and close presence of Jesus with him in prison.

**SUNDAY 2** Heavenly Father, we pray for our brothers and sisters in prison because they love and serve Your Son, Jesus Christ. Help us to remember them as if we were suffering alongside them. May they experience abundantly the joy of the Lord as their strength in their time of affliction. We pray that they will draw comfort from the fact that the Word of God is not chained and the Spirit of God moves where He pleases. Will You empower them to speak graciously, gently yet boldly to their persecutors and fellow prisoners? May their testimony lead others to salvation in Jesus Christ, in whose Name we pray. (2 Timothy 2:9; John 3:8)

**MONDAY 3** The Eritrean government cruelly persecutes Christians of certain denominations. Many are detained for years in horrendous conditions, where they are often beaten or tortured, starved of food and water, and forced to do hard labour. In prison they are forbidden to pray aloud, sing, preach or read religious books. Pastors and theological students are singled out for extra punishments or extended periods of detention. Pray that they will be able not only to rejoice in their persecution but even to "skip and shout for joy" (*agalliasathe* in the Greek) knowing that there is a great reward for them in heaven (Matthew 5:12).

**TUESDAY 4** Please pray for the people of Tigray, a strongly Christian area of

northern Ethiopia, where people are starving to death. The fields are brown and dusty because of drought. More than half of them were not even planted last year because of continuing insecurity after the war of 2020-2022. Children are dropping out of school to search for berries and leaves to eat. The main rainy season is supposed to be June to September. Ask that our Christian brothers and sisters will not lose hope but will continue to look in faith to the Lord. Pray that food aid will be safely delivered (from Barnabas and others) and that rain will fall in the right amounts at the right times and in the right places.

**WEDNESDAY 5** A church building in Wad Madani, capital of Gezira State, Sudan, was set on fire on 12 January. Church leaders believe that the arsonists were the Rapid Support Forces (RSF), a paramilitary group which grew out of the greatly feared Janjaweed militia. The church is the largest in the state and one of the oldest, having been built in 1939. The fire consumed the library and devastated the main hall. The RSF has been in control of Gezira State since 18 December 2023 following the withdrawal of the Sudanese army. It has been responsible for attacks on churches elsewhere in Sudan during the current conflict. Ask that, if it is the Lord's will, violence against Christians in Sudan will cease.

**THURSDAY 6** "Thank you for giving my son hope and teaching him to read and write, skills he thought he might never acquire." This grateful parent's words refer to the education that children of impoverished Sudanese Christian refugees are receiving because of

Barnabas' support for a Christian school in Cairo. Most of the parents fled to Egypt to escape conflict and persecution in Sudan and cannot afford school fees for their children. Now, with Barnabas supporters' donations, even the poorest refugee children can receive an education. Praise God for transforming Sudanese Christian children's lives and pray that they will flourish in their studies and relationships. Ask for His blessing and encouragement on their parents and teachers as the children grow and learn together in a loving Christian environment.



Christian school for Sudanese Christian refugee children in Egypt

**FRIDAY 7** Please pray with us at Barnabas Aid for God's guidance for our "Opportunity Africa" initiative. The aim is to help Christian communities in Africa become more resilient as natural disasters, weather extremes and persecution pose increasing challenges. Solutions can be very simple, such as a recent project in Uganda which provided cuttings of better varieties of cassava and plantain for subsistence Christian farmers. The farming families had been living with hunger because their crop yields, from old varieties, were so low. The

project also taught the farmers modern methods of cultivation. Soon, each of the 14,000 families helped will go on to help two more families, teaching them the skills they have learnt and giving them cuttings taken from their own new high-yielding plants. Pray for good harvests.

**SATURDAY 8** The violent terrorist onslaught against Christians and moderate Muslims in northern Mozambique had somewhat diminished, when in January ten Christians were killed in a series of attacks on Christian villages. At least 130 houses and a church building were burnt. In the following weeks, as further attacks occurred, nearly 100,000 people fled south, many of them settling in an area that was experiencing a cholera outbreak. Pray for all the innocent people of northern Mozambique, especially our fellow-Christians. Ask that they will be encouraged by remembering the words of Jesus when He warned His disciples that they would be persecuted: “I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world” (John 16:33).

**SUNDAY 9** Dearest Lord Jesus, we pray for Christians in Somalia and Somaliland, whose lives are in grave danger because they love and serve You. Despite the risks they face daily, keep them in Your perfect peace, the peace that passes understanding. Please protect our Christian sisters, Hanna and Hoodo, last heard of in separate prisons, serving sentences due to run until 2027 and 2029, respectively. Thank You that You know their situations and

**can strengthen their faith with a strong awareness of Your loving presence with them. Bless them and all the other Somali believers, whose names are known to You though not to us.**

**MONDAY 10** “Kill them wherever you find them” is the name of the latest campaign to be launched by Islamic State (IS – also known as ISIS, ISIL and Daesh). The militant group is reported to have claimed at least 30 attacks as part of this campaign, including in Iraq, Syria, Mali, Nigeria, Mozambique, Afghanistan and the Philippines. Christians are amongst their targets. Please pray that the terrorists of IS will come to realise that what they are doing is not pleasing to God, as they think, but just the opposite. Ask that Jesus will meet with them and change their lives.

**TUESDAY 11** Pray with us for God’s guidance and enabling for our food.gives project which ships food and other items donated by supporters in containers sent by land and sea to suffering Christians around the world. One of the most recent containers was sent by truck from the UK to Ukraine, containing rice, lentils, chickpeas, porridge, pasta, soup and other foodstuffs as well as clothes and hygiene/medical supplies. Praise God for its safe arrival and pray for an end to the war in Ukraine which has caused so much suffering.

**WEDNESDAY 12** “Our faith in Christ has been strengthened, hope in His caring Church, and relationship with loving people of God, restored through this disaster.” The words of a grateful believer in Pakistan as Barnabas delivered a second phase of aid to 172 of the families

worst affected by last year's devastating anti-Christian riots in Jaranwala. Give thanks for the strong faith of our brothers and sisters who have stood firm in the face of persecution. Pray that their joy in the Lord will be a powerful example to all Christians that, even in the worst of times, we will never be crushed, nor despair or feel abandoned (2 Corinthians 4:8-9).

**THURSDAY 13** Praise God for the wonderful news that two Pakistani Christian brothers, known as Rocky and Raja, were acquitted at a court in Faisalabad on 29 February of all the charges against them. The brothers had been charged under all three of Pakistan's "blasphemy" laws, including Section 295-C of the Penal Code which carries a mandatory death penalty. These accusations, and the arrest of the brothers on 16 August 2023, sparked the widespread anti-Christian riots in Jaranwala, during which at least 24 churches were set on fire, and the homes of more than 100 Christians were burned, looted or vandalised. A police investigation later discovered that two other individuals, also arrested at the time and still in prison, had sought to implicate the brothers in "blasphemy" charges.



Christians Umar Saleem (Rocky) and Umair Saleem (Raja), with their lawyer Tahir Bashir (centre), after they had been cleared of all charges [Image credit: Facebook/Tahir Bashir]

**FRIDAY 14** Another pair of Christian brothers in Pakistan is in great need of our prayers. On 22 January 2024 Azam Masih (39) and his brother Nadeem (41) were kidnapped in Sialkot district, beaten with iron bars and threatened with death until they recited the *shahada* (Islamic creed). Some Muslims believe that speaking the words of the *shahada*, even under coercion, is an act of conversion to Islam. If the person later returns to their original religion, he or she is considered an apostate from Islam and therefore punishable with death according to Islamic law. After their release, Azam and Nadeem received hospital treatment for their many injuries. They and their families are now in hiding. Please pray for their protection.

**SATURDAY 15** Pakistan needs our prayers as the decades-long political, economic and security challenges show no signs of easing. Strong reservations have been expressed on the validity of the results of the General Election in February. Pray that the new national and provincial governments will bring stability to the country. Ask the Lord to guide those in authority to govern wisely and bring peace and greater prosperity to all citizens. Pray that extremists who seek to exploit political uncertainty will be thwarted and that the Lord will protect Christians and other minorities, who are often targeted in times of national insecurity.

**SUNDAY 16** O Lord, we praise You that You know everything. We want to pray today for Christians in Afghanistan. We do not know their individual situations, but You do. We do not know the dangers they are facing, as converts from

**Islam, but You do. We do not know who may be planning to attack or even kill them, but You do. We do not know the hunger and other deprivation they are enduring in a desperately impoverished country, but You do. Pour out Your blessings on them, for we ask in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ, their Saviour and ours.**

**MONDAY 17** Ask the God of all comfort to draw close to Christians in north-eastern Burkina Faso after at least 15 worshippers were killed during an attack on a church on Sunday 26 February. Twelve died on the spot and the other three died later in hospital. Pray that the injured, survivors and bereaved may be given grace to follow Paul's words: "Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse" (Romans 12:14).

**TUESDAY 18** Jihadists have been waging a nine-year campaign of violence in Burkina Faso, much of it targeted against Christians and churches. They now control more than 40% of the country. An estimated two million people have fled their homes, creating one of the fastest-growing displacement crises in the world. Before the violence began, Burkina Faso was a beacon of religious harmony; its society comprised Muslims (60%), Christians (30%) and followers of African Traditional Religions (10%). Remembering that anti-Christian violence on earth is ultimately a sign of battles in the heavenly places, pray for a return to peaceful co-existence in Burkina Faso.

**WEDNESDAY 19** A Christian leader from the Gambia in West Africa wrote

recently of a wave of anti-Christian persecution in this impoverished, mainly Muslim country. He said that many imams were using social media to incite violence against Christians, three Christian converts from Islam had police cases against them, and his own family were being attacked by other relatives. At the same time, Muslims were continuing to turn to Christ, including two imams. Pray that our Gambian brothers and sisters will not give way to fear and that they will rejoice to see the Lord at work in their country building His Church.

**THURSDAY 20** "Anna", a teenage Christian in the Gambia, is often punished severely by her schoolteachers because of her Christian faith. This is in addition to bullying by her classmates. There are many other young Christians around the world, in places where Christians are a despised minority, who suffer like Anna every day when they go to school. Pray that, although young in years, they will be mature in their Christian faith and able to suffer for the Lord with joy.

**FRIDAY 21** A presidential election is scheduled in Mauritania for tomorrow, 22 June. The strongly Islamic nation is one of the few countries in the world where apostasy from Islam is officially punishable by death, although no known executions in recent years have been carried out for leaving Islam. At the time of writing President Mohamed Ould Ghazouani is expected to stand for another five-year term. Pray that whatever the outcome of the election, Mauritania's government will allow greater freedom for its citizens to choose their faith. Pray that the tiny minority



of Christian converts will grow in knowledge and love of the Lord, despite the severe restrictions they live with.

**SATURDAY 22** A group of Christians had gathered to worship in a private home in Kaleum Vangke village in Laos on the morning of Sunday 4 February, when village leaders and residents interrupted and began tearing down the house. They also burned Bibles. The law in Laos gives Christians the right to conduct worship services, but it is not well enforced in rural parts of the country. Pray that the Christians of Kaleum Vangke may be comforted by Jesus's promise: "Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 5:10).

**SUNDAY 23** O Lord Jesus, Prince of Peace, we pray that You will act in power in Myanmar, where for six decades the military have persecuted ethnic and religious minorities. Please bring the violence to an end. We pray especially for many thousands of Christians in the Chin, Kachin and Karen ethnic groups, who have fled attacks on their villages to seek safety in the jungle or in camps for displaced people. Please give them food and shelter. Comfort those who mourn for loved ones killed in the violence. Be their unchanging Rock of hope when nothing else stays the same.

**MONDAY 24** Barnabas is funding the transportation of 94,000 Bibles to Christians in Myanmar, part of a project to deliver a total of 200,000 Bibles. The books include hymnals

of Christian songs as well as the Scriptures and are being delivered to Karen Christians in impoverished parts of Myanmar. At the time of writing, the first shipment of 50,000 Bibles is underway. Pray for protection for those carrying out the distribution of the Bibles in Myanmar. Only the most elderly Karen believers can now remember what it was like to live without persecution by their country's military. Pray that God's Word will bring hope and encouragement.



Delivering Bibles to suffering Karen Christians in Myanmar

**TUESDAY 25** Anti-Christian hostility varies from place to place across Indonesia. It is greatest in the far west, where the semi-autonomous province of Aceh is the only part of the nation governed by sharia (Islamic law). Papua, the easternmost province, has for a long time been Christian-majority, but the government is encouraging Muslims to settle there so as to create a Muslim majority. Papua is very poor and underdeveloped, despite being mineral-rich, and the Christian population are frequently attacked by the Indonesian military. Pray that they will be strong in the

Lord and know His leading in their difficult and changing circumstances.

**WEDNESDAY 26** Pastor M is church-planting on a volcano in Java, Indonesia. The Islam of the local area is mixed with a lot of superstition, occultism, animism and ancestor worship. Already Pastor M has established two worshipping communities, including many new converts. One gave his life to Christ after he had been healed of paralysis when Pastor M prayed for him. Pray for the protection of Pastor M and his wife (who are supported by Barnabas Aid) and all the local believers, as they live boldly for Christ amidst so much spiritual opposition.

**THURSDAY 27** The government of Saudi Arabia has for many years been active in propagating Islam around the world. They also support efforts to convert non-Muslims living within Saudi Arabia and have recently announced about 350,000 conversions to Islam in Saudi Arabia during the five-year period 2019-2023. Of these, 163,319 converted during 2023. There are about a million Christians among the country's large population of expatriate workers, many of them suffering difficult working and living conditions. Pray that they will cling to the Lord Jesus, resisting all attempts to make them embrace Islam.

**FRIDAY 28** Fifty-two Algerian Christians have been sentenced in court to punishments including fines and prison sentences, ranging from two months to five years. These figures cover the period October 2019 to February 2024. Please pray for all

affected, that the Lord will provide for them. The majority of church buildings in Algeria have been forced to close and believers now meet in small groups in homes. Pray that this period of increasing pressure from the authorities will be matched by growing perseverance from Algerian believers.

**SATURDAY 29** Christian converts from Islam in a strongly Muslim country in North Africa are often thrown out by their families and harassed by society because of their decision to follow Christ. They must follow their new faith discreetly or, for some, in complete secrecy. A ministry, supported by Barnabas, disciples new converts and encourages them in their faith. The small team provides telephone guidance, organises fellowship meetings and supports ostracised new believers. Give thanks for the work of the ministry team and pray that our new brothers and sisters in Christ will fix their eyes on Jesus and hold firm in their confidence in Him (Hebrews 3:1,6).

**SUNDAY 30** O God of love and peace, we pray for Libya, a country of hatred and violence, with two rival governments and dozens of armed groups. Please protect our Christian brothers and sisters in the midst of this, who have come from many African countries, seeking work or trying to reach the safety of Europe. We pray also for the small number of Libyan believers, some of them in prison facing a death sentence, because they have chosen to follow Your Son Jesus. In His Name we ask: please act in power and might to save Your faithful people in Libya.

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**Front Cover:** A displaced Nigerian Christian farmer who received  
piglets from Barnabas Aid