



barnabasprayer

Barnabas Aid - bringing hope to suffering Christians

To help you
pray for suffering
Christians

**November/
December 2024**

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.

November

FRIDAY 1 Give thanks that Almighty God has knit together believers from every part of the world in communion and fellowship with one another and with Him, through Jesus Christ the Lord. Pray that Christians who suffer persecution, poverty and hunger will be an example to those believers who live in safer parts of the world, as well as being a powerful witness to all those around them. Ask that they will be further filled with the Holy Spirit, and that He will sustain them in their Christian faith, until we all meet as one great multitude that no man can number, “from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb” (Revelation 7:9).

SATURDAY 2 The Lord Jesus Christ taught that the world will hate His people because it first hated Him (John 15:18-19). This hatred is the source of all anti-Christian persecution, which will continue until His return. Our Lord also taught that those who endure until the end will be saved (Matthew 24:13). Pray for our brothers and sisters, wherever they are, who bear the brunt of the world’s hatred. Pray that their faith will be preserved, and that each one will endure to the end.

SUNDAY 3 Lord Jesus, we lift before You those who have been bereaved through their loved ones’ martyrdom. We thank You that You are the resurrection and the life and for Your assurance that whoever lives and believes in You will never die. Please grant that those who mourn will be comforted by the certain knowledge that their loved ones have been faithful and that the death of Your saints is precious in Your sight. Please inspire and encourage those who remain behind to stay faithful to their calling and to draw strength from the One who comforts those who mourn. (John 11:25)

MONDAY 4 Bishop Nason Baluku, a senior church leader in western Uganda, says that Barnabas Aid’s Opportunity Africa initiative is bringing “long-term food security” to hungry Christians. Barnabas has funded the planting of 900 acres of faster growing, disease-resilient cassava – a staple crop in the region. Nearly 14,000 households were supplied with cassava stem cuttings. “This project will transform people’s lives,” added Bishop Nason. Cassava growing is just one of our Opportunity

Africa projects. Give thanks for this long-term provision of food, and pray for the project's continued success.



The new variety of cassava root is faster growing and provides better yields

TUESDAY 5 In another Opportunity Africa project, 800 households in Uganda have been supplied with female goats. The goats reproduce quickly, and the young can be sold to give an income. The goat's milk can also be used or sold. Each animal's manure can be used as crop fertilisers, and the goats can also provide meat and skins. "God is a loving and faithful Father who remembers and cares for His people," said Eryeza, a 62-year-old church leader who gives thanks that his new goat will provide an income for him and his family when he retires. Join our brother in praising God for His love and care.

WEDNESDAY 6 Dozens of Christians have been slaughtered by Islamists in recent months in north-eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). In North Kivu, the worst-

affected area, at least 84 were killed by fighters from Islamic State Central Africa Province (ISCAP) in July and August. At least five more were killed in the neighbouring province of Ituri. Lift up in prayer the bereaved and traumatised, and ask that the Lord's promises will be their comfort even amidst such terrible suffering (Psalm 119:50).

THURSDAY 7 ISCAP fighters have waged violence in the DRC provinces of North Kivu and Ituri for several years. In August, however, two Christians were killed in an ISCAP attack on a village in the province of Tshopo. The terrorists also killed three soldiers and burned down more than 50 houses. The incident raises concerns that Islamist violence is spreading to new areas of the country. Pray that the Lord will restrain this evil.

FRIDAY 8 The Islamist insurgency in Mozambique shows no signs of coming to an end. International security experts have reported that Islamic State (IS – also known as ISIS, ISIL, Daesh) has placed its affiliates in Mozambique and DRC under the leadership of an HQ in Somalia. Fighters are moving freely between conflict zones in northern Mozambique and north-eastern DRC. IS poses a threat to all people, Muslims included, but Christians are at particular risk. Ask the Lord to rescue His people from evildoers and protect them from the violent (Psalm 140:1).

SATURDAY 9 Join us in giving thanks that Barnabas Aid was able to meet the needs of 1,000 Christian households in an impoverished area of Kenya after flash floods and mudslides had

left them without food and shelter. We provided emergency assistance of maize flour, cooking oil, beans and soap. Praise God for His provision in time of urgent need.

SUNDAY 10 Lord God and Heavenly Father, we pray for our brothers and sisters in North Korea who must keep their faith hidden from the authorities, and often even from their own families. We ask that the Holy Spirit will be with each one who must live in such dreadful circumstances, and that He will strengthen their faith and their trust in You. For those in prisons and labour camps, we ask that they will be helped to endure all manner of abuse and hardship until they are welcomed into glory, for we ask it in the Name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

MONDAY 11 There are believed to be 38 million Christians who attend churches affiliated to the Three-Self Patriotic Movement (TSPM), China's official Protestant church. Many others attend unofficial congregations, sometimes called "house churches". All face difficulties. Leaders in the TSPM can face pressure to teach what the authorities want them to. "House churches" could be raided and closed down, with members sometimes arrested. Pray for the millions of our Chinese brothers and sisters. Ask the Lord to give them great wisdom in how to live and serve Him (Proverbs 2:6).

TUESDAY 12 "God has provided a way for us to be a blessing to our community," says "Pani", a mushroom

farmer in South-East Asia. "We hope to be an even bigger blessing in the future." His is among more than 80 families for whom Barnabas has funded training to start small oyster mushroom farms. Praise God that this project is enabling Christians to earn a safe and sustainable living, and that they no longer have to risk eating wild poisonous mushrooms. Pray for more families to benefit from such training and to set up viable businesses.

WEDNESDAY 13 "The women's sewing project really helps reduce the risk of young Christian girls being sucked into a dark world of trafficking." A Barnabas partner in South-East Asia emphasises how vital the acquisition of such skills is. At the time of writing, 68 women are receiving training in sewing and weaving. At centres where they receive daily Christian ministry, they are equipped with sewing machines with the aim of them setting up their own businesses on completion of their training. Give thanks for the lives of young Christian women being transformed by this venture and pray for the continued success and growth of this project.



One of the South-East Asian women receiving Barnabas-funded training in sewing and weaving

THURSDAY 14 A pastor in northern Laos paid the ultimate price for his faith when he was shot and killed in his own home. Pastor Thongkham Philavanh was chairman of the Lao Evangelical Churches group in his province. His wife, son and daughter were present when he was attacked, but were unharmed. Give thanks for Pastor Thongkham's life and pray that God will use His servant's sacrifice to advance the cause of the Gospel in Laos. Pray that his family and the Christian community he pastored will experience divine comfort and courage in wrestling with the pain of their loss.

FRIDAY 15 Give thanks that six Christians in central Laos have been released from prison after a month's imprisonment. Pastor Mum and five other church members had been arrested at a prayer meeting. In releasing them, the local authorities warned them to restrict their activities. Pray that all will recover fully from their ordeal and that the Lord will honour their faithfulness in strengthening His Church. Ask that they will be wise and yet innocent in taking note of threats issued and be guided to trust the Good Shepherd and be obedient to Him even in the midst of wolves (Matthew 10:16).

SATURDAY 16 Lift up our marginalised and impoverished brothers and sisters in Laos and Vietnam whose homes and rice crops were destroyed on the brink of harvest by Typhoon Yagi in September. "Hundreds of already struggling rural Christian families have been hit hard," said our project partner in the region. "It is heartbreaking to see this." He thanked Barnabas for swiftly sending

two tonnes of rice to afflicted families and funding for tools and machinery to clear mud slides. Ask the Lord to strengthen and comfort believers (Philippians 4:13). Pray that He will sustain and meet the needs of Christian families following the loss of the rice harvest, upon which they all depend.

SUNDAY 17 Lord Jesus, we intercede for Your Church in Saudi Arabia and praise You for our faithful brothers and sisters who follow You in this heartland of Islam. We pray that You will light their paths and grant them discernment in an environment where leaving the majority religion is punishable by death. Thank You that You are the vine in whom we remain. Please enable Your branches in Saudi Arabia to remain firm in You and live fruitful lives amid the surrounding darkness, for we ask in Your precious Name. (John 15:5)

MONDAY 18 Regional conflict has caused anxiety and hardship among the Christian communities of the Middle East. In just one conflict-affected country, many have lost their jobs, and they worry about how they can provide for their families as food prices spiral. Here, Barnabas has provided warm meals along with parcels of food and hygiene items for 200 Christian families most in need. Our church partners, who prayed with believers as they distributed the aid, said families were "encouraged and strengthened" to receive practical and spiritual support. Join us in thanking God for the help He provides.

TUESDAY 19 Christians who fled violence in Africa are being given help

to build new lives in the Holy Land. Many of the 2,500-strong community of refugees from Eritrea, Sudan and Ethiopia live in poverty and still bear the physical and mental scars of their escape. Barnabas helps to fund an NGO that offers a range of support to refugees, including vocational training and education programmes for children and adults. Our partners provide food, psychological support to the traumatised, and advocacy assistance. Praise the Lord who “raises the poor from the dust and lifts the needy from the ash heap” (1 Samuel 2:8).

WEDNESDAY 20 Approximately 62% of households in Yemen are now experiencing severe food shortages, with some regions facing extreme levels of malnutrition. The humanitarian disaster that has blighted Yemen in recent years is worsening because of regional tensions. Aid agencies have reduced their activities in the country because of restrictions imposed in areas controlled by the Houthis, an Islamist group affiliated to Iran. Only the Lord knows how many Christians live in Yemen. They share in the overall suffering of the population while also experiencing persecution from extremists. Pray that the suffering of our brothers and sisters, and all people in Yemen, will be alleviated.

THURSDAY 21 Christian convert from Islam Mojdeh Falahi, 36, was arrested in early September in Shiraz, southern Iran, on charges of “Christianity” and “illegal Christian activities”, and held in a detention centre run by the Ministry of Intelligence. At the time of writing her family were refused

permission to see her and access to a lawyer was denied. Mojdeh’s two older sisters have previously been arrested and fined for Christian activities. Pray that charges against Mojdeh will be dropped and that she will be restored to her family. Pray for a just outcome for Christians facing spurious charges of endangering national security in Iran.

FRIDAY 22 Poverty, political instability and the fear of persecution are among the reasons why Christians continue to leave their ancestral homelands in Iraq. Before the US-led invasion of Iraq in 2003 there were around 1.5 million Christians in Iraq. An increase in sectarian tensions meant that only 700,000 were left by the time Islamic State (IS, ISIS, ISIL, Daesh) seized a third of the country – Christians were among those subjected to violence and displaced from their homes. In recent years it has been estimated that only 150,000-250,000 Christians are left, and this number continues to fall. Lift up in prayer our brothers and sisters who have suffered so much.



An Iraqi Christian receives a Barnabas-funded food parcel

SATURDAY 23 Please pray for a Christian congregation in Beni Suef, Upper Egypt, after their church building was destroyed in a massive fire. The cause of the fire remains unknown. The five-storey building contained offices and a library, as well as housing three schools. A church leader said it was “divine providence” that none of the children who were in the building at the time were hurt, but ten adults were hospitalised as a result of the blaze. Pray that the injured will make a full recovery, that frightened children will be comforted, and for God’s providence following the loss of so many important facilities.

SUNDAY 24 Lord Jesus, with thankful, joyful hearts we celebrate Your kingship and acknowledge You as King of our lives. We praise You that Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom and that the glory of Your majesty endures. Help us, Lord, to submit our lives to You and allow Your righteousness to fill us as we grow in obedience and understanding. Please encourage our brothers and sisters who live in lands where they are persecuted for bowing to Your divine authority. Give them grace to follow You whatever the temptations to yield to mortal rulers when they oppose Your kingship, for we ask in Your glorious Name, King Jesus. (Hebrews 1:8; Revelation 11:15)

MONDAY 25 “Only God knows how we are going to survive until the next harvest next year,” said Georgina, a farmer in the Mudzi district of

Christian-majority Zimbabwe. “I did not harvest anything after all my effort and using all our savings to buy seeds.” Zimbabwe is one of several southern African countries suffering a worsening hunger crisis caused by drought. People there report having no food to give their children. Ask the Lord to bring an end to this crisis. Pray that He will once again provide the earth with rain (Psalm 147:8).



Zimbabweans are concerned about feeding their children following poor harvests

TUESDAY 26 Voters will go to the polls tomorrow in Christian-majority Namibia, another southern African nation afflicted with hunger and poverty. International experts have said that nearly half of the country’s population is experiencing high levels of food insecurity, and that more than 80% of the country’s food reserves have been used up owing to the worsening drought. Pray that the Lord will give guidance to whoever is elected to the Presidency and the National Assembly.

WEDNESDAY 27 More than 5,000 churches have been closed down in

Rwanda for failing to comply with government-mandated health and safety regulations. The closures follow a series of inspections that took place in July. Legislation passed in 2018 requires that churches have suitable fire-fighting equipment, adequate parking and appropriate hygiene facilities, among other requirements. Church buildings are also required to be soundproofed. Church leaders have acknowledged the need for some of these requirements but have criticised the speed of the closures and asked for more time to comply. Ask the Lord to grant wisdom to Rwandan church leaders in navigating this difficult situation.

THURSDAY 28 The ongoing civil war in Sudan is “a story of pain, suffering and innocent blood shed every day”, says a senior church leader in the north of the country. “Everyone suffers and wants an end to the war, but we do not have the tools to achieve it.” Estimates vary, but it is certain that thousands of civilians have been killed. As of July, 7.7 million people had been internally displaced and more than two million had fled the country. The following month the World Food Programme declared a famine at a camp in North Darfur where thousands of displaced people are sheltering – only the third time in 20 years that a fully fledged famine has been declared anywhere in the world. Pray for a swift end to this humanitarian disaster.

FRIDAY 29 Christian-majority Ethiopia experienced prolonged drought from 2020 to 2023. This caused widespread food insecurity and was devastating for farmers. This period of drought

was followed by floods from September 2023 to March 2024. The floods killed livestock and caused crop losses, which heightened the existing food insecurity. This hunger was compounded by conflict which has hindered Ethiopia’s economy – many people are now unable to afford even the bare essentials. As of September 2024, 10.8 million Ethiopians are at critical levels of food insecurity. Pray for our brothers and sisters in Ethiopia, that they will obtain enough food to sustain them, and that the Lord will give them strength through this time of great struggle.

SATURDAY 30 Eritrea’s Marxist government exercises a tight grip on its population, which is roughly half Christian and half Muslim. Only three denominations of Christianity are legally allowed to be practised there: Eritrean Orthodox, Roman Catholic and Lutheran. Christians from other denominations are often subject to arrest and lengthy imprisonment, without charge or trial. Even those from the permitted denominations are often harassed and intimidated. Christians in prison are subject to beatings, starvation, degradation and torture. Ask the Lord to watch over the Christians in Eritrea. Pray that they will be allowed to practise Christianity freely, and all those wrongly imprisoned will be released. Pray for courage for those in captivity, that they never forget that the Lord is their fortress (Psalm 18:2), and they will have their reward in heaven (Matthew 5:12).

December

SUNDAY 1 Heavenly Father, as we begin this advent season, we

thank You that You sent Your Son to become flesh and live among us at exactly the right time. We pray that You will inspire us with the wonder of His birth, His life, His sacrificial death for our sins and His glorious resurrection in this precious season. Please enable those who experience daily persecution for their faith in You to draw strength as they reflect on You. We ask You to help us all to understand more fully the enormity of Your most magnificent gift, the Lord Jesus Christ, in Whose Name we pray. (Galatians 4:4)

MONDAY 2 Christian twin brothers Kalu and Tabish were arrested and charged with “blasphemy” in Punjab, Pakistan, following an accusation that they had desecrated pages of the Quran. The 18-year-old brothers were participating in a festival during which the crowd threw torn pieces of paper into the air. A local Muslim farmer claimed that the pieces thrown by the brothers contained verses from the Quran. Kalu and Tabish, both illiterate, did not know what was on the paper they threw, thinking it was only wastepaper. Ask the Lord to watch over Kalu and Tabish, and pray that the charges against them will be dropped. Ask that God protects the Christian community from the mob violence which often accompanies accusations of “blasphemy”.

TUESDAY 3 In yet another “blasphemy” accusation in Pakistan, two sisters, both Christians, have been arrested and charged. The arrest of Sonia and Saima, also in Punjab, followed claims

by a local Muslim man that he had seen some pages of a Quran in a bag of rubbish thrown out by Sonia, and that when he had investigated Saima had made some “inappropriate remarks”. Pray that Sonia and Saima will be released from prison, and ask that God watches over all of His people in Pakistani prisons.

WEDNESDAY 4 “I want to be a doctor – so I can serve poor communities,” says 11-year-old Merry, a Christian girl in Pakistan. However, Merry’s family could not afford to send her to school. Many Christians in Pakistan face discrimination, marginalisation and poverty. Their children can find themselves trapped in a cycle of illiteracy and subsequent poverty. Give thanks to God that Barnabas is helping by funding Christian schools for children like Merry. Pray that she and other children like her will achieve their dreams and escape the poverty in which so many Pakistani Christians are trapped.



Eleven-year-old Merry hopes that the education she receives at a Barnabas-funded school in Pakistan will help her in her dream of becoming a doctor

THURSDAY 5 Bangladesh has been thrown into political turmoil since Prime Minister Sheik Hasina fled the country in early August. Christians and other religious minorities, particularly Hindus, have faced violence from radicals taking advantage of the chaotic situation. Islamist political parties could use the political vacuum as an opportunity to gain power. Church leaders have written to interim Prime Minister Muhammad Yunus asking his government to ensure that ethnic and religious minorities face no deprivation, injustice or oppression. Ask the Lord to bring an end to the chaos for the sake of all the poor and vulnerable, especially our brothers and sisters.

FRIDAY 6 Since late August as many as six million Bangladeshis have been affected by flash floods caused by monsoons, the country's worst environmental disaster in recent history. Give thanks that Barnabas Aid is funding emergency aid – including rice, lentils and water purification tablets – to thousands of marginalised and impoverished Bangladeshi Christians. Pray that the country will recover from this disaster.

SATURDAY 7 Violence has once again broken out in the north-eastern Indian state of Manipur, leading to the deaths of at least 11 people. Tensions have long existed between the Meitei people and the Christian-majority Kuki people of the region, and these led to open conflict in May 2023. At least 114 church buildings were destroyed in the initial stages of this conflict, and two Christian women were sexually assaulted in an attack resolutely

condemned by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Pray that the violence will come to an end and for a peaceful solution to remaining tensions.

SUNDAY 8 **Gracious Lord Jesus, we praise You that each day people from every background are trusting in You as Saviour. Thank You for the revelation You impart to those who have taken the courageous step to leave the majority religion of their country to follow You. Please protect them from hostility and attempts to snatch them out of Your hand, and cause the voice of the Good Shepherd to be ever more distinct as they proceed on their journey of discipleship. We ask that they receive support from Your people and establish deep roots to lead fruitful lives that glorify You, for we ask in Your precious Name. (John 10:28)**

MONDAY 9 More than 40% of children under the age of five in Afghanistan are so malnourished that their growth is stunted. This is just one shocking statistic that lays bare the scale of the humanitarian disaster taking place in Taliban-ruled Afghanistan, which is enduring crisis levels of food insecurity. Pray that the humanitarian needs in Afghanistan will be met. Remember especially our brothers and sisters in Afghanistan, who will likely be killed for apostasy from Islam if their Christian faith is discovered.

TUESDAY 10 A new so-called morality law published by Afghanistan's Taliban government has increased restrictions on the population, and especially on

women. The law reinforces the rule that women must cover their entire body and face and be accompanied by a male when they leave their own homes – it adds that a woman must also “conceal her voice”. The Taliban leadership argues that these restrictions and others are in keeping with sharia (Islamic law). Pray for those enduring such hardship in addition to desperate hunger and poverty. Ask the Lord to be especially near to Christian women and girls forced to comply with the Taliban’s hardline application of Islamic law.

WEDNESDAY 11 Praise God that the Church is growing in Uzbekistan, in a region where Christian converts from Islam endure continuing discrimination from radicals from within the Muslim majority. Believers often face increasing hostility from family members, their neighbours and employers when they begin to follow Christ. A five-day seminar funded by Barnabas recently brought together 50 church leaders, helping them to strengthen their connections, enhance their Biblical knowledge and plan how best to respond to the needs of the growing Christian community. Give thanks for our brothers and sisters in this region whose strength lies in their joy of the LORD (Nehemiah 8:10).

THURSDAY 12 Kyrgyzstan’s National Security Committee (NSC) and State Commission for Religious Affairs (SCRA) officials have prepared a new version of a restrictive Religion Law to submit to the Kyrgyz parliament. Amongst several other proposed new restrictions, the amended version not only requires all religious communities to apply for state

registration (as is currently required) but also demands re-registration every five years. “I am afraid that if these changes are adopted, and if the authorities continue their past strategies, many churches will be closed down,” said a church leader. Pray that these concerns will not be realised, and that churches will not be overly burdened by administrative and legal responsibilities.

FRIDAY 13 A report from the Organized Crime and Corruption Reporting Project (OCCRP) has accused the government of Azerbaijan of obstructing the work of humanitarian organisations during its nine-month blockade of Nagorno-Karabakh in 2023. Nagorno-Karabakh was home to around 120,000 Armenian Christians, who fled to Armenia in September last year when the blockade ended and Azerbaijani troops advanced into the region. The OCCRP reports that during the blockade Azerbaijan prevented both the delivery of humanitarian aid and the evacuation of those who required medical treatment. Please continue to pray for the people of Nagorno-Karabakh, now refugees, who live with the trauma of what they have endured.



An elderly couple who were forced to flee Nagorno-Karabakh in September 2023
[Image credit: UNHCR]

SATURDAY 14 The Turkish authorities have arrested an Islamist terrorist accused of orchestrating a January 2024 attack on a church in Istanbul in which a Christian convert was shot dead. Viskhan Soltamatiov is believed to have provided the weapons used in the attack and has links with Islamic State Khorasan Province, the branch of Islamic State based in Afghanistan. Give thanks for the diligence of the security services in Türkiye, and pray that this arrest will prevent further incidents of violence.

SUNDAY 15 Sovereign Lord, we thank You for sending Your Son to grant us true freedom and life in His Name. We ask You to strengthen our brothers and sisters suffering imprisonment in many countries for the sake of the Gospel. Please fill them with great joy and peace in believing and the assurance that their labours and trials are not in vain. Empower them to speak graciously to their persecutors and captors, and to fellow prisoners. Please grant them release in Your time. May their testimony carry the Holy Spirit's conviction that leads others to salvation in Jesus Christ, in whose precious Name we pray. (Romans 15:13; 1 Corinthians 15:58)

MONDAY 16 “The building collapsed on top of us. Rubble was pressed into my head and hand. The girl behind me – she was dead.” Fourteen-year-old Benjamin is one of the survivors of a school collapse in Plateau State, Nigeria. Twenty-two children died in the disaster, and at least 132 were injured. Lift up in prayer the many

bereaved families, as well as the children who experienced such a traumatic event. Give thanks that Barnabas is providing funds for the children to resume their education at other local Christian schools.



Fourteen-year-old Daniel survived when his school collapsed. Twenty-two children died in the disaster

TUESDAY 17 Floods caused by persistent rainfall and a dam collapse in Borno State, Nigeria, in September caused the deaths of more than 30 people and displaced more than a million. Many of the displaced are those who had already been forced to flee their homes by Islamist violence. Christians report that their communities have received no help from the authorities. Give thanks that Barnabas has been able to step in to provide emergency supplies of food and cooking oil.

WEDNESDAY 18 “Many schools have been set alight and destroyed in attacks,” said a Barnabas project

partner in Nigeria. “Meanwhile, hospitals are ill-equipped or located far away from displaced communities, severely disrupting health care provision and access.” Anti-Christian violence in northern and Middle Belt Nigeria shows no signs of easing – there are mass graves in almost every community. Cry out to the Lord to bring an end to the violence and to be a shield to His people (Psalm 7:9-10).

THURSDAY 19 Three people were killed and at least 30 abducted when Islamists launched an attack on two churches in Kaduna State, Nigeria, in mid-September. The pastor of one of the churches was among those who were taken. Pray that the Lord will comfort those who have been left to mourn, and that Pastor Gajera and others will be released from captivity. Ask also that the community’s calls for greater protection against Islamist gangs will be heeded by the authorities.

FRIDAY 20 Islamist militants affiliated to Al Qaeda killed 26 men at a church service in Banwa province, western Burkina Faso. The militants raided the Sunday morning service and ordered the women and children to leave before shooting the men. They also set fire to houses and livestock. Lift up in prayer the Christians of Burkina Faso, who remain at great risk from Islamists that operate across their country and the wider region. Ask the Lord to strengthen them with power through His Holy Spirit (Ephesians 3:16).

SATURDAY 21 Elections that were due to be held in South Sudan tomorrow have been postponed by two years. South Sudanese officials have cited

the need for constitutional reform, as well as security and logistical challenges that make holding the elections difficult. The country gained independence from the Republic of Sudan in 2011 but was mired in civil war until 2018. Elections have never been held. Around 60% of the South Sudanese population are Christians. Pray that God, who “governs the nations” (Job 36:31), will grant peace and security whether or not the elections ever take place.

SUNDAY 22 Lord Jesus, we pray for Christians around the world who have been forced from their homes by war, extreme weather events or persecution. We ask You to draw close to them and provide for their needs. Please bless efforts to reach those who are refugees or internally displaced persons as this Christmas season approaches. Enable our homeless brothers and sisters to remember that You began Your life on earth as a refugee in humble surroundings and in adult life had nowhere to lay Your head. Teach them to trust in Your providence, for we ask in Your mighty Name. (Luke 2:12; Matthew 8:20)

MONDAY 23 Earlier this year it was reported that 92 countries are involved in 56 international armed conflicts, the highest number since the Second World War. As we reflect upon the dreadful cost of war, remember and give thanks that there is coming a day of peace in which the Lord “will judge between the nations and will settle disputes for many peoples. They will

beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not take up sword against nation, nor will they train for war any more” (Isaiah 2:4).

TUESDAY 24 “This has indeed been a very gory Christmas for us,” said Caleb Mutfwang, the governor of Nigeria’s Plateau State, nearly a year ago. Governor Mutfwang was speaking after a series of Islamist attacks on Christian communities that began on 23 December 2023 and ended on the morning of Christmas Day. More than 600 were slaughtered in the relentless onslaught – many of them women, children and the disabled who were the least able to flee fires set by their attackers. Christmas is often a time when extremists and radicals launch attacks against believers. Pray for those who gather for worship this evening and tomorrow in lands of persecution, that the Lord will grant them confidence in Him and to know the peace that is for “those on whom his favour rests” (Luke 2:14).

WEDNESDAY 25 Glory to the newborn King! Praise God that we celebrate today how He became a human being and was born in the humblest of circumstances for our salvation. Pray that the joy of this Christmas season will be felt powerfully in the Church worldwide, and especially among Christians suffering for their faith in the Lord Jesus. Ask that every worship service will be filled with awe and wonder at the glory of the Incarnation. Pray that the Saviour’s love will be experienced by those worshipping in the shadow of war, persecution and natural disasters, and that His Church

will grow in strength throughout this special day and beyond. (John 1:14)

THURSDAY 26 The Myanmar military (Tatmadaw) continues to attack Christian areas. Local human rights advocates have reported that the Tatmadaw has destroyed or damaged 75 Christian churches in Chin State alone since the coup in February 2021. Christians have been forced to flee their homes and find shelter in IDP (Internally Displaced Persons) camps, but even these camps have come under attack and many believers have had to seek refuge in the jungle. Pray for protection for Christians in Myanmar and for an end to their physically and emotionally draining ordeal. Ask the Lord to intervene for a peaceful and just resolution to the conflict.



An elderly Christian thanks Barnabas for sustaining 350 families with food aid

FRIDAY 27 “I am overwhelmed with joy for this gift,” said an elderly Christian woman in Myanmar. She was among 350 families of believers given Barnabas-funded rice, chickpeas and cooking oil after their villages in a Christian-majority region were burned down by the military. Many of the families are now living in makeshift shacks in a forest. Others are living with relatives or friends or sheltering in church buildings. Ask the Father of Compassion to have mercy on vulnerable civilians in Myanmar, especially our beleaguered brothers and sisters (2 Corinthians 1:3-4). Ask for an end to the conflict.

SATURDAY 28 Sri Lanka’s presidential election on 21 September was won by Anura Kumara Dissanayake. The new president hopes to revive Sri Lanka’s struggling economy. The country suffered an economic crash in 2022, while poverty rates have more than doubled since 2020. Christians, who constitute around 8% of the Sri Lankan population, are often among the poorest and most disadvantaged. Church leaders have also expressed dissatisfaction with the slow investigation into suicide bomb attacks at Easter 2019 in which at least 254 people died, mainly Christians. Pray that the Lord will equip President Dissanayake and his government to rule wisely, and that he will develop policies that will benefit all Sri Lankans.

SUNDAY 29 **Our Father in Heaven, we thank You for each of the 5.2 million servings of food that food.gives has been able to provide in 2024. Thank You for the supporters who have given**

so generously of their time, their food, their money and their prayers. Please watch over all the hungry Christians: fill their bellies and keep their spirits high. Remind them that You are always with them, and though their bodies may be hungry their spirits can be filled with Your life-giving Holy Spirit. We ask this in the Name of Jesus Christ.

MONDAY 30 Many people of other religions believe that the Western New Year is a Christian festival. Therefore it is often a time of increased violence against Christian minorities, often by people who sincerely believe that their religion requires them to conduct such attacks. Pray that vulnerable believers in such situations will hold unswervingly to their hope, remembering that He who promised is faithful, and will continue to spur one another on to love and good deeds, in the knowledge that the Day of the Lord is approaching (Hebrews 10:23-25).

TUESDAY 31 Praise God for providing the resources through our supporters to fund vitally important projects throughout 2024. Give thanks for the provision of food and medical aid to our brothers and sisters suffering in many countries. Remember with gratitude Christian children receiving a Christian education through the generosity of Barnabas supporters. Give thanks for believers taking part in skills training or being equipped to set up small businesses. Praise the Lord for help given to victims of anti-Christian violence. Pray for His continued provision for our suffering brothers and sisters in Christ.



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