



barnabasprayer

Barnabas Aid - bringing hope to suffering Christians

To help you
pray for suffering
Christians

**September/
October 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.

September

SUNDAY 1 Heavenly Father, we lift up before You our brothers and sisters who face the daily threat of anti-Christian violence at the hands of terrorists. We pray for their protection against those who seek to instil fear. We particularly remember our brothers and sisters in northern Nigeria, the Sahel, Mozambique and the Democratic Republic of Congo. Please enable Your children to trust that You will strengthen, help and uphold them with Your righteous right hand. We ask in the Name of the One who triumphed over terror and evil, our Lord Jesus Christ. (Isaiah 41:10)

MONDAY 2 Renewed prayers are needed for kidnapped Nigerian pastor Paul Musa after he was shown being held at gunpoint in a new video posted online by his captors, the Islamist terrorist group Boko Haram. Pastor Paul, 59, and his wife Ruth, 50, were abducted in March 2023 from their home in northern Borno State. The terrorists have threatened to kill both Paul and Ruth, but at the time of writing this threat has not been carried out. Pray that Pastor Paul and Ruth will be released. Ask that, in any

circumstances, they will continue to put their trust in the Lord for their strength and salvation (Exodus 15:2), and that their steadfast faith will be a powerful witness to the men of violence of the enduring love of God.



Rev. Paul Musa in Boko Haram video

TUESDAY 3 Prayers were answered as two Nigerian church ministers abducted by armed militants at opposite ends of the country in June were released. Mikah Suleiman in the north-western Zamfara State was kidnapped when gunmen stormed his home in the city of Gusau on 22 June. His release was announced on Sunday 7 July. Christian Ike was abducted, along with another believer, Mazi Ogbonnaya Aneke, on Sunday 16 June after a church service in Ajalli, Anambra State in southeastern Nigeria. Both were released on 13 July. Give thanks for the release of Mikah,

Christian and Mazi, and pray that each will make a full recovery from his ordeal.

WEDNESDAY 4 “This assistance will go a long way in helping our widows who don’t have anybody to look after them,” said a Nigerian pastor. He was thanking Barnabas for providing food and aid to 182 women whose husbands – the family breadwinners – were among more than 600 people killed in a wave of Islamist attacks spanning Christmas Eve, 24 December 2023, on 25 Christian-majority villages in Plateau State. The beans and maize given to the women will ensure their families do not go hungry, added the pastor. Ask God to meet the future needs of these women, and the many other Nigerian Christians widowed because of persistent anti-Christian violence.

THURSDAY 5 The West African nation of Burkina Faso has been in a state of almost persistent conflict for the past five years. Extremist groups – among them the Islamic State Sahel Province – control between 40% and 50% of the country’s territory. In May 2024 Burkina Faso’s military government extended its own stay in power for another five years in an attempt to deal with the problem. Pray that there will be peace in Burkina Faso for all people. Remember especially Burkina Faso’s Christians, who are around 30% of the population.

FRIDAY 6 A presidential election is scheduled in Algeria for tomorrow. Pray that Algerians will exercise discernment in making their choice. Incumbent President Abdelmadjid Tebboune has announced his decision to run for a second term. Pray for the peaceful conduct of the election, and

that whoever is elected or re-elected will discharge their responsibilities with wisdom, justice and equity. Pray that conditions for Christians and other minorities will improve during this term, and that more than 40 church buildings sealed since 2017 will be reopened.

SATURDAY 7 Christian converts from Islam in Muslim-majority Tunisia often face threats and violence from neighbours, family and former friends because of their new faith in Christ. Some are rejected and ostracised by family members. Others feel compelled to keep their faith secret because of the consequences of making it known. Pray that our brothers and sisters will be comforted in the knowledge that, for all they have lost, they have gained the Lord Jesus Christ, who is precious to all those who believe (1 Peter 2:7).

SUNDAY 8 Lord God, we pray for the success of Christian schools throughout the world, and especially in lands of great suffering and anti-Christian persecution. We ask You to fill those entrusted with leadership with Divine wisdom in governance and management so that values that reflect the Gospel are maintained. Please raise up and bless the work of godly teachers to train up children in the way they should go, to produce lasting fruit all their lives. Protect and renew pupils’ minds and hearts to receive all the benefits of a Christian education through instruction, practical experience and healthy social interaction and grow in

the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ, in whose Name we pray. (Proverbs 22:6)

MONDAY 9 “I am thankful to God for Barnabas Aid who made education possible for needy children like me,” said eight-year-old Awais. He is among more than 9,000 Christian children in Pakistan who study at one of 109 Christian schools funded by Barnabas through our Living Streams sponsorship initiative. These schools help to break the cycle of poverty and illiteracy that trapped previous generations, giving children like Awais the hope of getting a decent job. Pray for the pupils, teachers and parents of these schools, and ask that the schools will be springs of faith, strength and truth for poor Christian communities.

TUESDAY 10 An elderly Pakistani Christian man died in hospital on 3 June, nine days after being beaten and stoned by a mob of Muslim extremists in Sargodha, Punjab province. The attack on Nazir Masih, who was in his 70s, followed unsubstantiated allegations that he had desecrated a Quran. The mob set fire to his house and to a shoe shop owned by Nazir’s family, and damaged other Christians’ homes in Sargodha city’s Mujahid Colony. Pray that Nazir’s family will be comforted following his death and that their needs will be met. Ask the Lord to bring peace and security to the Christian community whose homes were damaged by this act of violence.

WEDNESDAY 11 Please pray for a vulnerable Christian woman arrested in Pakistan for alleged “blasphemy” against Muhammad, the prophet of

Islam, following an accusation made by a shopkeeper in Lahore, Punjab province, on 4 June. Jamila Jacob, who has mental health problems, was charged under Section 295-C of the Pakistan Penal Code, which carries a mandatory death sentence. Eyewitnesses dispute the accusation that she made derogatory remarks against Islam. Pray that justice will prevail and that the authorities will dismiss the allegations against Jamila as baseless. Ask that the Lord will protect her, her family and other Christians from any mob reprisals.

THURSDAY 12 Pakistani Christian and father of four Marshall, 28, was shot dead after at least four attackers broke into his home in Lahore. The attack stemmed from a complaint Marshall raised with police about his neighbour and others firing weapons into the air at night near Marshall’s house. At the time of writing, police have made four arrests. Marshall leaves a wife, Mehdi, three daughters and a son. Ask the Lord to comfort them in their grief, as well as the wider family and the Christian community. Pray for protection of Christians in Pakistan from further violence, and that the perpetrators will be brought to justice.

FRIDAY 13 Afghanistan’s Taliban government subjected 63 people to public flogging for various crimes on 4 June. The floggings underline Afghanistan’s return to hard-line Islamist rule in the three years since the Taliban returned to power. Only the Lord knows how many Christians remain in Afghanistan, but if they are discovered by the authorities then they will face death as apostates from Islam.

Ask the Lord to deliver His people from those who plan evil against them (Psalm 59:2).

SATURDAY 14 Barnabas Aid New Zealand was overjoyed to welcome Christians seeking refuge from lands of persecution. One family (a mother and two children) have arrived from Afghanistan – God willing, the children will now have opportunity to attend school for the first time since the family fled from the Taliban. A Christian husband and wife have also arrived from Iran. Under New Zealand’s Community Organisation Refugee Sponsorship scheme, Barnabas has partnered with churches to provide the refugees with housing support, assistance in navigating education and healthcare, and help to find jobs. Give thanks for the safe arrival of our brothers and sisters, and pray that He will bless them with every spiritual blessing (Ephesians 1:3).



Barnabas is supporting this couple who have fled anti-Christian persecution in Iran

SUNDAY 15 Our Father, we lift up to You our brothers and sisters in Saudi Arabia, where no non-Muslim worship is permitted and where Christian converts from Islam face violence and even

death for the Name of Christ. We can only guess how many of Your people are in Saudi Arabia, but each one is known individually and personally to You. Please turn and be gracious to these lonely and afflicted believers, guarding them from harm as they take refuge in You, for we ask in the Name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. (Psalm 25:16,20)

MONDAY 16 Christian communities in the Middle East are among those at risk as regional tensions escalate and the possibility of conflict spreading increases. Believers are a despised and persecuted minority in many Middle Eastern contexts, and often among the poorest and most vulnerable of people. Pray that the Lord will be a shelter and a place of safety for our brothers and sisters (Psalm 27:5).

TUESDAY 17 Thousands of believers are among the worst affected by Lebanon’s ongoing economic crisis. High unemployment and severe inflation (running at more than 200% in the second half of 2023, and at the time of writing around 50%) has led to shortages of food and medicine. Christians are also among more than 90,000 people who have fled from southern Lebanon because of ongoing conflict. Pray that the turmoil and poverty in Lebanon can be addressed, for the sake of all people and especially our Christian family.

WEDNESDAY 18 At least two Christians were among more than 20 people killed in terrorist attacks in the Russian Republic of Dagestan. Nikolai Kotelnikov, the minister of a church in

the city of Derbent, died after his throat was slit by the attackers. A guard at the same church was shot dead. Ask that the bereaved congregation and the families of these two men will be comforted with the knowledge that our Saviour Jesus Christ has “abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel” (2 Timothy 1:10, ESV).

THURSDAY 19 “We thank you so much because from the beginning of the war, you have been close to us, and you did not let us down. We are now left only with Barnabas’ help, and we are so thankful because you stay close to us...” These are the words of a Ukrainian believer who is one of the recipients of food.gives aid that has been sent to our brothers and sisters in Ukraine throughout the war. A recent aid shipment from the UK provided 274,640 servings of food. Give thanks that we have been able to help our brothers and sisters in their time of need. Pray that the war in Ukraine will end and Christians who are affected will find peace.



An elderly Ukrainian Christian receives Barnabas-funded aid

FRIDAY 20 It is now a year since almost the entire population of Nagorno-Karabakh, an Armenian Christian region within Azerbaijan, fled to Armenia to escape an Azerbaijani invasion of their homeland. An estimated 120,000 became refugees within just 48 hours. A year later, most are struggling to find jobs and living in poverty. Ask the Lord, who promises to supply all our needs according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus (Philippians 4:19), will provide for the Christians of Nagorno-Karabakh. Ask that He will comfort them as they bear the sorrow of knowing that they will probably never be able to return to their earthly homes.

SATURDAY 21 Today marks the 25th annual International Day of Peace, also known as World Peace Day. Our world is arguably less peaceful than at any time in the last 80 years. International experts report that 92 countries are currently involved in conflicts beyond their borders, the highest number since the Second World War. Civil wars and terrorist attacks are also claiming tens of thousands of lives. Give thanks for the promise that one day peace will be realised when the Lord Jesus Christ returns and “nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more” (Isaiah 2:4). Until that day, pray for those working to resolve conflicts and meet the needs of communities affected by war.

SUNDAY 22 Heavenly Father, we cry out for those who are suffering through food shortages around the world. We ask You to provide for millions of people facing food insecurity and malnutrition. We

pray that You will provide rain in season to enable crops to grow and meet the needs of the hungry. Please direct governments and aid agencies to supply needy communities wisely and protect those entrusted with transporting scarce resources, especially to Your Church that is suffering from persecution, hardship or the ravages of conflict. We ask for Your Divine provision in the wonderful Name of Jesus. (Isaiah 58:7)

MONDAY 23 Give thanks for the opening of a new food.gives warehouse in Northern Ireland. Since early 2022 our supporters in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland have sent more than 32 tonnes of donations to the food.gives warehouse in Swindon. Their generosity led to the need for the new 2,500 square foot warehouse opening in County Down. Our team hopes to ship containers from this warehouse each month to suffering Christians around the world. Praise the Lord for the generosity of our supporters in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. Pray that this new warehouse will inspire more growth of the food.gives ministry there.

TUESDAY 24 “Your kindness has made a significant difference in our lives, and I can’t thank you enough for what you have provided for us. God bless you for your generosity and care.” These are the words of Shobna, a Christian woman from Fiji. Her family is among 1,008 Fijian Christian families who received aid from food.gives in 2024. Fiji is experiencing profound economic hardship, and the 16 tonnes of food aid sent by food.gives has helped provide

for our brothers and sisters so that they can allocate the little money they have to other basic necessities. Pray for Christians in Fiji, that their hardship will be alleviated. Give thanks that food.gives has been able to help suffering believers in Fiji, and pray that its work there will continue as long as is necessary.



A Christian in Fiji welcomes a food.gives delivery

WEDNESDAY 25 Cuba is experiencing a “food scarcity and nutrition crisis” according to humanitarian experts, who are calling for urgent assistance for those suffering desperate hunger. Many of those afflicted are our brothers and sisters. Give thanks that Barnabas is sending food aid to Cuba through our food.gives project. Please pray for an end to this food scarcity crisis.

THURSDAY 26 Davy Lloyd, 23, and his wife Natalie, 21, a missionary couple from the US, were killed in a

gang ambush in Port-au-Prince, Haiti's capital, on 23 May. The couple were shot dead alongside Jude Montis, a Haitian national who worked for the same missionary organisation. Ask the Lord to bring comfort and peace to the families of Davy, Natalie and Jude. Pray that Jesus draws close to those affected by such attacks in Haiti, and that the violence there will cease. Give thanks for missionary organisations serving communities in this desperately poor and troubled nation and pray that their faithfulness and courage will bear lasting fruit for the Kingdom.

FRIDAY 27 Nearly half the population of Haiti are struggling to feed themselves owing to ongoing violence. Criminal gangs have taken over most of the capital Port-au-Prince and many surrounding agricultural areas. More than half a million people have been forced from their homes, and on average one person is killed or injured every hour. Pray for all Haitians suffering from food shortages and the threat of violence. Ask particularly that the Lord will sustain our brothers and sisters, and that they will bear witness to His goodness through these desperately difficult circumstances.

SATURDAY 28 "May God bless you mightily," said an elderly Christian in Brazil in thanks to Barnabas supporters for sending aid to believers following record flooding in southern Brazil in early 2024. More than 170 were killed and 580,000 displaced in the disaster. "The scene is like one of war," said Pastor Daniel as he described the destruction. Barnabas helped to fund the restoration of Pastor Daniel's flood-ravaged church

and provided food and practical aid for around 300 afflicted families. Give thanks that, by God's grace, our church partners were able to distribute aid to our brothers and sisters in need. Ask that they will lean on the Lord as they restore their homes and communities following these disastrous floods.

SUNDAY 29 Sovereign Lord, we pray for Your people who have been made homeless by extreme weather events. We pray that You, the God of all comfort, will comfort Christians suffering the effects of floods in Brazil, Kenya and Uganda, for those in Malawi, Zimbabwe and Zambia and other parts of southern Africa affected by prolonged drought, and others whose lives have been devastated by Cyclone Remal in Bangladesh. We pray that You will sustain those most in need and enable Christians to rebuild their lives, for we ask in the Name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. (2 Corinthians 1:3-4)

MONDAY 30 Canon John Bowers, who died on 24 May 2024, only weeks short of his 92nd birthday, was a tireless champion of suffering Christians around the world. Following his retirement from full-time ministry at the age of 70 in 2002, Canon John, from West Kirby, UK, embarked on 21 annual cycling pilgrimages, raising more than \$556,000 to help believers in need through the work of Barnabas Aid. Praise God for Canon John's faithful service to our Saviour Jesus Christ, and to His persecuted Church. Pray that Canon John's dedication will be an encouragement and an example to others.



“Chesa”, 46, now has a Bible for the first time

October

TUESDAY 1 “We have never held a Bible before today,” said “Chesa”, a 46-year-old Christian in a remote region of Myanmar. Chesa told our project partner that before this, only her pastor possessed a copy of the Scriptures. Praise God that Barnabas has been able to fund the transportation of 94,000 Bibles in a local language to believers in isolated and impoverished areas of Myanmar. Now, says Chesa, Christians in her village are praying more often, attending church more regularly, and showing love to one another. “God’s Word is alive, powerful, and can give peace in our heart,” she added. Ask the Lord that our brothers and sisters will continue to find His Word to be a lamp to their feet and a light to their path (Psalm 119:105).

WEDNESDAY 2 Two church buildings in Chin State – a Christian-majority region within Buddhist-majority

Myanmar – were destroyed in two airstrikes carried out by the Myanmar military (Tatmadaw). The churches in Lungtak village near the town of Tonzang were hit as the military attempted to drive out rebels from the area. The bombardment also destroyed five houses and caused more than 1,000 residents to flee into nearby forests. Two weeks earlier, Tatmadaw airstrikes on a cottage hospital near Mindat township, also in Chin State, killed five people, including four patients. Pray for an end to airstrikes on churches and hospitals. Pray for God’s comfort for those bereaved and protection for Christians throughout Chin State from such attacks.

THURSDAY 3 Church leaders in Bangladesh described themselves as “surprised and worried” after Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina repeated the false allegation that Bangladeshi Christians are planning to “carve out a Christian country taking parts of Bangladesh and Myanmar”. In a statement the church leaders restated their commitment to the sovereignty of Bangladesh. “We serve our beloved country Bangladesh in fields of education, health, and human development,” added one. Pray that the Christian contribution to nation-building in Bangladesh will continue to be acknowledged, and that believers will be protected from the actions of extremists in Bangladeshi society.

FRIDAY 4 Lift up in prayer six Christians in Tahae village, central Laos, who were arrested at a meeting at the pastor’s home on 22 June. Along with Pastor Mum, also apprehended were Mr Liang (aged 40), Mr Pa (24), Ms

Laen (50), Ms Lan (23) and Ms Khoon (28). The group were meeting for prayer in preparation for the following day's Sunday worship. The church of around 40-50 believers had met without harassment until the current village chief was appointed in May 2024. Pray that the six Christians will be released and that any attempts to prevent the lawful conduct of worship services in Laos will be defeated.

SATURDAY 5 At least 81 Christian families were among those affected by severe flooding in the Malaysian state of Sabah in July. More than 400 people were forced to flee their homes. The worst-affected area was Penampang District. Thankfully the flash flood did not claim any lives. Pray for all those who lost property and even homes in the disaster, especially our brothers and sisters.

SUNDAY 6 Lord Jesus, help us to remember those called to lead Your Church throughout the world, especially those serving in contexts of persecution or severe economic hardship. We thank You for their faithfulness in obeying their Divine calling and pray that You will ease their burden by surrounding them with godly servants to support them. Please enable their teaching and spiritual counsel to build Your Church as they trust You. We ask You to cause the Word of Christ to dwell in them richly by faith, to use them to make the Gospel flourish and to build Your Kingdom, for we ask in Your precious Name. (Hebrews 13:7; Colossians 3:16)

MONDAY 7 "God is my refuge, and I believe things will get better." These were the words of "Amina", a 27-year-old Christian who was abducted and abused by members of Islamic State Mozambique Province from February 2020 to August 2023. "I believe in God," continued Amina. "I still believed that God was in control when I had no hope there and was seeing others being killed." Give thanks that Amina's faith remains strong despite her horrific ordeal. Pray that the Lord, who "heals the broken-hearted and binds up their wounds" (Psalm 147:3), will continue to heal Amina from the trauma she has endured.

TUESDAY 8 Voters will go to the polls tomorrow in Mozambique to elect a new president and 250-member legislative assembly. Among other issues, the government of Mozambique faces an Islamist insurgency in the north of the country. Since 2017 terrorists linked to Islamic State have killed at least 6,000 people – many of them Christians. Pray that the Lord will enable whoever comes to power tomorrow to deal effectively with this crisis, for the sake of all people in Mozambique who desire peace, and especially for our brothers and sisters in Christ.

WEDNESDAY 9 Pray for the families of more than 80 people who were killed by suspected Islamist terrorists in a wave of attacks in Christian-majority North Kivu province of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), between 31 May and 9 June. According to survivors, many were killed while trying to flee from the militants, who were armed with guns and machetes.

Ask the Lord to protect His people in DRC from further attacks, and to comfort those who were affected by this violence.

THURSDAY 10 Pray for the family of Ugandan pastor Richard Malinga, who was attacked and killed on his way home from church on 17 June. He had been conducting prayer sessions in Pallisa District and was riding home by motorcycle when he was attacked, and his motorcycle was stolen. The 36-year-old's body was found on the road the following morning, with multiple head wounds. Ask that the Lord will comfort those who grieve for Richard Malinga. Pray that violent crimes in Uganda will decrease, and the Christians who live there will be safe to travel at night.



Ugandan Christians receive Barnabas-funded goats

FRIDAY 11 Four hundred Ugandan Christians living in an area subject to attack by Islamists have received a Barnabas-funded female goat under an initiative to create small farming enterprises. The goats reproduce quickly, and their milk and their young

can be sold, providing an income. Each recipient is encouraged to give one kid goat to another Christian to establish even more ventures. Praise God for the hope this project is giving families. Pray for His blessing on them and ask that these micro-businesses will grow and thrive, helping to strengthen the Christian community in their love of the Lord (Deuteronomy 28:8).

SATURDAY 12 A church building in the Sudanese capital Khartoum has become a makeshift IDP (internally displaced persons) camp as the civil war that began 18 months ago continues to rage. At the time of writing, around 80 IDPs are living in and around the building. Children often have only boiled leaves to eat while adults are forced to skip meals. When they hear gun or artillery fire, the IDPs take shelter inside the damaged church. It is not safe for them to try to evacuate the area. More than 10 million people have been forced from their homes by the ongoing violence, and around 50 million – more than half the population – are experiencing a hunger crisis. Thousands have been killed. Ask the Lord to bring an end to this conflict and to the resulting humanitarian disaster that threaten to take many more lives.

SUNDAY 13 Heavenly Father, we intercede for our brothers and sisters whose faithfulness and obedience to You is being tested severely by serving prison sentences for their faith in You. We pray that their faith will grow in these most trying of conditions and that they will understand

that their imprisonment is serving to advance the Gospel. Please strengthen them by Your Spirit to speak the truth to their captors and with the assurance that the Word of God is not in chains. We ask You to fill them with hope in the Lord Jesus Christ, in whom there is perfect freedom, in whose Name we pray. (Philippians 1:12; 2 Timothy 2:9)

MONDAY 14 Please pray for an Iranian convert from Islam sentenced to five years' imprisonment for "acting against national security". At the time of writing Esmail Narimanpour was awaiting the summons to begin his sentence. He was arrested on 24 December 2023, along with around 50 Christians during the Christmas period, when his home was raided in a search without a warrant and Christian books were confiscated. He was detained for more than four months before being released on bail a month before being sentenced. Ask the Lord to grant comfort and courage to Esmail through this trying process and keep his faith strong.

TUESDAY 15 A Christian Armenian citizen has been given a ten-year prison sentence for supposed "proselytising" while on holiday in Iran. Intelligence agents arrested Hakop Gochumyan and his wife Elisa in August 2023 and accused them of participation in "illegal Christian activities". The charge stems from his possession of seven Farsi (Persian)-language New Testaments, visits to Armenian churches and a visit to a Farsi-speaking "house church". Elisa was later released on bail. Please pray that God gives

Hakop and his family strength and comfort at this testing time.



Hakop Gochumyan [Image credit: Article 18]

WEDNESDAY 16 Eight Iranian Christian converts from the western city of Izeh have been given prison sentences ranging from nine months to 15 years. They were among nearly 50 Christians arrested over the Christmas period in 2023. Yasin Mousavi received the stiffest sentence of 15 years. Pray that Yasin and the other believers will continue to know the Lord as their light and salvation (Psalm 27:1).

THURSDAY 17 Two churches in Iraqi Kurdistan were seriously damaged, and several houses destroyed in a series of bombing raids by the Turkish military at the end of June. The attacks, supposedly aimed at Kurdish terrorist groups, targeted an area of Dohuk containing several Christian villages near the borders of Turkey and Iran. The Turkish bombs also caused huge fires in the nearby mountains, which also threatened the homes and property of local residents. Pray for an end to these attacks on Christian areas and other civilians.

FRIDAY 18 Large numbers of Iraqi Christian families remain displaced in semi-autonomous Iraqi Kurdistan, having fled their historic homelands to escape the advance of Islamic State in 2014. Many live in poverty in Kurdistan and suffer discrimination as an ethnic and religious minority. Attacks by Turkey against Kurdish militants add to believers' insecurity. Lift up in prayer our brothers and sisters in Kurdistan, and give thanks that, through the generosity of supporters, Barnabas recently provided food parcels to 2,000 impoverished families. Pray that Iraqi Christians will continue to be strong and courageous, knowing the Lord is with them always (Joshua 1:9).

SATURDAY 19 Terrorists affiliated to Islamic State (IS – also known as ISIS, ISIL, Daesh) have taken responsibility for 153 attacks in Iraq and Syria in the first half of 2024. Defence experts have warned that if this trend continues the total number of attacks for the year could be more than double the number in 2023. IS fighters in Iraq and Syria are also attempting to free former comrades from prison and plotting attacks in other countries. Christians are among those most at risk of IS brutality. Ask the Lord to deliver His people from the hands of their enemies (Psalm 31:15).

SUNDAY 20 Our loving Lord, we lift up to You Christian women and girls living in contexts of marginalisation and persecution, where they are often doubly despised – for being women and for being Christians. Please provide for all their needs and

protect them from those who plan to harm them. We pray especially for vulnerable Christian widows and their children, without a human defender, and we praise You that You are a father to the fatherless and a defender of widows. We pray in the Name of Jesus Christ. (Psalm 68:5)

MONDAY 21 “This project has turned my life around,” said Egyptian Christian “Hanan” as she thanked Barnabas for giving her the machinery and training to start a digital printing business. Hanan used to worry constantly about how she could support her children after her husband was injured in a work accident. Now she has a stable income. Hanan is among 93 Christians (mainly widows) whom Barnabas has enabled to become financially self-sufficient through the latest phase of our small business programme. Praise God for opening the door to new opportunities for believers who would otherwise struggle to find work because of their faith.

TUESDAY 22 Separate attacks were launched by Muslim extremists earlier this year on two Christian communities in southern Minya Governorate, Upper Egypt. Several houses belonging to Christians in one village were set alight in response to an attempt to build a new church. Just days later, extremists attacked Christians in a neighbouring village after learning that a congregation had obtained a permit to construct a church building. Give thanks that the authorities were able to prevent either incident escalating. Pray for continued protection of Christians in Egypt's rural areas. Ask that homes damaged will

be rebuilt, and that God will use His people to build His Church, whatever the opposition (Matthew 16:18).

WEDNESDAY 23 Please pray for the family of Eritrean pastor Ghirmay Araya, who has died in prison. He was arrested in his home in July 2021, for his faith in Jesus Christ. He was in his mid-70s at the time of his arrest. Eritrea's Marxist government legally permits only three Christian denominations (Eritrean Orthodox, Roman Catholic and Lutheran). Christians from prohibited denominations are often subject to arrest and lengthy imprisonment without charge or trial because of their faith. Ask that all Christians in Eritrea will be able to practise their faith freely. Pray for those who have been imprisoned for their faith in Christ, and for the family of Ghirmay Araya, that they will find comfort in the Lord.

THURSDAY 24 The authorities in North Korea have launched a crackdown on South Korean and Western cultural influence. It was recently reported that around 30 teenagers were shot for watching South Korean TV shows smuggled into the country. Christianity is one of many things deemed unacceptable by the rulers of North Korea. If discovered, believers will be killed or placed in prisons (often along with their families) where they are singled out for abuse and torture and will eventually die. Pray for an end to the suffering of all North Koreans, and especially our brothers and sisters.

FRIDAY 25 China's official Protestant church, the Three-Self Patriotic Movement, will soon enter the third

year of a "Five-Year Work Plan for Further Advancing the Sincicisation of Christianity". "Sincicisation" refers to a process of "making Chinese". While this can be useful in helping Chinese church leaders to apply Christian theology to their particular cultural context, there is also the risk that theology and the Gospel can be compromised, distorted or even abandoned. Ask the Lord, who gives wisdom and understanding to those who ask (Proverbs 2:6; James 1:5), to give such wisdom to Chinese church leaders as they navigate these challenges.

SATURDAY 26 Pray for our Christian brothers and sisters in Sri Lanka. Despite making up only 8% of the population, a recent study found that Christians in this Buddhist-majority country are the targets of 60% of online religious hate speech. These included stereotyping, threats of violence, and calls for exclusion or boycott. Pray that Christians in Sri Lanka will remain strong in their faith despite the hate shown towards them (Luke 6:22). Ask that the Lord will stay close to them and fill them with His peace and strength.

SUNDAY 27 Heavenly Father, on this Lord's Day we think of those who meet for worship knowing that they may face imminent violent attack. We consider those who cannot meet, because their faith must remain hidden, or because their churches have been closed down. We think also of those who meet in secret, not knowing whether this will be the last Sunday before they are discovered. For all such we pray that You will send blessings, comfort and the grace of our

Lord Jesus Christ, causing them to place their hope and their confidence in the One who has overcome the world, because we ask it in His Name. (John 16:33)

MONDAY 28 Pray for the family of a 13-year-old Christian who was beaten and killed by a group of Muslim teenagers in a Kyrgyzstan village. The incident was reported to the authorities, who have declined to investigate. The attackers threw the boy's body into a river to make it appear that he had taken his own life. This murder comes after a campaign of persecution waged against the small community of Christian converts from Islam in the village, instigated by a Muslim leader who declared that there should be no Christians in the area. Ask that the Lord will be gracious to the anguished family and friends of this young man, and deliver His people from their troubles (Psalm 25:16-17, 22).

TUESDAY 29 Uzbekistan's parliament is drafting a law to introduce punishments for parents or guardians who allow their children to receive "illegal" religious education before the age of 18. The aim is supposedly to "further strengthen the rights of children". Planned amendments to existing laws could lead to fines of a month's wages or jail terms of up to 15 days for parents failing to comply. Such a law could have serious consequences for Christians seeking to educate children in the faith. Pray that the planned law does not reach the statute books and there will be no further restrictions on the education of Christian children.

WEDNESDAY 30 Barnabas contacts in Indonesia report that at least three pastors in one part of the country have received death threats. One of the pastors is believed to be on the hitlist of an Islamist extremist organisation. Some parts of Indonesia are very hostile to the Gospel, and despite government attempts to curb extremism Islamist groups persist. Ask the Lord to be a refuge and a stronghold to these three pastors in their time of trouble (Psalm 9:9).



Christians in Indonesia

THURSDAY 31 Continue to pray for 40 Barnabas-supported church planters in Java, Indonesia, labouring to build God's Church. Praise God that many congregations have been established, and that new Christians are growing in faith and understanding. Pray for these faithful pastors and evangelists as they seek God's direction and guidance. Intercede especially for secret believers such as "Ramelan", a young man whose parents are janitors in a local mosque and who is unable to share his faith openly. Pray that he and others like him will grow in their relationship with the Lord and draw others to Him.



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