



PRAYER DIARY

Praying in Christ's Name for His Suffering Church

June - July 2025



Pray for each other.

James 5:16

SUNDAY 1 JUNE • UGANDA

I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.

Isaiah 41:10

On Sunday 9 March Esther's husband attacked her with a machete and cut off both her hands. This followed five years of severe persecution as he tried to pressure her to convert to Islam while she steadfastly held to her Christian faith. She is now completely dependent on others. It was not until long after they had married that Esther discovered her husband was a Muslim. TBF Trust is now assisting with rent for a new family home somewhere that her ex-husband will not be able to find, and start-up costs for a small business which her children and relatives can help Esther to run. Pray for the Lord to wonderfully comfort and strengthen Esther, giving her hope for the future.

“ O Cross, that liftest up my head, I dare not ask to fly from Thee; I lay in dust life's glory dead, And from the ground there blossoms red Life that shall endless be. George Matheson, Scotland (1842-1906)

MONDAY 2 JUNE • NIGERIA

Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. Matthew 5:4

The anti-Christian violence in Northern and Middle Belt Nigeria is continuing. In the early hours of 14 April Fulani Islamist extremists attacked Zikke village in Bassa County, Plateau State. They killed 51 Christians, including ten young children aged three to seven years old. The oldest to die was 94-year-old Reuben Adamu. Ask the Lord to comfort those who mourn, and

to give them the grace to forgive those who murdered their loved ones.

“ Intense sorrows, like gold in a furnace, purify the soul, give it life, fortify and temper it. A man ... becomes less attached to the earthly, thirsts more for the heavenly, the eternal, the unending. Joseph of Petrograd (now St Petersburg), Russia (1872-1937)

TUESDAY 3 JUNE • BURUNDI

You are all one in Christ Jesus. Galatians 3:28

Elections for Burundi's National Assembly (parliament) will be held on 5 June. This Christian-majority country is riven by ethnic conflict between the Hutu majority and Tutsi minority. There is also a small percentage of Twa pygmies. A terrible civil war between Hutus and Tutsis raged from 1993 to 2005 and its scars are yet to heal. Church-state relations are an ethnic issue, and for some time the government restricted one section of the Church because it was seen as favouring one ethnic group. The Hwa are hunter-gatherers who have lost their historic lands and hunting has been banned. Meanwhile the small Muslim community is growing. A complicated electoral system ensures that the National Assembly will always have 60 Hutus, 40 Tutsis and 3 Twa. Pray for peaceful, fair elections on Thursday and that the newly elected law-makers will be wise, just and courageous. Pray also that there will be reconciliation between Jesus's Burundian followers of all ethnic groups.

“ Crown him the Lord of peace,
Whose power a sceptre sways
From pole to pole, That wars may

cease, And all be prayer and praise.
Matthew Bridges, England/Canada
(1800-1894) and Godfrey Thring,
England (1823-1903)

WEDNESDAY 4 JUNE • TANZANIA

Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me. Luke 9:23

Tanzania is predominantly Christian, but Muslims hold many key positions in politics, education, business and the judiciary. Off the mainland are the islands of Zanzibar; here the population is 98% Muslim. Churches in Zanzibar have needed police protection and Christian converts from Islam are vulnerable to violent attack. Pray for wisdom, vision and courage for all Christians in Tanzania and for the Lord's protection over those in Zanzibar, particularly those who have left Islam to follow Jesus.

“ If Jesus Christ endured all the suffering, why can't we do that? Jesus Christ lived all the agony, in order to show us that this life is short and you have to carry your cross as He carried it. Amal, a Christian woman living in Bethlehem, 2025

THURSDAY 5 JUNE • SYRIA

In the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, in order to fulfil the word of the Lord spoken by Jeremiah, the Lord moved the heart of Cyrus king of Persia to make a proclamation... Ezra 1:1

Praise God for America's surprise lifting of sanctions on Syria, announced by Donald Trump on 13 May. This is wonderful news for all the suffering

people of Syria but there is much paperwork and reversing of laws to be done before the promise becomes reality. Pray for speedy progress in implementing the decisions. The removal of American sanctions is conditional on the protection of Syria's minorities. Pray that the new Islamist government of Syria will ensure that all the minorities are protected, including Christians who have been living in what one called “total fear” since the Islamists seized power toward the end of last year. The European Union have also lifted sanctions on Syria.

“ Do not have Jesus Christ on your lips, and the world in your heart. Ignatius of Antioch, Syria, but now in Turkey (martyred c.107)

FRIDAY 6 JUNE • JORDAN

My soul is downcast within me; therefore I will remember you from the land of the Jordan. Psalm 42:6.

Jordan is one of the most moderate and stable countries in the Middle East, despite the large number of refugees it hosts. It has been a place of tolerance and many Christians in the region have fled there for safety. Pray that, amidst the turmoil and unrest in the Middle East and the rise of extremism, this tolerance will continue and that Christians in Jordan, whether Jordanians or refugees, will not be downcast.

“ Be still, my soul! your God does undertake To guide the future as he has the past; Your hope, your confidence, let nothing shake; all now mysterious shall be bright at last. Katharina von Schlegel, Germany (1697-1777) translated

by Jane Northwick, Scotland
(1813-1897)

SATURDAY 7 JUNE • IRAQ

Marry and have sons and daughters; find wives for your sons and give your daughters in marriage, so that they too may have sons and daughters. Increase in number there; do not decrease. Also, seek the peace and prosperity of the city to which I have carried you into exile. Jeremiah 29:6-7

It is eleven years since Islamic State (ISIS) terrorists swept across Iraq in 2014. ISIS was officially declared defeated by Iraqi forces in 2017 but there are “sleeper cells” of ISIS fighters, who launch occasional attacks As ISIS advanced in 2014 thousands of Iraqi Christians fled from the Plains of Nineveh and Mosul to safety in Iraqi Kurdistan. Most of them are still there, afraid to return to their old homes because of hostility stirred up by ISIS. Pray for continued peace, and that the Christians may feel settled and at home in the place to which the Lord has brought them.

“ Without affliction there is no life.
Isaac of Syria, also called Isaac of Nineveh (7th century)

SUNDAY 8 JUNE • LEBANON

Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them. Acts 2:2-4

Even though things are getting slowly better in their own country, many

Lebanese Christians are very troubled by events in neighbouring Syria, which has turned quickly from a secular state to an Islamic state governed by Islamists. They wonder whether Christians can ever again live safely in the Middle East, and many are leaving the region. They are weary and worn by all that they themselves have endured in recent years. Pray that each Lebanese Christian will know the guidance of the Holy Spirit as they struggle with the question of whether to stay or leave. Pray that a Christian presence will continue in Lebanon, which less than a century ago had a Christian majority.

“ Lord, send me a renewed flame.
Send it now, Lord. A Christian song from the Ao Naga tribe, India, translated by Lanusenla Longchar. She explains that “flame “means “spirit”.

MONDAY 9 JUNE • BELARUS (1)

So do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord or of me his prisoner. Rather, join with me in suffering for the gospel, by the power of God. 2 Timothy 1:8

A 65-year-old church minister, Henryk Okolotovich, is serving an 11-year jail term for fabricated charges of espionage. His appeal against the sentence was rejected on 1 April, and on 20 April he was sent from prison to a labour camp. He has advanced cancer and is not expected to survive the 11 years. If he does survive he will have no money to live on as a vast financial penalty will use up all the savings he had put aside for his old age. Henryk says that he and other church ministers in Belarus are being persecuted to prevent them telling the truth. It was his

habit to invite people to commit their lives to Christ after every church service he held, as would have been observed by the undercover agents who were always present in the congregation. Pray that the Lord will wonderfully strengthen Henryk and use him in the labour camp. (Forum 18)

“ Time is given us to use in view of eternity. Henry Allan Ironside, Canada (1876-1951)

TUESDAY 10 JUNE • BELARUS (2)

Is anything too hard for the Lord? Genesis 18:14

July 5th is the deadline for the 3,500+ registered “religious communities” in Belarus to re-register. Any which have not submitted a re-registration application by that date are to be liquidated through the courts. This compulsory re-registration is one of the measures in a repressive new Religion Law which came into force on 5 July 2024. Forum 18 reports that both Christians and Muslims have expressed concern that the law requires a “religious community” to have at least 20 adult members in order to register. Many village churches and mosques will not be able to register because their congregations are too small. Pray that the new law will not be rigorously enforced and that the authorities of Belarus will soften in their attitude to Christians and followers of other religions.

“ Lord Jesus, you suffered for me – what am I suffering for you? Corrie ten Boom, Netherlands (1892-1983)

WEDNESDAY 11 JUNE • RUSSIA (1)

Seek peace and pursue it. Psalm 34:14.

Forum 18 reports that the Russian government has used a variety of methods to try to pressure religious leaders into supporting Russia’s invasion of Ukraine. Some have been warned while others have been prosecuted or fined for publicly opposing the war. Similar tactics have been used against many other Russians who express opposition to the war. At the time of writing, two Christian leaders and a Zen Buddhist leader are facing trial for anti-war comments. Christian preacher Eduard Charov is on trial at a military court in Yekaterinburg, charged with terrorism-related offences as well as discrediting the armed forces. The charges arise from some of his posts on social media. In one he asked, “Would Jesus Christ have gone to kill in Ukraine???” Eduard and his disabled wife run a shelter for elderly homeless people. Eduard is currently allowed to live at home but not to use a phone or the internet. Pray that the charges against all of them will be dropped.

“ Pray even when you are happy. Before the difficult challenge, pray! Pray when threatening sorrow comes. When you feel confused, pray! Pray when you have been offended. When danger comes, pray! Pray for your loved ones. For your evil enemies, pray! A Russian hymn by K.R., translated by Olga McNaughton, Russia (born 1978)

THURSDAY 12 JUNE • RUSSIA (2)

A future awaits those who seek peace.

Psalm 37:37

Pastor Nicolay Romanyuk (62) is in detention in Moscow for preaching an anti-war sermon. Every two months

his detention has been extended, but his trial has not (at the time of writing) begun. While in prison he has had a mini-stroke and his health is deteriorating. Sometimes he writes dejectedly to his family to say goodbye and that he is longing to go to heaven, at other times he is cheerful. Nicolay's current period of detention expires on 17 June. Pray that he will be released and allowed to live at home while he awaits trial. Pray for health of body, mind and spirit and that he will be found not guilty of the charges against him. (Forum 18)

“ *War is always bad, and God's Word does not allow us to kill people. It does not matter on whose side, in which country.* Nicolay Romanyuk (born 1962), speaking at his detention hearing in Moscow on 13 February 2025

FRIDAY 13 JUNE • UKRAINE

He makes wars cease to the ends of the earth.
Psalm 46:9

It is possible that by the time you are reading this, the war between Ukraine and Russia will be over. If so, thank our loving Lord for bringing peace. But post-war Ukraine will be almost as much in need of prayer as Ukraine at war. The infrastructure has been destroyed in many places, exorbitant taxes have crippled businesses and the economy is in decline. Many Ukrainians fear that life will be as hard in peacetime as in wartime. Pray that Ukrainian Christians will be salt and light in their country as its suffering continues.

“ *Lord Jesus Christ, who came into this world as a man and endured your passion [suffering], allowing*

your hands to be nailed to the cross for our sins, give me the strength to endure my passion [suffering]. It comes not from my enemies, but from my own brother: Yes, Lord do not account it to him as sin. Boris of Kiev (martyred 1015)

SATURDAY 14 JUNE • AFGHANISTAN

Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. Matthew 11:28-29

Pray for ministries seeking to share the Gospel with Afghan people and to disciple those who have left Islam to follow Christ. The Good News is being made known by radio, TV, online and social media to Afghans, both in Afghanistan – a country of severe hunger and deprivation – and outside it. There are Bible websites in five languages: Balochi, Dari, Hazaragi, Pashto, Turkmen. The most read item is the book of Matthew in Dari. Ask the Lord to guide those creating the materials and those who do the online follow-up with enquirers. Pray that many Afghans will repent and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. Thank the Lord for the courage of Afghan believers who are individually making known the Christian faith to other Afghans in various ways.

“ *I've always been taught to retaliate and take revenge, but the Bible says to forgive and love your enemy. This is very different.* A woman in Afghanistan, 2025

SUNDAY 15 JUNE • PAKISTAN (1)

He rescues me unharmed. Psalm 55:18

Praise God for answered prayers for Ariha, a Pakistani Christian girl who was abducted from her home by a Muslim neighbour. The next day he phoned Ariha's parents, threatening to rape her and sell her to sex traffickers if they tried to get her returned to them. A judge at the Lahore High Court accepted her family's documentary evidence that she was a minor, not 18, and that the marriage to her abductor was not lawful. He ordered that Ariha be returned to her family. Pray for many other girls, both Christians and Hindus, who have suffered similar experiences but whose families have not been able to get them returned. The legal ruling on Ariha's case sets a powerful precedent.

“ My song is love unknown, My Saviour's love to me, Love to the loveless shown That they might lovely be. Samuel Crossman, England (1623-1683)

MONDAY 16 JUNE • PAKISTAN (2)

...we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope. Romans 5:3-4

Today we share a prayer request from one of TBF Trust's project partners in Pakistan. He is thinking particularly of Pakistani Christians whose work is brick-making. Often a whole family – parents and children – must labour together to earn enough to survive. “Please pray for the poor and marginalized Christians of our country and especially the families who are working at brick kilns where they have to face different kind of challenges everyday like forced conversion attempts, insecurity of job, harassment

etc. Pray that God will make it possible for them to get stronger in their Christian faith every day.”

“ Turn your eyes upon Jesus, Look full in His wonderful face, And the things of earth will grow strangely dim, In the light of His glory and grace. Helen Lemmel, England/ USA (1863-1961)

TUESDAY 17 JUNE • PAKISTAN (3)

You, Lord, are a shield around me, my glory, the One who lifts my head high. Psalm 3:3

TBF Trust supports some small and simple Christian schools for children of Christian families in the brick kiln communities of Pakistan. These schools are more than places to get an education. They are also places of hope and refuge for Christian children who often face discrimination and rejection in mainstream schools. “Many have endured humiliation, bullying, and systemic bias simply because of their faith, often being denied equal opportunities or even forced to clean classrooms instead of being allowed to learn,” says our project partner. Others may have had no opportunity for any schooling before. Some of the schools lack proper buildings or roofs that give adequate protection from rain or strong sun, and many do not have enough tables and chairs for the children. Please pray that the Lord's presence will be very real and enable His people, both children and teachers, to overcome these obstacles with joy and thankfulness.

“ Although my entire family is dead, I am not afraid to go to the church. We should thank God and His

great love. Shaloom Naeem, a teenager in Pakistan, speaking after a bomb attack on his church in Peshawar on 22 September 2013 which killed the rest of his family, so he went home from church an orphan without siblings

WEDNESDAY 18 JUNE • NORTH KOREA

I know that my redeemer lives, and that in the end he will stand on the earth. Job 19:25-26

This communist country is so hostile to Christianity that Christians have been executed just for owning a Bible. Only the Lord knows how many are now in prison cells or political labour camps, where they are abused, tortured and worked to death. Children are encouraged to report their Christian parents if they see them praying. Pray for Christians in North Korea that they will be sustained in their suffering by the hope of the Lord's return.

“ *Lo! he comes with clouds descending, Once for favoured sinners slain! Thousand, thousand saints attending, Swell the triumph of his train. Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! God appears on Earth to reign.* Charles Wesley, England (1707-1788)

THURSDAY 19 JUNE • CHINA (1)

We have the mind of Christ. 1 Corinthians 2:16

Praise God that Christianity is still growing rapidly in China despite various challenges. The shortage of trained pastors and lay leaders is a serious issue for the Church in China. The Oxford Centre for Religion and Public Life has played a vital role in providing Chinese-language programmes to train

more than 200 leaders scattered in remote areas and cities. Many Chinese missionaries are also wanting to study these programmes. Please pray that God will provide the necessary funding and resources.

“ *How true it is that without the guidance of the Holy Spirit intellect not only is undependable but also extremely dangerous, because it often confuses the issue of right and wrong.* Watchman Nee, China (1903-72)

FRIDAY 20 JUNE • CHINA (2)

You knit me together in my mother's womb... Your eyes saw my unformed body; all the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be. Psalm 139:13, 16

Ten children, aged five to six years old, were detained by police who forced their way into a private home in Fuyang city in eastern China on Tuesday 29 April where the children were attending a “Sunday School” class. Five teachers were also held. The children were later allowed to return to their families but at last one of them had experienced severe psychological distress, manifested in repeated seizures. Three of the teachers were released but Ms Chen Fangfang and Ms Wang Dandan, who were held in a detention centre for a period. Pray for them and for the traumatised children that all will be comforted by the Lord Himself. Pray that this experience will strengthen them to face future persecution. Only the Lord knows what these young children will face in the rest of their lives.

“ *Had I a thousand lives, all these to Him shall I offer.* Lorenzo Ruiz

(martyred 1637). He was the son of a Chinese father and Filipino mother, martyred in Japan for refusing to deny Christ.

SATURDAY 21 JUNE • CHINA (3)

Christ has indeed been raised from the dead.
1 Corinthians 15:20

On 10 April verdicts were announced which had been passed on nine Christians by a court in Inner Mongolia in January. All were found guilty of “illegal business operations”. Wang Honglan, a 70-year-old grandmother, was sentenced to four years and ten months in prison and a fine of around £100,000. A tenth member of the group, Bang Yanhong, had already been given a five-year sentence in 2024. The Christians had bought Bibles from Three-Self churches, where they are openly sold because the churches are officially recognised by the Chinese authorities. They had re-sold the Bibles at a lower price to other Christians, making a financial loss for themselves. At the end of the trial, when the judge allowed them to make statements, Wang Honglan expressed her thankfulness to God that she had survived the rigours of the detention centre. She also mentioned Jesus’ resurrection. She finished by reciting the Apostles’ Creed. Pray that the judge and all who heard her words will keep pondering them and that the Holy Spirit will lead them to faith in Christ.

“ I believe in God, the Father almighty, Creator of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was

crucified, died and was buried; he descended into hell; on the third day he rose again from the dead... From The Apostles’ Creed, developed 2nd to 7th centuries

SUNDAY 22 JUNE • MYANMAR

He has delivered us from such a deadly peril, and he will deliver us again. 2 Corinthians 1:10

The government of Myanmar has been persecuting Christians for 60 years. Most of the Christians are from the ethnic minorities, so they are targeted for being non-Buddhist and also for being non-Bamar (non-Burman). Persecution is typically in the form of violent attacks by the Myanmar military on Christian villages. Many Christians now live in camps for displaced people. Some prefer the jungle, feeling safer there because the trees give them cover. Pray that they will have perseverance to endure, grace to forgive their persecutors and that the government will abandon its policy of persecuting its own people just because they are not Buddhists and not of the Bamar ethnicity.

“ A seed of rice, one grain, cannot become a lot Unless it is planted in the ground and there disintegrates. Then only can it sprout and bring forth many grains. We men are like that too. We men are like that too.
Translation of Malay Christian song from south Thailand

MONDAY 23 JUNE • SOMALIA

They will no longer be victims of famine in the land or bear the scorn of the nations.
Ezekiel 34:29

After a severe drought, leading to crop

failure in 2024 and hunger levels that were approaching famine, torrential rains this May caused serious flooding. The small community of Somali Christians are almost all converts from Islam; they face great danger from family, community and zealous Muslims if their faith in Christ is known. Many have been martyred. Pray for all Somali citizens suffering so greatly from weather extremes, and especially for Somali Christians, who endure the same and in addition bear the constant risk of persecution.

“ My Father, I abandon myself to you. Do with me as you will. Whatever you may do with me I thank you. I am prepared for anything. I accept everything, provided your will is fulfilled in me and in all creatures. I ask for nothing more, my God. I place my soul in your hands. I give it to you, my God, with all the love of my heart, because I love you. Charles de Foucauld, France (1858–1916 martyred in Algeria)

TUESDAY 24 JUNE • SOMALILAND

In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world. John 16:33

Somaliland broke away from Somalia in 1991. It has been more stable than Somalia and has had governments and democratic elections, but it is a very hard place for Christians. Islam is the state religion and promoting any other religion is forbidden. All laws must be grounded on sharia (Islamic law). There is no recognition that a Muslim could choose to change their beliefs and some have been imprisoned for converting to Christianity. Pray for our brothers and sisters in Somaliland that

they will have courage, hope and the peace of Christ in their hearts.

“ Through many dangers, toils and snares I have already come. 'Tis grace has brought me safe thus far And grace will lead me Home. John Newton, England (1725-1807)

WEDNESDAY 25 JUNE • GABON

He deposes kings and raises up others. He gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to the discerning. Daniel 2:21

Thank you for your prayers for the presidential election in Gabon in April. The winner was Brigadier-General Brice Oligui Nguema, who had been transitional president since a military coup overthrew President Ali Bongo in 2023. General Nguema resigned from the military in March. As a Christian, he brings to an end half a century of Muslim presidents ruling this country whose population is only 10% Muslim. The first Muslim president, Omar Bongo, made his mainly-Christian nation a member of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation, thus opening the way for the Islamisation of Gabon. Pray that General Nguema will lead Gabon with wisdom and discernment in a way that brings glory to Christ.

“ Come, Lord, and cover me with the night. Spread your grace over us, as you assured us you would do. Your promises are more than all the stars in the sky; your mercy is deeper than the night. Prayer from Ghana

THURSDAY 26 JUNE • DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO (DRC)

Then the Lord opened the servant's eyes, and

he looked and saw the hills full of horses and chariots of fire all round Elisha. 2 Kings 6: 17

On 12 April Islamic State Central Africa Province (ISCAP) beheaded four Christians near the town of Oicha in DRC's North Kivu province. Two days later they attacked the Christian village of Kokola where they killed six Christians, five by machine gun and one by beheading. They also set fire to 16 homes and stores. All this is claimed in ISCAP's own statements. Ask the Lord to send His angels to protect His people in North Kivu province and also Ituri province where similar violence occurs. Pray that the needs of those who lost their homes, food and possessions will be met.

“ I can see what those who persecute me cannot. On the other side of this river there is a multitude waiting to receive my soul and carry it to glory. Sabas the Goth, Romania (c.334-372 martyred)

FRIDAY 27 JUNE • CHAD

Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. Ephesians 4:3

Between August 2020 and August 2024, ten countries of Central and West Africa experienced coups or attempted coups. Chad was the first to return to democratic rule, with elections held in December 2024. But critics say that the election of General Mahamat Déby has changed little and note that the Déby family have held power in Chad since 1991. For decades Chad has been wracked by tensions between the mainly Muslim north and the south whose people are mainly Christians or followers of traditional African religions.

Chad is breaking its links with France and reaching out to Russia. Anti-Western attitudes are strengthening amongst Chad's urban young people. This is likely to morph into anti-Christian attitudes because Christianity is often viewed as a Western religion. Chad has a long eastern border with war-torn Sudan while in the west Boko Haram extremists are attacking security targets around Lake Chad. Christians face discrimination from Muslims and sometimes persecution by followers of traditional African religions. Pray that, amidst all these divisions and conflicts, there will be unity amongst Chad's Christians and that they will bring healing to their nation.

“ The spirit that refuses to hate when men are hateful. The spirit that is just when others are unjust. The spirit that is unselfish when others are selfish. These are the men that can be used by the Prince of Peace to make peace. Frank Buchman, USA (1878-1961)

SATURDAY 28 JUNE • IRAN (I)

The chief priests and the whole Sanhedrin were looking for false evidence against Jesus so that they could put him to death. Matthew 26:59

“The charges are fabricated, completely unfair and false, and part of the fabrication was done with the help of a ‘Christian’ traitor.” This extract comes from a letter written from prison in Iran by Hakop Gochumyan, an Armenian citizen. Hakop and his wife Elisa were arrested in August 2023 while having dinner at a friend's home near Tehran. Both were put in solitary confinement, repeatedly interrogated and psychologically tortured. Elisa was

charged with “propaganda against the state through the promotion of Christianity” but after two months she was released on bail. The only evidence against Hakop was that he had seven New Testaments in Farsi (the national language of Iran, used by the Muslim majority) and had visited three churches there. Pray that Hakop will be sustained during his 10-year sentence by the knowledge that His Saviour was also betrayed, falsely accused and unfairly condemned.

“ Lord, grant me this crown for which I have longed, for I have loved you with all my heart and all my soul. I long to see you, to be filled with you, and to find rest ... I no longer wish to see those I considered my friends change within their hearts, becoming angry and seeking my death; or have those who are my true friends taken from me by this persecution, while their killers order us about. Simeon of Seleucia in modern Iran (martyred c.344)

SUNDAY 29 JUNE • IRAN (2)

I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it. Matthew 16:18

The persecution of Christians in Iran has been analysed in a recent report into categories including: vilifying Christians as a “sect” or a security threat; making it a crime to promote Christianity; forcing Christians to recant their faith; treating the Bible as contraband and evidence of a crime; criminal charges for peaceful Christian activities. Despite these efforts by the authorities, many Iranian Muslims continue to make decisions to follow Christ. Leaked files have revealed

that the vast majority of Christians prosecuted in the period July 2008 – January 2023 were converts from Islam, rather than members of the historic Christian minorities. Pray for resilience for Christians of all backgrounds in Iran that the more pressure is put on them, the stronger their love for the Lord will grow.

“ Let courage rise with danger.
George Duffield, USA (1818-1888)

MONDAY 30 JUNE • KAZAKHSTAN

Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows. James 1:17

Christians in Kazakhstan are thankful to the Lord for an unexpected improvement in their situation. The fines given for illegal religious gatherings have become significantly lower. Also a lesser penalty known as “administrative punishment” (a fine without a criminal conviction or prison sentence) has been introduced to serve as a warning. At the same time, however, a proposal has been submitted to parliament to change the law so that a religious organisation would require 200 members to register instead of the current 50. This would make it more difficult for churches to gain registration and thus function legally. Praise God for this time of respite for Christians in Kazakhstan. As the authorities seem to be struggling amongst themselves regarding how to treat Christians, pray that the Lord’s purposes will prevail.

“ In all time of our tribulation; in all time of our prosperity; in the hour of death, and in the day of

*judgment, Good Lord, deliver us.
From The Great Litany, Book of
Common Prayer, 2016*

TUESDAY 1 JULY • TURKMENISTAN

*When Christ appears, we shall be like him,
for we shall see him as he is. 1 John 3:2*

Turkmenistan is about 90% Muslim but perhaps the real “religion” of Turkmenistan is the personality cult surrounding President Berdymukhamedov and his predecessors. It is a strongly authoritarian state, whose people are poor and kept isolated from the world outside. The Christian minority of about 7% (mainly Armenians and Russians, plus a small number of converts from Islam) live with surveillance, restrictions, scarcity of Christian literature, insufficient church buildings for legally permitted worship, arrests, fines, imprisonment with beatings and semi-starvation. Pray that the challenges facing Christians in Turkmenistan may draw them closer to the Lord and to each other, and that they will grow in Christ-likeness.

*“ Father, make us more like Jesus.
Help us to bear difficulty, pain,
disappointment and sorrow,
knowing that in your perfect
working and design you can use
such bitter experiences to make us
more like our Lord. We look with
hope for that day when we shall be
wholly like Christ because we shall
see him as he is. Ignatius of Antioch
(martyred c.107)*

WEDNESDAY 2 JULY • KYRGYZSTAN

*Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful
and thankful. Colossians 4:2*

Rejoice with Christians in the village of Belovodskoye that, after much time and effort, they have been given permission to build a House of Prayer in which the Christians can gather together. When the warm weather began this spring, so did the construction work which has now been completed. At the time of writing, the internal work is underway including ceilings, floor tiles and heating. The Christians also rejoice in the sacrificial zeal with which the builders set to work as soon as winter had ended. Pray that the remaining work will not be hindered by the authorities, by any local people who are hostile to Christians, by adverse weather or by lack of funds.

*“ When peace like a river attendeth
my way, When sorrows like sea
billows roll; Whatever my lot, thou
hast taught me to say, «It is well, it
is well with my soul. Horatio Gates
Spafford, USA (1828-1888)*

THURSDAY 3 JULY • UZBEKISTAN

*Rejoice that your names are written in
heaven. Luke 10:20*

Islam is growing in strength, confidence and visibility in Uzbek society, although since 2023 their country is has been defined in its constitution as a “secular state”. The government’s attitude towards Christians is softening but churches find it very difficult to get the compulsory registration which makes their activities legal. In February President Mirziyoyev approved a new religious policy which seems designed to support moderate Islam and discourage radical Islam. Pray for the small Christian minority in this complicated and ever-changing

context that they may be guided by God and bring glory to Him

“ We will cheerfully walk on life’s journey, If we will trust in Jesus. We will find the strength of God for our labour, If we will trust in Jesus. And the way becomes lighter, And the joy will never end, The enemy will not confuse you, If we will trust in Jesus. Anonymous Russian hymn, translated by Olga McNaughton, Russia (born 1978)

FRIDAY 4 JULY • TAJIKISTAN

... we wait for the blessed hope – the appearing of the glory of our great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ. Titus 2:13

Tajikistan is more than 90% Muslim. No one under the age of 18 is allowed to participate in public religious activities. So Christian parents must teach their children the faith at home; they cannot go to Sunday School or church. Congregations find it very difficult to get official registration, which means they are acting illegally whenever they gather for worship. Even registered churches face harassment and restrictions. There are frequent and intimidating inspections of churches, when items may be seized. Pray that the faith of Christians in Tajikistan will grow as it is tested in so many ways.

“ Even when the Saviour came to this place He lived under very difficult conditions... And we are following His footsteps. Amal, a Christian woman living in Bethlehem, 2025

SATURDAY 5 JULY • MOROCCO

Then I saw a Lamb, looking as if it had been slain... The four living creatures and

the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb. Each one had a harp and they were holding golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of God’s people. And they sang a new song, saying: ‘You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased for God persons from every tribe and language and people and nation...’ Revelation 5:6,8-9

Officially all Moroccan citizens are Muslims, so the only Christians in the country are supposedly foreigners. Thank the Lord that for many years the Moroccan authorities have turned a blind eye to Moroccan Christians (converts from Islam and their children) who practise their faith discreetly. Pray that the Holy Spirit will give wisdom and grace to His people as they live for Him in this North African country.

“ The carpenter carved out his heart, And whittled it into me. And though he didn’t wish to part, He lovingly set me free, Hoping one day that I’d understand, Hoping I’d finally see, That I was saved by the holes in his hands, Oh how love unloved can bleed! Catherine Reilly, USA (born 1997)

SUNDAY 6 JULY • ALGERIA

Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you. Luke 6:27

Algeria is about 98% Muslim. The Christian community is mainly from the ethnic Berber minority, who are the indigenous people of the land, not from the Arab majority. Most of the Christians are first-, second- or third-generation converts from Islam. Christians who evangelise Muslims

risk a jail sentence but there is no penalty for choosing to leave Islam. Many congregations have had their church buildings forcibly closed by the authorities. Pray that church buildings will reopen, in the Lord's perfect timing, so Christians can meet for worship in larger numbers, and that full religious freedom will be granted.

“Ye have enemies; for who can live on this earth without them? Take heed to yourselves: love them. In no way can thy enemy hurt thee by his violence as thou dost hurt thyself if thou love him not. Augustine of Hippo (modern Annaba, Algeria) (354-430)

MONDAY 7 JULY • TUNISIA

A new command I give you: love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. John 13:34-35

The 2011 “Arab Spring” began in Tunisia, where it toppled the country's autocratic ruler. In the freedom that followed, political Islam flourished in this 98% Muslim country. But aspects of autocratic rule were reimposed in 2021 when President Kais Saied seized extraordinary powers for himself, undermined the authority of parliament and the next year introduced a new constitution. Since then, journalists have faced increasing intimidation. In March a mass trial began of about 40 prominent opposition figures. This is the context in which Tunisia's small Christian community find themselves, juggling a mixture of freedoms and restrictions. Most of the Christians are expatriates but there are also Tunisian converts from Islam who are stigmatised by the Muslim community and may face

persecution from their relatives. Pray that they will have the enabling of the Holy Spirit to live Christ-like lives.

“Stand fast in the faith and love one another. Perpetua, Carthage, in modern Tunisia (c.181-203 martyred). These were her last words.

TUESDAY 8 JULY • LIBYA

Why, my soul, are you downcast? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Saviour and my God. Psalm 42:11

The Christian community in Libya is mostly migrant workers from sub-Saharan Africa. Other African Christians are passing through Libya, attempting to cross to Europe and earn money to send back to their needy families; they are often subject to severe abuse while they wait in Libya. There is also a small number of Libyan converts from Islam – only the Lord knows how many. The country is chaotic, violent and strongly Islamic. It is one of the few 21st century nations which has an official death penalty for apostasy from Islam. Pray for the protection of our very vulnerable brothers and sisters.

“See from his head, his hands, his feet, sorrow and love flow mingled down; Did e'er such love and sorrow meet Or thorns compose so rich a crown? Isaac Watts, England (1674-1748)

WEDNESDAY 9 JULY • EGYPT

But let all who take refuge in you be glad; let them ever sing for joy. Spread your protection over them, that those who love your name may rejoice in you. Psalm 5:11

Egypt has an estimated 10 million Christians. Under President al-Sisi, their situation has significantly improved, although extremists in this Muslim-majority country are still hostile so Christians suffer frequent discrimination and occasional violence. Al-Sisi's government has granted licences to over 3,000 church buildings, making it legal to worship in them, and the president is quick to give verbal and financial support for Christians whenever anti-Christian violence occurs. Pray for the protection of Christians especially in rural areas. Pray that the Lord will enable them to earn a living despite discrimination. Ask that they will hold on to the Lord Jesus, in the land where He Himself was a refugee and where the Christian faith has been handed down through the generations for almost 2,000 years.

“ *There is no safety – human safety, worldly safety – apart from the true safety I found with the Lord Jesus Christ.* Nagla al-Imam, Egypt, 2010

THURSDAY 10 JULY • INDONESIA

But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Saviour from there, the Lord Jesus Christ. Philippians 3:20

The treatment of Christians varies across this vast nation, which has the largest Muslim population in the world. In Aceh, the westernmost province, sharia (Islamic law) is in force. In Papua, the easternmost province, Christians are numerically strong but they are very poor economically and are often attacked by the Indonesian military. Pray that the peaceful, respectful and equal co-existence of religions in Indonesia, which older

Indonesians still remember, will be re-established.

“ *When we've been there ten thousand years, Bright shining as the sun, We've no less days to sing God's praise Than when we first begun.* John Newton, England (1725-1807)

FRIDAY 11 JULY • LAOS

Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you. Matthew 5:11-12

This month sees an amended constitution come into effect in Laos. One of the changes it makes is to abolish the role of Village Chief and establish a Governing Committee instead. Christians are a small minority in this country which has a communist government, a predominantly Buddhist culture and where religious liberty has improved considerably in recent years. Most of the persecution of Christians nowadays occurs at the village level, where village chiefs sometimes have Christians arrested and imprisoned and villagers may destroy their homes and fields. Pray that the constitutional amendments will give more protection for Christians in rural areas of Laos.

“ *O Jesus, I have promised To serve Thee to the end; Be Thou forever near me, My Master and my Friend.* John Ernest Bode, England (1816-1874)

SATURDAY 12 JULY • BANGLADESH

For you who revere my name, the sun of

righteousness will rise with healing in its rays. Malachi 4:2

Bangladesh's Constitution Reform Commission has proposed sweeping changes to the constitution, with an emphasis on democratic accountability at all levels of government; the aim is apparently to prevent authoritarianism. The Commission proposes to drop three of the four fundamental principles of the existing constitution: nationalism, socialism and secularism, leaving only democracy. To this they propose to add four new fundamental principles: equality, human dignity, social justice and pluralism. The existing constitution is very supportive of freedom of religion, which is helpful for Christians, Hindus and other non-Muslim minorities. Please pray that this characteristic of Bangladesh will continue, even if secularism is no longer a fundamental principle.

“ Should pain and suffering, sorrow and grief, rise up like clouds and overshadow for a time the Sun of Righteousness and hide Him from your view, do not be dismayed, for in the end this cloud of woe will descend in showers of blessing on your head, and the Sun of Righteousness rise upon you to set no more for ever. Sadhu Sundar Singh, India (1889-1929)

SUNDAY 13 JULY • BHUTAN

One thing I ask from the Lord, this only do I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to gaze on the beauty of the Lord and to seek him in his temple. Psalm 27:4

All Christian activities in this Buddhist

nation are illegal, except worshipping in private homes. It is even illegal for Christians to be buried in Bhutan. Despite these government restrictions, society has grown more accepting of Christians who find they do not face as much discrimination as they used to. But Christian converts from Buddhism face a lot of pressure to return to Buddhism. Pray that Christians will succeed in their efforts to register some Christian organisations with the government, thus making their activities legal. Pray that they will be allowed to bury their dead.

“ O Thou who hast prepared a place for my soul, prepare my soul for that place. Prepare it with holiness; prepare it with desire; and even while it sojourneth upon earth, let it dwell in heaven with thee, beholding the beauty of thy countenance and the glory of thy saints. Joseph Hall, England (1574-1656)

MONDAY 14 JULY • NEPAL

My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one will snatch them out of my hand. John 10:27-29

Nepal's population is about 85% Hindu but the Church has been growing fast since the 1950s – praise God. There is a lot of pressure on Christians who are active in sharing their faith with Hindus and Buddhists. A vaguely-worded law passed in 2018 makes it easy for the authorities to take Christians to court for almost any public Christian activity. Pray that our brothers and sisters will know the Lord's guidance, strength and peace as they worship and witness. Pray that the Holy Spirit

will continue to bring people in Nepal to repentance and faith in Jesus.

“ *Were the whole realm of nature mine That were an offering far too small; Love so amazing, so divine, Demands my soul, my life, my all.* Isaac Watts, England (1674-1748)

TUESDAY 15 JULY • MALDIVES

... in all things God works for the good of those who love him... Romans 8:28

A popular holiday destination in the Indian Ocean, the Maldives are also one of the strictest Islamic states in the world. Non-Muslims living in or visiting the Maldives can be imprisoned or fined if they express their beliefs openly. No church buildings are allowed. Non-Muslims are not allowed to become Maldivian citizens. Even Muslims are strictly regulated, with the government controlling mosques and sermons. It is illegal to leave Islam. Despite all this, there are Maldivian Muslims who have decided to follow Jesus Christ. Pray for their protection and also for all other Christians in the Maldives.

“ *The one who clings to life, who counts his own life dear, Cannot receive new life from God, He always stays alone.* Malay Christian song from south Thailand

WEDNESDAY 16 JULY • SRI LANKA

Blessed is the one who perseveres under trial because, having stood the test, that person will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love Him. James 1:12

Sri Lanka is predominantly Buddhist, with Christian, Hindu and Muslim minorities. Christians can face hostility

and violence from Buddhist extremists, Hindu extremists and Muslim extremists. Many Christians are very poor and suffered greatly during Covid times and the economic crisis which Sri Lanka has passed through recently. Praise God that Christians are represented in both the main ethnic groups of Sri Lanka - Sinhala majority and Tamil minority - and pray that they will be a blessing to their country.

“ *God has called us to shine. Let no one say that he cannot shine because he has not so much influence as some others may have. What God wants you to do is to use the influence you have.* Dwight L. Moody, USA (1837-1899)

THURSDAY 17 JULY • MOZAMBIQUE

The Lord is in his holy temple; the Lord is on his heavenly throne... The Lord examines the righteous, but the wicked, those who love violence, he hates with a passion. Psalm 11:4-5

Statements issued by Islamic State Mozambique Province on 14 April claimed they had burned two church buildings and “dozens of Christian homes” in Ncole village, Cabo Delgado province, while in Ngura village they had burned more than 60 homes. The Christians and moderate Muslims of Cabo Delgado have been enduring violence from Islamist extremists for nearly 11 years. Pray for an end to this one-sided savagery and that the perpetrators will come to realise that their violence is not pleasing to God.

“ *He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain* Revelation 21:4-5

FRIDAY 18 JULY • ERITREA (1)

When he has tested me, I shall come forth as gold. Job 23:10

The government of Eritrea often arrests Christians from banned denominations. They are imprisoned in appalling conditions, typically with beatings, torture, extreme temperatures, forced labour and insufficient food and water. Many are held for years without being charged let alone tried and sentenced. The more they are involved in Christian ministry the worse they are treated. Ask that those who spend time in prison will come forth as gold, with their faith strengthened and purified.

“ *The sufferings are almost forgotten. All is deep praise to God, for the experience has been so blessed – the experience of His power to cover and keep in perfect peace, only seeing glory when face to face with death – the experience of His tender carrying and enabling love when brought nigh unto death...* Flora Glover, England (1872–1900). She wrote these words shortly before her death in China after a period of hardship and persecution.

SATURDAY 19 JULY • ERITREA (2)

... say to the captives, “Come out,” and to those in darkness, “Be free!” Isaiah 49:9

There are thought to be about 400 Christians in prison in Eritrea, adults, children and babies. Conditions are appalling, and many die in prison. Mussie Ezaz, an evangelist and youth leader, has been in prison since 2008. For a long time after Mussie’s arrest, his family did not know where he was or even whether he was still alive.

Eventually they learned that he was in the notorious maximum-security Wengel Mermera interrogation centre in Asmara. It is thought that 20 other church leaders are also in Wengel Mermera. Like Mussie, none of them have been tried and all have been held incommunicado since their arrests. Pray for them all, as the years and decades pass in what has been described as a “dungeon-like inner labyrinth of cells”. Pray also for their families. Mussie’s wife is called Frewrini and they have three adult sons who have not seen their father since they were small boys.

“ *I delivered thee when bound And, when wounded, healed thy wound, Sought thee wandering, set thee right, Turned thy darkness into light.* William Cowper, England (1731-1800)

SUNDAY 20 JULY • MAURITANIA

Then you will shine among them like stars in the sky as you hold firmly to the word of life. Philippians 2:15-16

Praise God for the faith and courage of Mauritians who have left Islam to follow Christ. The Mauritanian population is almost 100% Muslim and apostasy from Islam is officially punishable by death under its penal code, although no known executions have taken place in recent years. They face much harassment, persecution and danger. Pray that they will shine like stars in Mauritanian society as they live Christ-like lives for His glory.

“ *We are the Bibles the world is reading. We are the creeds the world is needing. We are the*

sermons the world is heeding. Billy Graham, USA (1918-2018)

MONDAY 21 JULY • NIGERIA

The people will be secure in their land. They will know that I am the Lord, when I break the bars of their yoke and rescue them...

Ezekiel 34:27

At least 85 Christians were killed when Islamist militants launched a wave of attacks against 13 mainly Christian villages in Bokokos County, Plateau State, during March and early April. Hundreds of homes were destroyed and thousands of people displaced. The Governor of Plateau State, Caleb Mutfwang, condemned the “unprovoked attacks on innocent people, vulnerable people” and commented that “this is a well-coordinated plan to keep the people in those areas in perpetual poverty” by driving them out of their lands. Pray that the Nigerian authorities will find an effective way to prevent the ongoing violence which began in 2009 and has killed around 45,000 Christians.

“ *Be still, my soul! When dearest friends depart And all is darkened in the vale of tears, Then shall you better know his love, his heart, Who comes to soothe your sorrow and your fears. Be still, my soul! your Jesus can repay From his own fullness all he takes away.* Katharina von Schlegel, Germany (1697-1777) translated by Jane Northwick, Scotland (1813-1897)

TUESDAY 22 JULY • MALI

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. Romans 15:13

Mali is a Muslim-majority country with a constitution that upholds religious freedom, affirms that all Malians are equal and bans religious discrimination. Muslim leaders have spoken against extremist interpretations of sharia (Islamic law). But the nation is afflicted by the activities of many jihadist groups, which control swathes of territory in the north. The Christian minority of about 2% live mainly in the south but suffer attacks and kidnappings from time to time. Ask God to make them overflow with hope despite the alarming changes in their country in recent years and that their intercessions for Mali will be effective.

“ *Prayer the Church’s banquet, angels’ age, God’s breath in man returning to his birth, The soul in paraphrase, heart in pilgrimage, The Christian plummet sounding heav’n and earth.* George Herbert, England (1593-1633)

WEDNESDAY 23 JULY • SUDAN

I know that you can do all things; no purpose of yours can be thwarted. Job 42:2

Civil war continues to rage in Sudan as government armed forces struggle against a paramilitary group called Rapid Support Forces (RSF). Millions have fled their homes. Hunger is severe, with 25 million people affected. It is feared that new regulations on relief work introduced by the government in May will make the humanitarian situation even worse. The RSF has been accused of ethnic cleansing and genocide in an apparent campaign to rid the area of non-Arab people-groups whether Muslim or Christian. There is evidence that they rape non-Arab

women and have murdered thousands of civilians. Pray that the Christian minority will be a channel of blessing to the Muslim majority as all suffer together in this terrible conflict.

“ *The will of God will not take us where the grace of God cannot sustain us.* Billy Graham, USA (1918-2018)

THURSDAY 24 JULY • IRAN (3)

They called the apostles in and had them flogged. Then they ordered them not to speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go. The apostles left the Sanhedrin, rejoicing because they had been counted worthy of suffering disgrace for the Name. Acts 5:40-41

Two Iranian brothers, converts from Islam, have been sentenced to four years in prison. After their release, they are forbidden to live in their home province of Isfahan for two years and forbidden to be members of any group for five years. Mahmoud Mardani-Kharaji (now aged 56) and his brother Mansour (50) were arrested in December 2021 when plainclothes officers raided a Christmas gathering. They were held for a month incommunicado before being released on bail. Pray that Mahmoud and Mansour may be given grace to rejoice that they are suffering for the Name of Christ.

“ *If I refuse to allow one who is dear to me to suffer for the sake of Christ, if I do not see such suffering as the greatest honour that can be offered to any follower of the Crucified, then I know nothing of Calvary love.* Amy Carmichael, Northern Ireland (1867-1951)

FRIDAY 25 JULY • IRAN (4)

May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all. 2 Corinthians 13:14

The Iranian authorities seem well aware how much Christians need fellowship with each other. Much of their anti-Christian pressure focuses on separating believers from other believers. A common punishment is internal exile, forcing a Christian to move to a remote part of Iran. Another one is to oblige a Christian to stay at home and not communicate with other Christians. It is also common for the authorities to threaten long prison sentences and then give time for the Christians to flee the country of their own accord. But the Iranian authorities cannot stop the Holy Spirit from drawing close to isolated believers. Pray that He will comfort and encourage them so that they emerge from their isolation with an even stronger faith and an even deeper love for the Lord.

“ *Our life is seed, sown in the earth to rise again in the world to come, where we will be renewed by Christ in immortal life. I did not frame this body, nor will I destroy it; God, you gave me life, you will also restore it.* Jonas of Beth-Asa in modern Iran (martyred c.327)

SATURDAY 26 JULY • IRAN (5)

This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down His life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters. 1 John 3:16

Pray for Joseph Shahbazian (aged 61), an Iranian-Armenian house church

leader, who was arrested in February and, at the time of writing, is still in detention. His wife Lida and various Christian friends were interrogated in a fruitless effort to gather evidence against him. Then Lida herself was arrested and held in solitary confinement for a month. Joseph's mother died three days before Lida's arrest, but neither Joseph nor Lida was allowed out of prison to attend her funeral. Praise God that Joseph's friends and relatives refused to be intimidated into giving evidence against him. Pray that they will be protected from any reprisals by the Ministry of Intelligence and Security who had tried to get them to betray him.

“ God you are with me and you can help me. You were with me when I was taken, and you are with me now... I will worship only the true God; you will I carry in my heart. No one on earth shall be able to separate me from you. Quirinius of Siscia, now Sisak in modern Croatia (martyred c. 308)

SUNDAY 27 JULY • ARMENIA

As the mountains surround Jerusalem, so the Lord surrounds his people both now and for evermore. Psalm 125:2

Armenia has been a Christian nation since 301 AD and Armenians have suffered greatly for their faith over the centuries. Modern Armenia is bracing itself for the possibility of invasion by its Islamic neighbour Azerbaijan; pray that it will not happen. It is almost two years since the Azerbaijani military took control of the enclave of Nagorno-Karabakh, whose inhabitants were Armenian Christians. Almost the entire population of Nagorno-Karabakh

immediately fled to Armenia. Nagorno-Karabakh used to be filled with church buildings, carved stone crosses and other Christian sites, but Azerbaijan has obliterated many of them or re-written their history to say that they were not built by Armenians. Pray that nothing will destroy the faith of Armenian people.

“ Prayer is the test of everything; prayer is also the source of everything; prayer is the driving force of everything; prayer is also the director of everything. Gregory of Narek, Armenia (951-1003). Narek is now in Turkey but during Gregory's lifetime was in Armenia.

MONDAY 28 JULY • TURKEY

There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens. Ecclesiastes 3:1

The remnants of the historic Christian communities in Turkey find that life for them under President Erdogan at the moment is easier than ever before in their lives. They are descendants of Armenians and Assyrians who survived an anti-Christian genocide that peaked in 1915 and remained in their homeland despite a century of discrimination and harassment. Thank the Lord with them for the freedoms they now have, including to teach Syriac (Aramaic, the language of the Lord Jesus) and to train leaders for Christian ministry. Pray that they will make good use of this liberty. Some Christians are even returning to Turkey, having lived in other parts of the world for decades.

“ O Lord, protect Your Church which You ransomed by Your precious blood, under the care of Your mighty right hand. Banish all

heresies and false teachings from her. Enable the Church to keep her hope and expectation in You, and to enjoy and rejoice in Your salvation. We offer praise to You and to Your Father and to Your Holy Spirit, now and always, for ever and ever. Amen. A prayer of the Malankara Syrian Orthodox Church, India

TUESDAY 29 JULY • SAUDI ARABIA

Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Matthew 5:10

There are thought to be at least a million expatriate Christians, mainly from Asia and Africa, living in Saudi Arabia. They face many restrictions but not the dangers endured by Saudi Christians, who are converts from Islam. At the moment Saudi law lays down a death sentence for leaving Islam, although it is not known to have been applied to Christians in recent years. Converts also face danger from zealous Muslims. Most converts are therefore secret believers. Pray that the Saudi authorities will grant freedom of religion in their land. Ask that our heavenly Father will protect His children in Saudi Arabia, whatever their background.

“ We left Muhammad, and we do not follow in his path. We followed Jesus Christ, the Clear Truth. Truly, we love our homeland, and we are not traitors. We take pride that we are Saudi citizens... Be content to leave us to ourselves to be believers in Jesus. Let us live in grace before our time comes. There are tears on my cheek, and oh! the heart is sad. To those who become Christians you are so cruel! And

the Messiah says, “Blessed are the Persecuted”. And we for the sake of Christ all things bear. From a poem by Fatima al-Mutairi, Saudi Arabia (martyred 2010)

WEDNESDAY 30 JULY • QATAR (1)

Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything. James 1:2-4

An estimated 400,000 Christians live in Qatar. Nearly all of them are expatriates, especially from India and the Philippines, often working in dangerous jobs and living in great poverty. Although Qatar is strictly Islamic, expatriate Christians are allowed to worship in the Mesaimmeer Religious Complex, which has six main church centres, some of them hosting dozens of services each weekend for all the different congregations. Even within the complex, however, crosses are not allowed. Before the Covid pandemic, Qatar unofficially allowed churches to operate outside the complex. These churches closed during the pandemic and have not been permitted to re-open. Evangelising Muslims is forbidden and many expatriate Christians have been deported after being accused of this. Pray that every believer in Qatar will know the Lord's presence to strengthen, guide and encourage them, however difficult their circumstances.

“ Always keep in mind the grievous afflictions of those stricken with sorrow and tribulations, that you may render due thanks for the small and insignificant adversities which may happen to you, and be

able to bear them with joy. Isaac of Syria also called Isaac of Nineveh (7th century). He was born in Beth Qatraye (modern Qatar).

THURSDAY 31 JULY • QATAR (2)

Many are the plans in a person's heart, but it is the Lord's purpose that prevails. Psalm 19:21

Qatar follows the Wahhabi version of Islam, but less strictly than Saudi Arabia. Leaving Islam is forbidden. Qatari security personnel at the entrance to Mesaimmer Religious Complex (see above) require churchgoers to show ID; Qatari citizens are not allowed in. Warning messages pop up on church websites to tell Qatari citizens that the website has Christian content. The vast majority of known Qatari Christians converted

abroad and most have not returned to Qatar due to fear of persecution. The few known Christian converts living in Qatar are very discreet and have no contact with expatriate Christians. Pray that, despite the laws and despite the website warnings and despite the security guards, the Gospel will bear fruit amongst Qataris and many will commit their lives to Jesus.

“ God is working His purpose out As year succeeds to year; God is working this purpose out, And the time is drawing near; Nearer and nearer draws the time, The time that shall surely be: When the earth shall be filled with the glory of God As the waters cover the sea. Arthur Campbell Ainger, England (1841-1919)



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