



barnabasprayer

BARNABAS AID - BRINGING HOPE AND AID TO SUFFERING CHRISTIANS

To help you
pray for the
persecuted
Church

MAY/JUNE 2022

barnabasfund.org

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

MAY

SUNDAY 1 Lord God and Heavenly Father, we lift up to You all of Your people across the world who have been displaced by persecution and violence over many years. We think in particular of our brother Barka Amos in Borno State, Nigeria, who after another attack on his village by Islamic State said, “I am tired of running.” Please strengthen all believers who have had to flee danger, reminding them that, “The name of the LORD is a strong tower; the righteous run to it and are safe.” We ask in the Name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. (Proverbs 18:10, NKJV)

MONDAY 2 Boko Haram militants killed four Christian men and abducted at least 24 other Christians – 22 women and girls, and two men – in three separate attacks in Chibok Local Government Area, Borno State, Nigeria. Four girls were subsequently released by their abductors. Borno State Governor Babagana Umara Zulum pledged additional security

support. Pray that such support is forthcoming and effective in preventing further violence. Ask that those still held captive will be released unharmed and that those bereaved will know the Lord’s comfort.

TUESDAY 3 When Aicha’s husband discovered that she had left Islam to follow Christ, he told her she must choose between her home and her faith. “I decided to be faithful to my Lord,” says Aicha, who lives in Burkina Faso. She and her children were thrown out. Working through the local church, Barnabas aid provided food for Aicha and other very needy Christian families. “We are humbled and thankful that Christians from far away are helping us with so much food,” said Aicha. Pray that Aicha, the other beneficiaries and their local churches will continue strong in the Lord, despite their hardships.

WEDNESDAY 4 Military leader Paul-Henri Damiba took office as President of Burkina Faso in February, promising to tackle the Islamist insurgency that has claimed thousands of lives, many of them Christian, and forced more than 1.4 million to flee their homes. Islamist groups have frequently targeted Christians, church leaders and places of worship. Most Christians have fled the worst-affected areas, and the few remaining believers worship in secret. Pray for peace in Burkina Faso and ask for the Lord’s protection over its beleaguered people. Ask our Almighty Father, for whom nothing is impossible, to change the hatred of the men of violence into love (Matthew 19:26).

THURSDAY 5 “I have seen the love of the Church,” said a Christian woman after Barnabas sent food and practical aid to survivors of a jihadi attack on a predominantly Christian village in South Sudan. Islamist militants killed at least 25 villagers, razed homes and a church, stole their animals and destroyed their food stores. It was just one of a number of anti-Christian attacks on communities by jihadists from across the border in Sudan. Ask for comfort for the bereaved, an end to the attacks and strength for the survivors to rebuild. Pray that these exhausted Christians will fix their thoughts on Jesus, and hold firmly to their confidence and hope of His glory (Hebrews 3:1,6).



Barnabas-funded aid distributed in South Sudan

FRIDAY 6 A bill to recognise the Ottoman-era Armenian Genocide was scheduled to receive its second reading in the UK House of Commons on 18 March. Unfortunately, through time constraints, the reading did not take place. The second reading was re-scheduled to take place today, 6 May. Persist in seeking the Lord that neither parliamentary procedure nor wilful

opposition will prevent this bill passing into law. Pray for MPs to be convinced of its importance, and for the UK to join more than 30 countries that have officially recognised the Genocide in which 3.75 million Christians in the Ottoman Empire were killed between 1893 and 1923.

SATURDAY 7 The Democratic Republic of the Congo, a Christian-majority country, has suffered much over the past 140 years. Under the despotic rule of King Leopold II of Belgium (1885-1908) the people of this land were treated brutally. Violence has continued since the country gained independence in 1960. Today cobalt mining, driven by the world’s desire for lithium batteries to power mobile phones and electric cars, is the scourge of the DRC. Child labour is common, the mines hazardous, and workers often mistreated. Pray for the success of efforts to better regulate mining, that the poverty and misery of our brothers and sisters will be alleviated, and that peace will come to this troubled nation.

SUNDAY 8 Father God, we pray for Your children across Africa. Many suffer persecution, poverty and hunger. These problems appear set to increase as the population of Africa grows, with predictions that from 1.2 billion today the continent will be home to 2.5 billion people by 2050. Yet simultaneously the Church here is growing, and if this continues nearly half of all Christians on earth will live in Africa. Thank You in the Name of Your Son that His Kingdom is increasing, and for the hope that “a people not yet born will praise the LORD”. (Psalm 102:18, NLT)

MONDAY 9 A report published in March 2022 highlighted continuing human rights abuses in Eritrea. Investigators said that since 1991 thousands of Eritreans have been arbitrarily imprisoned, often subjected to degrading conditions, forced labour, and torture. Some have died, while the whereabouts of others is unknown. Many of those imprisoned are Christians, who are regarded by Eritrea's communist government with suspicion and hostility. Church leaders are often singled out for beatings, extra punishments or extended prison sentences. It is estimated that there are 160 Christians imprisoned in Eritrea, but the exact figure is unknown. Pray that the government of Eritrea will stop persecuting believers.

TUESDAY 10 The province of Tizi Ouzou has the highest concentration of Christians in Algeria. On 2 February the provincial governor began legal proceedings against leaders of a church in Ait Atteli with a view to closing it down. He cited a 2006 ordinance that stipulates permission must be obtained before a building is used for non-Muslim worship. Pray that the church leaders will be wise in dealing with the court case. Ask that the church will avoid closure and that the government will begin to grant licences allowing Christians in Algeria to worship legally.

WEDNESDAY 11 Egyptian Christian Abanoub, 19, recalls as “a memorable event” receiving the gift of a personal Bible at the age of 12. He uses it regularly for guidance and comfort. Pray that every one of the 4,791 young Egyptian Christians, aged 12 and 13, who have recently received the gift of

a Bible, funded by Barnabas, will also cherish the Word of God, and use the Scriptures throughout their lives as a lamp to their feet and a light to their path (Psalm 119:105).

THURSDAY 12 On 9 February Judge Boulos Fahmy Eskandar, a Christian, was sworn in as President of Egypt's Supreme Constitutional Court. It is the first time that a Christian has been appointed to this position, which makes Boulos effectively Egypt's most senior judge. The appointment of a Christian to such a high position of authority is rare in a Muslim-majority country, and demonstrates the courage of Egyptian President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi's support for religious equality. Pray for Judge Boulos, that the Lord will grant him wisdom and make him a blessing to the people of Egypt. Give thanks for the improving situation of Egyptian Christians.



Judge Boulos Fahmy Eskandar is the first Christian to be appointed President of the Egyptian Supreme Constitutional Court [Image credit: Ahram Online]

FRIDAY 13 “I am very sad,” wrote a Jordanian church leader to Barnabas, describing the situation in his country. Life in Jordan (which includes the Biblical region of Gilead) is becoming

very hard, with the result that many people are emigrating, especially young Christian families. “My heart bleeds for them leaving,” wrote the church leader, “and I fear that Christianity may die in her birthplace [the Middle East].” Only about 130,000 Christians remain in Jordan. On top of this, two pastors recently died of Covid. Pray that this crushed and mourning Christian community may find balm and healing in their beloved Lord (Jeremiah 8:21-22).

SATURDAY 14 Continue to pray for Syria, especially our fellow Christians there. One wrote from Aleppo in February describing the terrible new poverty, which he said was even worse than the pandemic. “The Syrian economy is suffering major collapse, high inflation, the depreciation of the local Syrian pound, and uncontrollable high prices for food, transportation, medicine, fuel, gas and clothing.” The churches are struggling to provide even a little help to their congregations “in this bleeding and financially exhausted country”. The following month we were told of an important city on the Turkish border getting electricity for only 30 minutes in every 24 hours. Prayer was requested that the crops in that region of Syria could be gathered in safely this year, and not set on fire by Turkish armed forces just before harvest-time.

SUNDAY 15 Almighty God, our Father, we cry out for Christian brothers and sisters facing isolation and extreme loneliness for the Gospel's sake. We pray for those suffering in prison, away from loved ones, those rejected from their families and socially excluded because of their faith in You, even forced to leave their homeland. Please cause them to sense You drawing alongside them to

counsel, to comfort and to chart the course of their lives. While they may feel insignificant and unknown, may they be assured that they are known by You and encouraged that You have a plan for their lives. We ask this in the precious Name of Jesus.
(2 Corinthians 6: 4-10)

MONDAY 16 Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman is overseeing reforms in this highly conservative Islamic kingdom. Known as Vision 2030, the Saudi programme includes a reduction in the powers of the religious police and an expansion in women's rights, alongside an unofficial softening of the ban on marking Christmas and other holidays celebrated in the West. Saudi Arabia remains a strictly Islamic country. There are over a million expatriate Christians, who are barred from practising their faith openly, and an unknown number of Saudi converts who are at great risk. Pray that these reforms will continue, and that Christians of all backgrounds will be accepted.

TUESDAY 17 More than 120 homes, shops, factories and plots of land stolen in Iraq from Christians and Sabeans, another indigenous religious minority, were restored and given back to their rightful owners in February. The ownership review was conducted by the Committee for Restitution of Christian and Sabean Property, set up in early 2021 by Muslim cleric Muqtada al-Sadr, whose Sadrist Movement holds the majority in Iraq's parliament. Give thanks to the LORD of justice and compassion for answering the cries of His people (Isaiah 30:18-19). Pray that this initiative will continue and that Christians return to their lands and properties.

WEDNESDAY 18 Thanksgiving for the acquittal of eight Christian converts in Dezful, Iran on charges of “propaganda activities” was tempered by additional sanctions against them. Esmaeil Narimanpour, Mohammad Ali Torabi Shangari, Masood Nabi, Alireza Varak-Shah, Hojat Lotfi Khalaf Juy, Mohammad Kayidgap, Mohsen Saadati Zadeh and Alireza Roshanaei Zadeh were all found not guilty in November 2021. However, in January 2022 they were all summoned, along with other Christians, to attend ten classes with an Islamic cleric so that they could be guided “back onto the right path”, i.e. Islam. Pray that Iranian Christians forced to undertake such classes will stand firm in their faith.

THURSDAY 19 Naser Navard Goltapeh, a 60-year-old Iranian Christian convert, has served more than four years of a prison sentence for “acting against national security with the intention to overthrow the regime”. He has always contested the charges, which concern running a house church. The Supreme Court finally agreed to review his case in January 2022 but has now ruled



Naser Navard Goltapeh has been imprisoned for more than four years for acting “against national security”, charges which he denies [Image credit: Article 18]

that there are no grounds for a retrial, without giving any explanation. Pray

that the Lord will strengthen Naser, reminding him that He works all things together for the good of those who love Him. Intercede for other imprisoned and exiled Iranian Christians to draw on God’s grace and truth amid intimidation and false accusations.

FRIDAY 20 On 24 January a group of Iranian Christians previously imprisoned for their faith released a statement protesting against the denial of the right to education to Farsi-speaking Christians in Iran. The signatories included Mary Mohammadi, expelled from university, without explanation, on the eve of her exams in December 2019. Farsi-speaking Christian children who refuse to take Islamic Studies classes have been barred from school. Unlike the historic Armenian- and Assyrian-speaking Christian communities, Farsi-speaking Christians are converts from Islam. As apostates they are liable to punishment according to Islamic law. Ask the Lord to open doors for Christians of all backgrounds to have full access to education in Iran and that the authorities see them as valued contributors to society.

SATURDAY 21 Only the Lord knows how many Christians remain in Afghanistan. Believers there are at risk of being killed as apostates from Islam. They must hide their faith from the Taliban government, their neighbours, and usually from their family and friends. Many keep moving from place to place to avoid detection. As well as suffering for their faith, Afghan Christians share in the wider suffering of Afghanistan – poverty, hunger and malnutrition. Ask that the Lord will protect, strengthen and sustain His

people in Afghanistan, send the food they so desperately need, and provide a safe haven for those who have been forced to leave their homes.

SUNDAY 22 Lord Jesus, we thank You for the promise that those who give up everything to follow You will receive blessings in this life and, in the age to come, eternal life. We pray for Christians in cultures where family and nationhood ties are so strong that leaving the majority religion to follow Christ is seen as treachery. Please enable our brothers and sisters to remain true to their calling and to be filled with the sure conviction that they are forever part of the worldwide family of God and His holy nation. We ask this in Your Name and for Your glory.
(Mark 10:29-30; 1 Peter 2:9-10)

MONDAY 23 Many Christians in Pakistan are consigned to poorly paid, dirty jobs such as sanitation work (e.g. cleaning sewers) and street sweeping. The National Commission for Human Rights (NCHR) initiated a campaign in Islamabad on 25 January criticising advertisements for sanitation workers and other low-paid, menial work that stipulate applicants must be non-Muslim. Give thanks for NCHR's initiative and pray that adverts requiring sanitary workers to be members of religious minorities will be outlawed. Ask that Christians will no longer be viewed as unclean, fit only for dirty and dangerous jobs, but as equal and valued members of Pakistani society. Pray also for greater employment opportunities for our brothers and sisters and better conditions for all sanitary workers.

TUESDAY 24 Pakistani Christian Pervez Masih was involved in an altercation with a group of Muslims in February

in the games store he ran in Lahore, which appeared to have been settled after intervention by local Christians. The following day, however, a mob of between 150 to 200 Muslims went to the store armed with guns, clubs and iron bars. Pervez was hit on the head with a brick and died. Police later registered a case of murder against the members of the mob. Only a day before Pervez was killed, Prime Minister Imran Khan had said his government has "zero tolerance" for anyone taking the law into their own hands. Ask the Lord to wipe the tears from the eyes of Pervez's mother and sisters and pray that their needs will be met (Revelation 21:4). Give thanks for the words of Prime Minister Khan and pray that they will be put into practice.

WEDNESDAY 25 In February Pakistan's Council of Islamic Ideology declared that violence against those accused of "blasphemy" is "contrary to Islamic principles". The statement came in response to two high-profile cases of mob violence, in which two "blasphemy" suspects – one Buddhist, the other Muslim – were killed. The council also recommended a campaign using texts from the Quran and other Islamic sources to show that "such brutal torture by a violent mob is neither logical nor in line with the injunctions of the religion". Pray that these efforts will be successful, and that accusations of "blasphemy" will no longer be a means of inciting violence towards Christians or any others in Pakistan.

THURSDAY 26 Suffering Christians around the world are strengthened and encouraged in the knowledge that the risen Lord Jesus Christ has ascended to

His Father, in victory over sin, death, hell and all the forces of darkness. The Son of God is even now, in the words of the Apostles' Creed, "seated at the right hand of the Father". Our Lord is enthroned in power and authority, He intercedes for all His people (Hebrews 7:25), and He will soon return (Acts 1:11; Revelation 22:20). Pray that this knowledge will comfort our hearts, and those of our Christian family in every land.

FRIDAY 27 Priya Rajan, 28, made history on 4 March when sworn in as mayor of Chennai, formerly Madras, India's fourth largest city. She became the city's youngest ever mayor and the first Dalit Christian woman to hold this office. Scheduled Castes, including Dalits, are viewed as having the lowest status within the Hindu caste system and their representation in such high positions is rare.



Priya Rajan being sworn in as Chennai's youngest mayor on 4 March [Image credit: Asia News International]

Praise the Lord for Priya's election and ask Him to fill her abundantly with wisdom as she addresses her new responsibilities. Pray that she will know His Divine guidance in serving the people of Chennai and inspire India's Christian population, 70% of which is estimated to be from a Scheduled Caste background.

SATURDAY 28 In an open letter to Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Christian politician Margaret Alva called on his government to do more to protect Christians and other religious minorities from extremist groups. A former governor of several Indian states, Ms Alva argued that Modi's silence was taken as "tacit approval and encouragement" by extremist elements within Indian society. She highlighted anti-conversion legislation as an infringement of personal liberties and a violation of the Indian Constitution. Pray that Margaret Alva's voice will be heeded and that the government will take steps to protect Christians and other minorities.

SUNDAY 29 Loving Father, we thank You for the verdict of a judge in Tamil Nadu, India, who gave permission for the construction of a church building despite local opposition. We praise You that through this decision You have provided for Your people and we ask that the building will be a blessing to the whole community. May those who worship in this church, and Your people around the world – including ourselves – pray and praise You with our whole hearts, and grow in knowledge and love of the Lord. We ask this in the Name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

MONDAY 30 On 22 March the state government of Haryana, India, became the latest to pass an anti-conversion bill to "prevent religious conversions through force, undue influence or allurement". Such legislation can be easily misused against Christians engaged in valid evangelism. A church leader protested against the bill saying, "Our constitution provides us the freedom to choose any religion

according to our free will. It is our fundamental right.” Haryana joins nine other Indian states with anti-conversion laws. Pray that Christians will not be falsely accused of seeking converts through underhand means, and that India’s constitutional commitment to freedom of religion will be upheld.

TUESDAY 31 The Gospel was brought by Western missionaries to the north-east Indian state of Arunachal Pradesh in 1834, but it was not until 1960 that the seed sown really began to bear fruit. Anti-Christian persecution has occurred, the worst period being 1970-1990. This was also the period of fastest Church growth, when Christians increased from 0.6% to 30%. They are now estimated at 40-45% making Christianity the predominant faith. But there is still persecution from Buddhists, who demolished a church hall not long ago and warned Christians not to meet for worship or any other purpose. Believers, however, are continuing to meet quietly and by night, and evangelists are continuing to share the Good News. Praise God for what He is doing and pray for the protection of all His people in Arunachal Pradesh.

JUNE

WEDNESDAY 1 Soldiers were deployed to petrol stations in Sri Lanka in March as protests broke out among motorists queuing for scarce fuel. The South Asian island nation is grappling with its worst economic crisis in almost 70 years, stoked in part by the devastation the pandemic caused to its tourism sector. There are rolling electricity blackouts and essential goods such as food and

cooking gas are in short supply. Another year of poor harvests is expected because of a shortage of fertiliser. School tests have been cancelled for lack of paper and ink. Ask the Father of Compassion to comfort the people of Sri Lanka, especially the small Christian minority (2 Corinthians 1: 3-4) and pray that their needs are met.

THURSDAY 2 After seven years of holding church services at his home, a Sri Lankan pastor has been ordered by local authorities to stop. Officials informed him in a letter that express permission is required for a building to be used as a place of worship (though this is not correct) and claimed that there had been objections from the office overseeing Buddhist affairs. The pastor said he has sought permission several times over the years but has never received a response from the authorities. Ask the Lord to give wisdom to pastors on how they may continue to meet for worship. Pray that churches will not be forced to close and that Christians will be able to live out their faith in peace.

FRIDAY 3 On 6 March a mob of around 600 people, including as many as 60 Buddhist monks, forced their way into the grounds of a church in Sri Lanka’s Southern Province. They threatened to kill the pastor unless he shut the church immediately. Two of the mob attacked a worshipper, who needed hospital treatment. Police advised that there was no legal basis to shut the church. The police agreed with the pastor that four Buddhist monks be allowed to enter the church building and question the pastor about his activities. Before the mob dispersed the four monks

told them that that the church was illegitimate. Pray that no further action will be taken against the church, and that the Christians there can continue to worship in safety.

SATURDAY 4 Bangladesh has witnessed a rise in Islamist extremism in recent years. Since October 2020 the country has been convulsed three times with violence led by the extremist group Hefazat-e-Islam. Hefazat seeks to implement a manifesto that includes the death sentence for those who insult Islam, compulsory Islamic education for children, and outlawing media content deemed anti-Islamic. Ask that the Lord restrain the hand of the Islamists, causing them to repent and turn to Him for forgiveness. Pray for the safety of Bangladesh's small Christian community.

SUNDAY 5 **Lord God and Heavenly Father, we praise You for the gift of the Holy Spirit. We thank You for His work of bringing individuals to faith, and of comforting, sustaining and teaching each one of Your saints. We ask that suffering Christians around the world will be encouraged in the knowledge "that you yourselves are God's temple and that God's Spirit lives among you". Whatever our circumstances, we pray that the Spirit would increase our joy in You, because we ask it in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ.**
(John 14:26; 1 Corinthians 3:16)

MONDAY 6 Lift up our brothers and sisters in the Philippines as they struggle to rebuild from the devastation wrought by Typhoon Rai. At least eight million people were affected and 1.4 million homes damaged or destroyed in December 2021. Some of these were

makeshift houses built after Typhoon Haiyan, one of the most powerful tropical cyclones ever recorded, struck the region in 2013. Field crops and fishing boats were also destroyed, depriving people of their livelihoods. Barnabas responded to church leaders' urgent calls for help by sending food as well as building materials and tools to assist in repairs. Pray that the rebuilt homes will be robust enough to withstand even the strongest tropical storm, and that livelihoods will soon be restored. May the joy of the LORD be their strength in these days of trial (Nehemiah 8: 10).

TUESDAY 7 Civilians, including children, are being killed in Christian-majority areas of Myanmar as the Tatmadaw (Myanmar military) attacks mainly Christian ethnic minorities. In January alone a seven-year-old girl, her 18-year-old sister and a man in his 50s were killed during the bombing of a camp for internally displaced persons in Kayah State; the bodies of ten civilians arrested by Tatmadaw troops, including that of a 13-year-old boy, were discovered in Chin State; and six bodies, exhibiting signs of torture, were found dumped in a sewage pit in Kayah. Pray that the Lord will comfort the bereaved and intervene to put an end to acts of violence carried out on His people.

WEDNESDAY 8 More than ten thousand civilians, many of them Christians, who are sheltering from military attack in the Myanmar jungle on the border between Kayah and Shan states, are at risk of starvation because army roadblocks are preventing food from reaching them. Beseech the Lord to

intervene and enable food to reach these desperate people, who fled their homes with little except the clothes on their backs. Ask that they will have courage and perseverance knowing that God will meet their needs according to the riches of His glory (Philippians 4:19). Pray that supplies of food and practical aid funded by Barnabas will continue to get through to Christians in even the least accessible areas.

THURSDAY 9 “Pah”, 33, and her four children are one of many persecuted Christian families in Myanmar for whom Barnabas has provided food and other basics. Pah’s husband was attacked by the Myanmar military when they invaded their village, and his burned body was found the following day. The family has since been forced to move from place to place. “I just comfort myself with the words of God,” says Pah, “and I’m strongly believing that God will continue to protect me and my children.” Give thanks for the many families who have been helped and ask that the lives of hundreds of Christians will be preserved as they are compelled to leave their homes. Pray that Pah and others similarly bereft will experience the Lord’s sovereign guidance as they seek to rebuild their lives.

FRIDAY 10 “Generosity extended during such times of crisis and recovery is a testament of hope and God’s unfailing love for His people – through His people.” These were the words of thanks from our church partner for the generous gifts of Barnabas supporters to our brothers and sisters in Tonga after the island nation suffered three devastating natural disasters. In two weeks in January an underground

volcano erupted, covering a wide area in ash, and triggered a tsunami followed by an earthquake. Homes were destroyed or damaged while the ash cloud polluted water bodies and ruined crops. Praise the Lord for the generosity of Barnabas supporters in responding to the crisis. Pray that the Lord, who “established the mountains by His strength”, will strengthen His people in Tonga as they rebuild (Psalm 65:6).

SATURDAY 11 Baroness Caroline Cox, a patron of Barnabas, has raised concerns about the threat to Armenian churches and Christian sites in Nagorno-Karabakh. Azerbaijan, which controls parts of Nagorno-Karabakh, is removing visible indications of Armenian Christianity. The government of Muslim-majority Azerbaijan claims falsely that these are forgeries, and that the area does not have an Armenian Christian heritage. Pray for our brothers and sisters in Nagorno-Karabakh and in Armenia itself, who have suffered so much for so long, that the Lord will keep church buildings safe from cultural vandalism and believers themselves from physical violence.

SUNDAY 12 **Father God, we thank You that we may draw near to You in prayer and in worship, clothed in the righteousness of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ and guided by the Holy Spirit who causes us to be born again. Blessed Trinity, we praise You for Your grace and mercy. Your Word proclaims You to be three times holy – yet You have made a way by which sinners can be forgiven. May fellowship with Father, Son and Holy Spirit be a source of strength to Your suffering people around the world, for we ask in the precious Name of Christ. (Isaiah 6:3; Revelation 4:8)**

MONDAY 13 Barnabas has created The Shepherd's Academy (TSA) to provide theological education to grassroots church ministers across the Global South who would otherwise be without such training. By March 2022 TSA already had more than 100 students from eight different countries. It is hoped that this will rise to 500 in 2023, and that those who complete their training will in turn train others. Pray for the success of this ministry, and that the Word will be entrusted to "reliable people who will also be qualified to teach others" (2 Timothy 2:2).



Believers in Moldova providing food for the refugees from Ukraine

TUESDAY 14 On 24 February the conflict in Ukraine began. At the time of writing around 3.5 million people have fled from Ukraine, including many Christians. These have sought refuge in neighbouring countries, where churches are among those to offer help and practical support. Meanwhile those who remain in Ukraine are desperately short of food, drinking water and other necessities. Thank the Lord that we have been able to send both funds and lorries/containers full of aid from the US and the UK to these neighbouring countries and into Ukraine itself. Pray for the restoration of peace and security in this troubled region.

WEDNESDAY 15 The conflict in Ukraine is already having a knock-on effect on food supply around the world, especially in the poorer regions that have long suffered from food insecurity and famine. Russia exports more wheat than any other country in the world, while Ukraine is also one of the world's largest exporters. The two countries are also leading exporters of other grains, seeds and vegetable oils, as well as much-needed fertilisers. Supplies of bread and other food are diminished in many African, Asian and Middle Eastern countries. Food prices are rising beyond the means of the poorest, among them many thousands of our brothers and sisters. Pray that the Lord, who provides even for the birds (Job 38:41; Matthew 6:26), will provide for these needy people.

THURSDAY 16 Lift up our brothers and sisters in Central Asia who are desperately poor and hungry. It is especially difficult in this Muslim-majority part of the world for converts from Islam who often face hostility and threats to their lives. The ongoing pandemic makes it difficult to find employment. In one region of Uzbekistan the river has dried up causing crops to fail – this means less food, and less work as seasonal harvesting jobs were not available. In Turkmenistan the price of bread in state-owned shops has more than doubled. In other areas families have to queue outside stores from 3am to buy bread. Through local churches, Barnabas is helping hundreds of the poorest Christians, including the elderly and disabled. Pray that the spiritual and physical needs of believers are met and they grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ (2 Peter 3:18).

FRIDAY 17 After many years of living in harmony with their Muslim neighbours, Christians in a north-eastern city of Uzbekistan are at risk of attack. In recent months an Islamic cleric has been calling for a ban on Christianity and urging Muslims to rise up against Christians in areas where churches are growing. Radicalised Muslims have begun going from house to house in the city to find Christian converts in an attempt to stop them from going to church. In response, police are stepping up patrols near the church and are urging its leaders to install an emergency call button and video surveillance cameras. Cry out to the Lord to strengthen and protect Christians (2 Thessalonians 3:3-5). Give thanks for the police response to the threat of attacks. Pray that the words of moderate Muslims will drown out the words of the militants and that harmony will be restored between Christians and Muslims in the city and elsewhere.

SATURDAY 18 Give thanks for the completion of a new church building in Uzbekistan, which provides one of country's few registered churches with spacious and modern worship facilities. These are large enough to share with other local congregations, so they no longer have to meet illegally in unregistered premises. Praise the Lord that the building of the church has changed attitudes of Muslims towards Christians so that they are less suspicious of the small but growing community of believers. Local officials are now even urging the church to hold an official opening ceremony. Give thanks that the new church is enabling more of our brothers and sisters to

worship without fear of police raids or arrest. Rejoice that the building project has drawn more people to the Lord's Word and pray that through it they will come to love Him as we do (John 12:32).

SUNDAY 19 Our God and our Father, we thank You that You have knit together for Yourself a people "from every nation, tribe, people and language". It is a testimony to Your grace and goodness that salvation has been extended to a countless multitude of people from every part of the world, and we "are all one in Christ Jesus". Please encourage us in love, in prayer and in giving for our brothers and sisters near and far, especially those who suffer for our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, in whose Name we pray. (Revelation 7:9; Galatians 3:28)

MONDAY 20 Globally there are estimated to be more than 82 million refugees and internally displaced persons, among whom are many Christians. In the early weeks of the conflict in Ukraine at least 3.5 million people sought sanctuary in neighbouring countries. Christians have been forced to flee their homes by Islamist attacks in Nigeria, the Taliban takeover in Afghanistan, oppression by the Myanmar military government, and land disputes in various countries where they are driven out by followers of the majority religion. Cry out to the Lord on this World Refugee Day that His children will experience God's peace amid the trauma of displacement. Pray that they will be encouraged with the thought that they have citizenship in heaven (Philippians 3:20).

TUESDAY 21 The tide is gradually turning against Christians in China, despite the relative freedom to worship and to practise their faith that has characterised

the period from the 1990s to the mid-2010s. Unofficial churches (sometimes called house churches) are now less likely to be tolerated, while churches of the Three-Self Patriotic Movement – China’s officially recognised Protestant church – are coming under increasing pressure to align their teachings with the ideology of the Chinese Communist Party and the thoughts of President Xi Jinping. Pray for China’s Christians, that the Lord will grant them the wisdom to adapt to changing circumstances, and continue their brave stand for the Truth that never changes.

WEDNESDAY 22 North Korea’s grim reputation as leading persecutor of Christians shows no sign of abating. Christians have been executed for the “crime” of owning a Bible and many parents even have to keep their faith secret from their children for fear of being reported to teachers at school. Pray that believers in North Korea will experience God’s protection as they are confronted with danger daily. Ask the Lord to fill their hearts with hope, especially those enduring the harsh realities of the labour camps and prisons.

THURSDAY 23 Christian widows face a harsh struggle when they lose a husband’s support. In many cultures they are doubly vulnerable because of their faith and gender, and often pressurised to convert to the majority religion on the loss of their partner. On this International Widows’ Day, give thanks for the many Barnabas-funded initiatives – among them sustaining desperately poor Pakistani widows with food aid, giving practical support to women who have lost their husbands

through Islamist extremist violence in Nigeria, and providing skills training programmes for Senegalese widows to set up small businesses. Pray that Christian widows throughout the world will receive the support they need to thrive as faithful, fulfilled women of God.

FRIDAY 24 Eighteen people, including a baby, were killed when Fulani militants attacked the predominantly Christian Irigwe village of Ancha in Plateau State, Nigeria in the early hours of 12 January. Following this eleven people were killed and more than 30 houses razed when gunmen raided Zaman Dabo village in the Atyap Chiefdom in neighbouring Christian-majority southern Kaduna State on Sunday 30 January. Seek the Lord for protection for the Irigwe and Atyap peoples, and ask that their faith will sustain them in dark days as they grieve for loved ones lost in the violence.

SATURDAY 25 The kidnapping of Christians is becoming ever more commonplace as violence rises in the Middle Belt and North of Nigeria. In early March an armed gang stormed a church in Kaduna State and shot dead at least one security guard before kidnapping the church minister Joseph Aketch, as well as a mother and her two children. Just a month earlier another minister, Joseph Danjuma Shekari, was abducted in the same state by a gang who killed his cook, Sati Musa. Thankfully, the minister was freed safely almost 24 hours later. Praise God for the release of Mr Shekari and ask that the mother, her two children and Mr Aketch will soon be freed unharmed. Pray for the families of those killed in the attacks. Pray for an end to the kidnappings and ask that Christians

will be strong and take heart as they continue to hope in the LORD (Psalm 31:24).

SUNDAY 26 Lord God and Heavenly Father, as many of us meet to together to worship You, we think of those of our brothers and sisters around the world who are not able to do this. We lift up to You all those in prison, all those in hiding, all those who have no fellowship with other believers because there are so few Christians in their land. We pray that You will be especially close to all such, that they may not miss out on the gladness of attending “the house of the Lord”, for we ask in the Name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. (Psalm 122:1)

MONDAY 27 “It was when I started reading the Bible that I really understood what Jesus did for me and what it is to be a Christian.” These are the words of Waly, a Senegalese Christian, one of 267 who completed a 14-month programme of adult literacy and numeracy classes funded by Barnabas. Along with other practical benefits, the Christians have been spiritually invigorated by being able to read God’s Word for themselves. Praise the Lord for the transforming power of His Word.

TUESDAY 28 “Cyclone Batsirai has gone, leaving Madagascar with disaster,” wrote a church leader to Barnabas. The tropical storm wreaked havoc on the desperately poor island in February 2020, killing at least 111 people, destroying more than 6,000 homes and wrecking its already underdeveloped infrastructure. At least 81 church buildings, six schools and 13 pastors’ homes were damaged or destroyed. The terrible irony is that Madagascar has suffered repeated droughts in recent

years, causing severe hunger and deaths from starvation as crops failed. Now the rain has destroyed the growing rice. Pray for our suffering Church family in Madagascar. Ask that they will be joyful in hope, patient in affliction and faithful in prayer (Romans 12:12).

WEDNESDAY 29 Barnabas’ food.gives initiative is making a major difference to the lives of needy Christians in Madagascar. Generous donations have enabled the purchase and transportation of nutritious ePap porridge from South Africa, resulting in significant physical benefits for Christians of all ages. We are also delivering dry food from Australia, Canada, New Zealand, South Africa, the US and the UK to Ukraine and neighbouring countries, Eswatani, Jordan, Mozambique, Namibia, Pakistan, Tonga and Zimbabwe. Pray for the continued progress of our ongoing food.gives programme and that further opportunities will open up for successful distribution of dry food around the world.

THURSDAY 30 Please continue to remember in your prayers Aasia Bibi and her family, now in a safe country after she spent many years on death row in Pakistan, falsely accused of “blasphemy”. Earlier this year they were all suffering from Covid simultaneously but are now recovered. Every day Aasia thanks God for her freedom, but adds one prayer request: a house of her own. After enduring so much time with her life in the balance, she longs for the security of a permanent family home. Barnabas has sent some financial help towards the costs. Pray that Jehovah Jireh will provide.

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