



barnabasprayer

Barnabas Aid – bringing hope to suffering Christians

To help you
pray for suffering
Christians

**November/
December 2022**

barnabasaid.org

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

November

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

WEDNESDAY 2 Around 33 million people were affected when unprecedented flooding in August and

September left large areas of Pakistan under water. At the time of writing the danger was from water-borne diseases such as diarrhoea, malaria and gastroenteritis that had claimed hundreds of lives in Sindh, the worst-hit province. Many of our brothers and sisters lost their homes, livelihoods, crops and animals in the flood waters. Barnabas responded to urgent calls for help by sending food, drinking water, medicines and plastic sheeting to create temporary shelters. Pray that Christians will have courage and perseverance knowing that God will meet their needs according to the riches of His glory (Philippians 4:19).

THURSDAY 3 “With smiling faces they are praising God and giving thanks in their trials and sufferings,” reported Barnabas Aid’s Pakistan Coordinator, describing Christians in Sindh province, one of the areas worst affected by devastating flooding in Pakistan in August and September. He was helping our project partners to distribute Barnabas-funded food, clean water and other practical aid to remote and isolated Christian communities where no other aid had reached. Christian farmer “Chand” said he felt very blessed by God who had provided “for His people through His people”. Pray that the joy of the LORD will continue to be their strength in these days of trial (Nehemiah 8:10).

FRIDAY 4 Praise God that the Supreme Court of Pakistan has granted bail to three Christians accused of “blasphemy”. Salamat Mansha Masih had been charged after distributing Christian literature, while Patras Masih and Raja Waris were accused of posting offensive

material online. Give thanks that the Supreme Court recognised the lack of evidence against our three brothers. Pray that Salamat, Patras and Raja will all be acquitted or the cases against them dropped, and for their protection from attack by zealous Muslims.

SATURDAY 5 Give thanks for a highly significant and welcome legal opinion published by the Supreme Court of Pakistan, which affirmed that the preaching of Christianity “is not a crime, nor can it be made into one”. The court’s judgment came as it granted bail to Salamat Mansha Masih, who is accused of “blasphemy” (see Friday 4 November). The nine-page opinion also raises issues such as false and malicious “blasphemy” allegations, the lack of credible evidence in many “blasphemy” cases, and the mob violence that often faces the accused. Pray that the court’s opinion will be heeded by the police, lower courts and Muslim-majority society.

SUNDAY 6 Lord God and Heavenly Father, we thank You that Your Word forewarns us of persecution, opposition and suffering. Please equip us by Your Holy Spirit to stand firm in our Christian faith despite earthly suffering, reminding us that though such suffering is real and painful it is but for a moment, and not to be compared with the eternal glory that awaits all those who stand firm. May Your Word keep us from both false hope and faithless despair, for we ask in the Name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. (2 Corinthians 4:17; Matthew 24:13)

MONDAY 7 “I am so grateful for my God who provided everything for me here – I can worship God, I can pray, I can be with my God.” These are the words of Samim, a first-generation Afghan

Christian convert who fled his homeland and the threat of death at the hands of the Taliban. He is among the first group of Afghan Christians whom Barnabas has helped to start new lives in safety in Brazil. Give thanks for the steadfast faith of these converts from Islam, and ask God to help us to learn from their example of courage and perseverance. Praise God for churches in Brazil who have welcomed the refugees as their brothers and sisters (Matthew 25:40).



Samim was among the first group of Afghan refugees re-settled by Barnabas Aid in Brazil

TUESDAY 8 The number of Christians still living in Afghanistan is known only to the Lord. As converts from Islam or children of converts, they face the death penalty for apostasy if discovered. Being in hiding, they cannot work. The growing humanitarian crisis affecting all Afghan people has added to the suffering of our brothers and sisters. Pray for food and other essential supplies to reach Christians, and that they will also be provided with spiritual food and encouragement. Ask the Lord to enable His people to find safe havens, whether within Afghanistan or abroad, where they will be protected from the danger of violence and death for their faith.

WEDNESDAY 9 Muslim-background Christians have often been viewed with suspicion and distrust in Muslim-majority Kazakhstan, but now this hostility is increasingly directed against all Christians. This situation has arisen in part because of a growing sense of Kazakh nationalism that is linked to Islamic identity. Around 25% of Kazakhstan's population are Christians. Pray that our brothers and sisters, whether they are from a Muslim background or a Christian background, will stand should they face attacks or discrimination from their non-Christian neighbours.

THURSDAY 10 Fourteen Kyrgyzstan churches were encouraged when 134 of the poorest families from their congregations received three months' food from Barnabas. "They have seen the real work of God in caring for their children through Barnabas," a pastor told us. All of the aid recipients are facing hardship – some because they have disabled children, others are widowed, elderly or unable to work because of health issues. Most are converts from Islam who receive no help from their relatives because of their faith in Jesus. Pray that though hard pressed on every side, these Christian convert families will not be crushed, though perplexed they will not despair, though persecuted they will never feel abandoned (2 Corinthians 4:8-9).

FRIDAY 11 Lebanon's catastrophic economic situation is reckoned to be even worse than in war-ravaged Syria. Yet Dima, a young Syrian Christian widow, came to Lebanon with her children in 2021, when Lebanon was mired in dreadful calamities. She

depends on the church for practical support, as do many Lebanese Christians. In Lebanon there are long queues to buy bread, and cooking oil is virtually unobtainable. Fuel is so costly that lengthy cooking is out of the question for many. People have died because they could no longer afford the medication they depended on. Pray that our Lebanese and Syrian brothers and sisters will receive vital aid and support in rebuilding their lives.

SATURDAY 12 The presidential election for the self-declared Republic of Somaliland will be held tomorrow, Sunday 13 November. Incumbent President Musa Bihi Abdi of Kulmiye, first elected in 2017, is eligible to seek a second five-year term in office. Islam is the official religion of Somaliland. Its constitution prohibits conversion from Islam to another religion, stipulates that its laws "shall not be contrary to Islamic sharia" and bans the propagation of any religion except Islam. The few Christians are all converts from Islam or children of converts. Pray that the elections will be conducted peacefully and that whoever is elected to office will govern fairly for all the people of Somaliland. Ask that any laws introduced will not be determined by extreme interpretations of sharia and will allow Christians to practise their faith in peace.

SUNDAY 13 **Father God, we lift up before You our brothers and sisters around the world who are imprisoned for their faith in Your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. We think of those who have been locked away in Iranian prisons, who have been jailed for alleged "blasphemy" in Pakistan, or are being held in the detention centres and concentration camps of China and North Korea. Please**

draw near to each one by Your Holy Spirit, reminding Your children that though they have lost their earthly freedom, perhaps permanently, they have a profound and eternal freedom in Christ, in whose Name we pray, that can never be taken away. (Luke 4:18; Galatians 5:1; John 10:29)

MONDAY 14 Three Iranian Christians who were convicted of involvement in “house church” activities lost their appeals for retrial in August. Iranian-Armenian pastor Anooshavan Avedian, 60, was sentenced to ten years in jail for “propaganda contrary to and disturbing to the holy religion of Islam”. Two members of his house church, Christian converts Miss Maryam Mohammadi and Mr Abbas Soori, both in their mid-40s, were given sentences of two years’ internal exile and banned from travelling abroad, for membership of the church. Pray that Anooshavan, Maryam and Abbas will remain steadfast under the trial of imprisonment, knowing that the crown of life awaits all who love God (James 1:12).

TUESDAY 15 Pastor Joseph Shahbazian and four Christian women from a Muslim background have lost their appeals against jail terms and fines imposed because of their involvement in “house churches” in Iran. Pastor Shahbazian, 58, an Iranian-Armenian, was sentenced to ten years in jail, while converts Mina, 59, and Malihe, 48, were ordered to serve six years. Masoumeh and her daughter Somayeh (also known as Sonya) were issued with fines. Pray that all five Christians’ trust in their Lord will be constant and even grow stronger, despite the rejection of their cases by the appeal court. Ask

that Joseph, Mina and Malihe receive the courage to endure their time in prison, and that their faith will be an inspiration to other prisoners.

WEDNESDAY 16 Christians and other minority groups in north-east Syria are threatened by Turkish plans to conduct new military operations in the region. Turkey has stated that it intends to combat Syrian terrorist groups – but in the past Turkish airstrikes in Syria and Iraqi Kurdistan killed Christians and destroyed homes and farmlands in Christian areas. Pray for the safety of our brothers and sisters in the affected areas, asking that suffering will not be increased. Ask that there will be peace in this troubled region of the world.

THURSDAY 17 The authorities in Northern Cyprus (officially the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus) have turned down a request to hold a church service in the town of Lefkonoiko. Northern Cyprus – around a third of the island – is an unrecognised country that has been governed separately from the Republic of Cyprus since the Turkish invasion of 1974. In 2016 the government barred many churches in the region from holding more than one service each year, citing the difficulty of policing Christians who wished to cross the border to worship. Pray for the Cypriot Church, that our brothers and sisters will not be discouraged, remembering that we worship a High Priest who dwells in a sanctuary not made with human hands (Hebrews 9:24).

FRIDAY 18 In September 2022 heavy fighting took place along the border between Christian-majority Armenia and Muslim-majority Azerbaijan, and

even within Armenia itself. Prior to this, fighting had flared up in the Armenian-populated enclave of Nagorno-Karabakh in Azerbaijan, with Azerbaijan taking over the town of Lachin and some of the surrounding areas. In September 2020 Azerbaijan, with Turkish support, invaded Nagorno-Karabakh, which is part of the historic homeland of the Armenian people and was placed within Azerbaijan by the Soviet Union in 1923. Pray for the safety of our brothers and sisters in Nagorno-Karabakh and in Armenia itself that the LORD will protect and preserve them (Psalm 41:2).

SATURDAY 19 A General Election in Hindu-majority Nepal will take place tomorrow, Sunday 20 November. Whoever comes to power will have to deal with inflation caused by rising food and energy prices and a potential financial crisis. A growing sense of Hindu nationalism may also have an impact on government policy. Christians – who could be as many as 5% of the population – are often among the poorest and most marginalised of Nepali citizens. Pray for wisdom for the new government of Nepal, and ask for the Lord's blessing upon His people.

SUNDAY 20 **Lord God and Heavenly Father, we give thanks that Your Son Jesus Christ is King of kings and Lord of lords, and that He rules and reigns over all. When we look at the troubles and suffering of this world, and especially the persecution of Your people in many lands, it is easy for us to forget that our Saviour is in sovereign control of all things. Please help us to remember and take comfort in this truth, and to give Him the honour and praise due to His royal Name, in which we pray. (Revelation 19:16; Acts 4:24, 28)**

MONDAY 21 Lift up to the Lord our brothers in sisters in North Korea, a country that is routinely ranked as one of the most dangerous places on earth to be a Christian. Children are encouraged from an early age to report on their parents if they see them praying or reading Scriptures. Believers have been executed for simply owning a Bible. Tens of thousands of Christians have been incarcerated in labour camps where they are abused, tortured and worked to death. Pray that Christians in North Korea are filled with hope by His almighty strength, sure in the knowledge that the gates of hell shall not prevail against His Church (Matthew 16:18).

TUESDAY 22 China's Administrative Measures for Internet Religious Information Services require churches and other religious organisations to obtain permission from the authorities to carry out religious activities online. Some official churches, including many in Beijing, have successfully obtained permission, while others have been excluded – out of 150 applicants in the province of Shanxi, only 24 were granted a permit. Unofficial churches, not being recognised by the authorities, cannot apply. Ask the Lord to make His people in China as wise as serpents and as innocent as doves (Matthew 10:16) in responding to increasing restrictions and regulation.

WEDNESDAY 23 Two Christians – 13-year-old Margaret and her father – have been killed by a shell fired by the Myanmar military (Tatmadaw) at a camp for internally displaced persons in Demoso township, Kayah State. Margaret died instantly when

struck on the head by shrapnel from the 120mm shell. Her father succumbed to similar injuries the following day. A local community spokesman said it was “safe to assume that [the Tatmadaw] were targeting the camp”, given the lack of obvious military targets in the area. Pray for Margaret’s family as they come to terms with their loss. Ask for an end to the targeted attacks on Christians and other displaced persons in Myanmar.



This Christian mother from Myanmar was among 3,500 internally displaced people who recently received Barnabas-funded aid

THURSDAY 24 Give thanks for the swift response of the authorities in the Indian state of Punjab to a spate of attacks on churches. In the Punjabi village of Thakarpura, four masked men broke into a church building, taking a security guard hostage while they vandalised church property and set the pastor’s car on fire. At the request of the state’s governor, police have launched a special investigation. While extremists in this Sikh-majority state appear to be stoking hatred against churches owing to the

number of Christian converts from Sikhism, in Thakarpura Sikhs and Christians live peacefully side by side. Pray that peace within the community will be maintained, and ask the Lord to draw near to new converts as they face the possibility of harassment by extremists.

FRIDAY 25 Praise God for signs that India’s Supreme Court is taking seriously the issue of anti-Christian persecution. The court has ordered eight Indian states to submit evidence concerning alleged attacks against Christians, including police reports. The order follows a submission to the court from Christian leaders calling for a directive to end “hate speech” targeted against Christians and attacks on their places of worship. Pray that the verification process will be thorough, fair and a true reflection of the persecution Indian Christians experience. Ask that the findings will cause government to take steps to protect freedom of religion for all its citizens in accordance with the Indian constitution.

SATURDAY 26 Ask the Lord to grant wisdom to church leaders and all Christians in the Indian state of Karnataka, which has now passed a permanent anti-conversion law. The law is more stringent than similar legislation in other Indian states, both in terms of the punishments that can be applied and in its definition of what counts as an illegal attempt to gain converts – believers may find themselves in trouble simply for sharing the Gospel message. Continue to uphold in prayer our brothers and sisters who face such obstacles and challenges. Ask that the Christian community will be kept safe from extremists who wish to do them harm.

SUNDAY 27 Lord God and Heavenly Father, we thank You that at the beginning of this Advent season we may remember with joy the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ, who though He was “rich beyond all splendour, all for love’s sake became poor”. While many are unable to grasp the full significance, we thank You that the eyes of Your people around the world have been opened to see that the baby born in Bethlehem is the King, who “will proclaim peace to the nations” and whose rule “will extend from sea to sea”. In His Name we pray this knowledge will be an encouragement to our suffering brothers and sisters wherever they are. (Zechariah 9:10)

MONDAY 28 Give thanks to our healing Lord Jesus Christ (Matthew 15:30) for the Barnabas-funded Hope Clinic in Pakistan’s Sindh province, which is providing quality health services to poor Christians that they could otherwise not afford. In its first year the qualified Christian medical staff of Hope Clinic helped 6,890 patients, almost double the expected number. At the time of writing, medical team members were travelling flood-affected areas of the province to reach our brothers and sisters in need, as cases of water-borne diseases were rising. Pray for the continued success of this medical ministry that is bringing both physical and spiritual comfort to impoverished Christian communities.

TUESDAY 29 Zeeshan, the son of poor Christian Pakistani brick-kiln workers, used to feel sad when he saw other boys and girls going to school. He was unable to join them because his parents couldn’t afford the fees. Now, thanks to the donations of Barnabas supporters, he has a place at a new Barnabas-funded school, as well as books and stationery. Zeeshan hopes

to study hard and when he is older find a good, well-paid job to help his parents. Pray that Zeeshan, and other Christian children like him, will do well academically and spiritually and be able to escape the cycle of poverty, illiteracy and discrimination that has trapped previous generations.



Zeeshan plans to study hard

WEDNESDAY 30 “This support was a ray of hope for me and my daughter,” said Pakistani Christian widow “Safia”. Women like Safia are triply discriminated against in Muslim-majority Pakistan: because of their gender, because they have lost the protection of their husband, and because they are followers of Christ. A total of 1,208 impoverished Christian families receive a monthly food parcel from Barnabas, which allows them to save a little money to pay for such things as home repairs, schooling for their children – or, in Safia’s case, medicine to treat her cancer, treatment that is also now being funded by your generous donations. Ask that, through these gifts of love, believers will grow in faith, and know the LORD will be with them wherever they go (Joshua 1:9).

December

THURSDAY 1 Pray for family and friends mourning 41 people, including 18 children, killed when fire broke out at a church in Giza city, near Egypt's capital Cairo. Five families lost all their children in the disaster. In one case three five-year-old triplets, Mohrael, Youssef and Philopator, died. At least 45 people were also injured after an electrical fault ignited the blaze during Sunday worship on 14 August. Ask the Lord to comfort the bereaved (Matthew 5:4), in the sure knowledge that in Him there is eternal life (John 3:15). Give thanks for the financial support pledged by Egypt's President al-Sisi for bereaved families and to rebuild the church.

FRIDAY 2 Today is National Day in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), and comes two days after the UAE's Commemoration Day on 30 November. The UAE is a highly conservative Muslim-majority country, where Christian worship is tightly restricted and Christian converts from Islam risk imprisonment for apostasy. Proselytising Muslims or preaching "against Islam" is prohibited by law and carries a prison sentence of up to five years. Most of the Christians in the Arabian Peninsula are resident non-citizens who came to the region as migrant workers, though there are a small number of Muslim-background converts – the exact number is known only to the Lord. Pray that at this time of national celebration there will be a recognition in UAE of the contribution of Christian migrant workers, and a softening of attitudes towards Muslim-background believers.

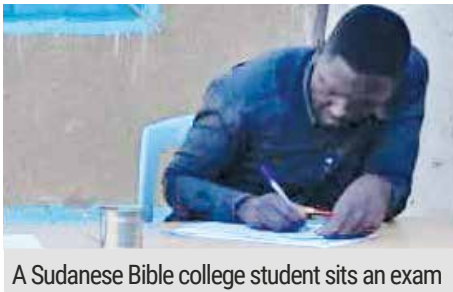
SATURDAY 3 Despite some improvements, the highly conservative Muslim-majority state of Saudi Arabia continues to have one of the world's worst human rights records, with lengthy prison sentences given in recent months to those who are alleged to have criticised the country on social media. Christian migrant workers may face abuse or harassment from their employers, while Saudi Christian converts from Islam could face the death penalty for apostasy (this is not known to have been carried out in recent times, though some converts have been murdered by their own families). Intercede for the people of Saudi Arabia, and especially our brothers and sisters forced either to hide their faith or to face abuse and even death.

SUNDAY 4 **Father God, we pray for those believers around the world who cannot gather for worship this Advent season, or any Lord's Day, because of the persecution they suffer in this world. Some are imprisoned, some have seen their church buildings closed and their congregations dispersed, some live in lands where Christian worship is illegal, and others must hide their faith for fear of reprisals from family and friends. For all such, we pray that, despite their circumstances, "the God of hope" will fill them "with all joy and peace in believing", because we ask in the Name of Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. (Romans 15:13, ESV)**

MONDAY 5 We rejoice that a case for apostasy against four Sudanese Christian converts from Islam has been dismissed by the General Prosecutor in Central Darfur. The four young men had been facing the death penalty if convicted of apostasy for renouncing

Islam. The case was particularly troubling, as the law against apostasy in Sudan had been abolished in 2020. Despite the welcome decision, the men, their families and their church remain under threat, while there are still concerns that the Sudanese government will return to harsh Islamist rule. Give thanks for this decision, and pray for all of our brothers and sisters in Sudan.

TUESDAY 6 Give thanks for the Lord's protection over a Bible college in Sudan, a land where Christians have for many decades been persecuted by the Muslim majority. The country has been in political turmoil since a military coup of October 2021, which threatens to roll back positive changes towards greater religious freedom made by the previous administration. Despite this instability, the Bible college has been able to serve and grow, training new church leaders with campus-based and distance learning courses, as well as holding regular meetings to strengthen serving pastors. Ask that God will guide college leaders with His wisdom to know how to train and spiritually equip students in their ministry for years to come, advancing His kingdom in Sudan.



A Sudanese Bible college student sits an exam

WEDNESDAY 7 In a recent online poster campaign, Islamic State (IS – also known as ISIS, ISIL, Daesh) boasted

of killing 190 Christians and burning down 13 church buildings across Africa in June and July, celebrating what they called a “Harvest of African Christians”. IS have previously called for Muslims to move to Africa as an act of jihad, in order to fulfil their aim of Islamising the entire continent. Pray that the LORD, our refuge, will save and deliver His people from all who pursue them, bringing an end to violence and making the righteous secure (Psalm 7:1,9).

THURSDAY 8 Researchers have highlighted Côte d’Ivoire (the Ivory Coast) as a country in particular risk of Islamist insurgency. This is due to ineffective governance in the country’s northern regions, existing jihadi networks, and proximity to other unstable regions where Islamist terrorists operate (namely, Burkina Faso and Mali). Approximately 44% of the Ivorian population is Christian, although Islam is dominant in the North. Pray for vulnerable believers in this unstable part of the world, that the Lord will protect them from harm and, if necessary, prepare them for persecution.

FRIDAY 9 Pray earnestly for believers in northern Mozambique, at increasing risk of brutality at the hands of the Islamic State (IS) of Mozambique, known locally as Al-Shabaab (no connection with the Somali group of the same name). Its militants make about two attacks every week, burning houses, killing people, raping women and kidnapping boys to serve as child soldiers. Their main targets are Christians but they also kill moderate Muslims who refuse to join their ranks. The militants work strategically, launching attacks in one area to draw in security forces and

leave other areas defenceless. Ask the Lord to comfort all those grieving, to strengthen His people, to grant wisdom to Christian leaders seeking to continue ministering in the area, and to make the Mozambican government and security forces resolute in protecting innocent people so that the whole population will be able to live in peace.

SATURDAY 10 “God has remembered us” whispered our brothers and sisters in northern Kenya in their mother tongue as Barnabas-funded supplies of flour, beans and cooking oil were distributed among 2,561 Christian households. The region is afflicted by drought and Christians often suffer attacks from the Muslim majority. Furthermore, they had been excluded from receiving aid given by the authorities because of their faith in Christ. Pray that the Lord will protect, strengthen and sustain His people in northern Kenya. Ask that supplies of further aid funded by Barnabas will get through as before to Christians even in the least accessible areas.

SUNDAY 11 Sovereign Lord, we bring before You hard-pressed pastors and other Christian leaders around the world as they prepare to lead God’s people in the coming Christmas season. Please provide for those experiencing economic hardship, for those oppressed by restrictions imposed by governments favouring the majority religion, and for those encountering hostility from neighbours and even family members because of their trust in You. Give them wisdom in preparing their Christmas messages and enable them to direct their congregations to the Light of the World who provides eternal hope amid the world’s spiritual darkness. Send

the comfort of Your Spirit to Christian leaders imprisoned for their faith in You and remind them that Your Word is never in chains. We ask in the precious Name of Jesus. (John 8:12; 2 Timothy 2:9)

MONDAY 12 Lift up to the Lord three Nigerian Christian women rescued eight years after they were kidnapped with 273 other girls, mostly Christian, from a school in Chibok by Boko Haram Islamist terrorists. Ruth Bitrus, 24, Hanatu Musa, 26, and Kauna Luka, 25, were recovered with their children by the Nigerian army in June and July. Around 165 “Chibok girls” have escaped, been rescued or released since their kidnapping in April 2014. They reported being whipped by their captors to force them into marriage, while a group of girls experienced a mock execution for refusing to convert to Islam. Ask for healing and comfort for Ruth, Hanatu and Kauna that they will recover fully from their ordeal and that their needs, and the needs of their children, will be met. Pray that other Chibok women still held by the terrorists will be freed soon.

TUESDAY 13 Intercede for Christians in Plateau State, Nigeria, where anti-Christian violence continues. In one attack, for example, on a Christian village earlier this year, seven people – three adults and four children, one as young as five – were shot dead by suspected Fulani Islamists. Pray for the bereaved of this community and others in Plateau State who have suffered anti-Christian violence, that they will know the Lord’s comfort in their loss. Ask the Lord that security in Plateau State and across Nigeria will be improved, and that such attacks will cease.

WEDNESDAY 14 Bring before the Lord the Christian minority in Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger and northern Nigeria, where several jihadi groups affiliated to Islamic State (IS, ISIS, ISIL, Daesh) and al-Qaeda are attacking the Church and seeking to assert Islamism. Pray for our brothers and sisters who face the possibility of attack any time they meet for worship, who are forced from their homes and off their land, and who seem to be without any earthly protection, that the Lord will sustain them in their joyful Christian faith.

THURSDAY 15 Lift up in prayer a Libyan Christian convert from Islam, who has been sentenced to death for apostasy by the Court of Appeal in the city of Misrata. The man became a Christian around four years ago, and has been arrested several times since then by Libyan militias who act as law enforcement in the disordered country. The death sentence for apostasy was applied as a result of his refusal to return to Islam. Pray for our brother in Libya, asking that the death sentence will not be carried out and that he will be allowed to practise his Christian faith in peace. Ask that whatever happens, the Lord will strengthen him and remain close to him.

FRIDAY 16 The Tunisian parliamentary elections take place tomorrow (17 December). In recent months the government of Tunisia took the important step of no longer naming Islam as the country's state religion, a constitutional amendment made with the intention of combating Islamist extremism. In addition, Tunisia – like many other countries – is facing severe financial difficulties, including

inflated food prices. It was a similar situation in Tunisia in 2010 that led to the so-called Arab Spring of protest movements across North Africa and the Middle East. Pray for Tunisia's new parliament, that they will share the aim of tackling Islamism and respond wisely to economic problems. Ask for the Lord's blessing upon the small Christian community, especially converts from Islam who face harassment from the Muslim majority.

SATURDAY 17 Alongside Algeria's 99% Muslim majority a small but growing indigenous Christian population, mainly converts from Islam and their children, stands firm. The Algerian constitution guarantees freedom "to exercise worship". According to a 2006 ordinance, the National Commission for Non-Muslim Worship grants permits for churches but, so far, no permits have been issued, despite repeated requests by churches. Pray for church buildings that have been closed and physically sealed on spurious administrative grounds to be reopened. Intercede especially for Aouchiche church in the port city of Béjaïa, which was served a closure notice earlier this year. Give thanks that God's Word is never hindered and pray that He will enable His people across Algeria to meet for worship.

SUNDAY 18 Heavenly Father, we thank You for every child who has come to know You at a young age and for the strong foundation to their lives that they receive. We ask You to enable them to grow spiritually even as they are forced to experience hardship early in life, as they face persecution for their faith. We pray for Your protection, comfort and strength to sustain little ones who are internally

displaced in their own countries, through persecution, conflict or natural disasters, or living as refugees in other lands. We pray that they will never lose their childlike trust in You and we ask in the Name of the Lord Jesus, who welcomed children into His arms and declared that Your kingdom belongs to them. (Mark 10:14)

MONDAY 19 Intercede for our brothers and sisters in Eritrea persecuted by the Communist government for worshipping the Lord Jesus Christ. Only God knows how many Christians are being held arbitrarily in prison, where they are often subjected to beatings, forced labour and torture. Church leaders are often singled out for extra punishment and longer sentences. Pray that these courageous believers will be able to take comfort and strength from the words of the Lord Jesus, “Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of Heaven” (Matthew 5:10-12).

TUESDAY 20 Iranian Christian couple Homayoun Zhavah, 63, and his wife Sara Ahmadi, 44, have been detained at Evin prison, Tehran. Both were convicted of membership of an “illegal organisation” (meaning a house church). Homayoun has been sentenced to two years’ imprisonment and Sara to eight years. Evin prison is notorious for prolonged interrogations and abusive treatment of inmates. Pray for the couple’s release, and that Homayoun’s health condition (advanced Parkinson’s disease) will not be affected by the stress of imprisonment. Ask that the Lord will sustain them and that the prosecution, and imprisonment of Christians in Iran for simply attending

worship meetings will end.

WEDNESDAY 21 Cancer sufferer Gholamreza Keyvanmanesh, 65, is among four Christians detained after Iranian security forces raided a “house church” in north-eastern Iran. At least eight other Christians questioned following the meeting were informed by the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps to expect a summons for further interrogation. Farsi-speaking congregations are regularly raided and members charged with belonging to “illegal groups”. Pray that Gholamreza’s health needs are met, and that he and the other three Christians detained will be released. Ask that the remaining Christians questioned, and other Farsi-speaking Christians throughout Iran (converts from Islam), will draw on the Lord’s strength to find ways of maintaining fellowship despite the restrictions imposed.



Gholamreza Keyvanmanesh [Image credit: Article 18]

THURSDAY 22 Iraq, a country wracked with instability for many years, remains without a government a year after

parliamentary elections took place in October 2021. The country's Supreme Court rejected on 7 September 2022 a petition to dissolve parliament, saying it was beyond its legal authority. The long political crisis has left the country without a government, prime minister or president and resulted in several outbreaks of deadly violence. Pray that a peaceful solution is found and that a new government is formed swiftly who will govern with wisdom and compassion. Ask for protection for Iraq's beleaguered Christian community that they take heart and find peace in our Redeemer, who overcame the world (John 16:33).

FRIDAY 23 Lift up in prayer the family of an Egyptian Christian father and son who were shot dead by Islamist terrorists. Salama Moussa Waheeb and his son Hany were working on their family farm in the Sinai peninsula when they were shot by jihadists from Islamic State (IS, ISIS, ISIL, Daesh). Salama was father to two sons and three daughters. Hany, 40, leaves behind a wife and two daughters. Pray for their family to receive the Lord's comfort and strength. Ask for an end to violence towards Egyptian Christians in Sinai.

SATURDAY 24 Many extremists see Christmas as a prime opportunity to attack believers celebrating the birth of Christ. The Christmas period is a time when Christians gather together in large numbers for church services and other celebrations, inadvertently making themselves a target for terrorist attacks and other violence. Additionally, some religious extremists will see Christmas as the ideal time to strike a blow against the Christian

faith. Pray for those who gather for worship this evening and tomorrow in lands of persecution, that the Lord will grant them confidence in Him and to know the peace that is for "those on whom his favour rests" (Luke 2:14).

SUNDAY 25 Our Father, as we celebrate with great joy the birth of our Saviour Jesus Christ, we pray for Christians suffering today because of violence and war, drought and tempest, disease and discrimination, harassment and persecution. Help them to fix their eyes upon the Author and Perfecter of our faith, who came to this earth to endure the cross, that all who believe will live with Him in eternity. Help us not grow weary and lose heart, but rejoice in Him at every opportunity, ordering our lives by His teachings, so that by our example others draw close to His Name, in which we pray. (Hebrews 12:2-3).

MONDAY 26 Although Jordan is considered a food-secure country, the kingdom faces many challenges. It has limited agricultural land, water is scarce and it shelters a growing number of refugees from other countries. Almost 10% of Jordanians have health conditions as a result of nutritional deficiency. "Daoud" and his wife were amongst many impoverished Jordanians who received 20kg of chickpeas through our food.gives programme. This enabled them to give their four children meals of high quality plant protein. Life had been tough for the couple since Daoud had to give up work because of illness and mobility problems. Southern Jordan, where they live, has experienced years of drought and the family only receives water from the mains once a week. Pray

for our brothers and sisters in Jordan, that the Lord will provide for them and strengthen their faith in Him.

TUESDAY 27 Pray for the success of Barnabas Aid's medical.gives ministry, which we are currently expanding in an effort to meet the medical needs of our suffering Christian family worldwide. We hope, God willing, to be able to forward donations of medical supplies and equipment – for example, reading glasses, walking sticks and frames, blood pressure machines, stethoscopes – and transport these to where they can make a difference in the lives of our brothers and sisters. Ask God to bless our efforts, for without His blessing we labour in vain (Psalm 127:1).

WEDNESDAY 28 Give thanks for the provision through medical.gives of 1,176 manual wheelchairs worth \$344 each for those in need in Ukraine. Many people in this troubled land have been left injured and maimed by the ongoing conflict, and earlier this year the Ukrainian Ministry of Health made an appeal for wheelchairs. The wheelchairs were donated to Barnabas by another charity, and shipped to Ukraine thanks to your generous financial contributions. Rejoice with us that we see the Lord's hand at work even in such dark and difficult times.

THURSDAY 29 Praise God for His blessing and provision that is enabling Barnabas to expand our food.gives programme into food production for the first time, dramatically increasing our ability to sustain our hungry brothers and sisters around the world. Through His perfect timing, we have forged a partnership with a US-based Christian

charity Blessings of Hope to own and operate a food dehydration machine. By the time you read this, God willing, the machine will be in operation, preparing surplus and unused produce from the US for delivery to Christians in great need. Give thanks to our almighty Father for whom all things are possible (Luke 1:37).

FRIDAY 30 Western New Year is sometimes wrongly considered by non-Christians to be a Christian festival, much like Christmas or Easter. As such this period of the year can be dangerous for believers, who face the increased risk of attack associated with both of those days in the Church calendar, a risk intensified this year as New Year's Day is a Sunday. Lift up our brothers and sisters, asking that the Lord will restrain the hand of those who plan to do them harm in the days ahead.

SATURDAY 31 Praise God for providing the resources through our supporters to fund hundreds of live-changing and life-saving projects throughout 2022. Give thanks for the provision of food and medical aid to our brothers and sisters suffering in many countries. Remember with gratitude Christian children receiving a quality education through the generosity of Barnabas supporters. Give thanks for Christian communities, often persecuted, who have received funding to construct church buildings. Pray that the Lord will direct Barnabas Aid and our many partners worldwide to serve Him with wise stewardship in 2023 to enable His kingdom to expand and His Church to be built up.



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