



barnabasprayer

Barnabas Aid – bringing hope to suffering Christians

To help you
pray for suffering
Christians

**September/
October 2023**

barnabasaid.org

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

September

FRIDAY 1 “All for Jesus – even in death.” These were the courageous words of five North Korean Christians, who were arrested as they attended a secret church service in a farmhouse in Tongam, South Pyongan province, on a Sunday morning earlier this year. Christianity is outlawed in North Korea, and people will almost certainly face imprisonment, torture and death for any expression of Christian faith. Pray for the five believers, and any others arrested in connection with this underground church, asking that the Lord will sustain their faith as He sustained the faith Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego when they were thrown into the blazing furnace, even if they are not delivered from harm (Daniel 3:16-18).

SATURDAY 2 A theological seminary in Wuhan province, China, hosted a lecture on “Sinicisation Reconstruction of Christian Ideology” in which the speaker said that churches should incorporate traditional Confucianist ideals into their theology and liturgy. “Sinicisation” refers to a process of “making Chinese”. While lectures and seminars like this can be useful in helping church leaders apply Christian theology to a particular cultural context, there is also the risk

that theology and the Gospel can be compromised, distorted or even abandoned. Ask the Lord, who gives wisdom and understanding to those who ask (Proverbs 2:6; James 1:5), to give such wisdom to Chinese church leaders as they navigate these challenges.

SUNDAY 3 **Lord God and Heavenly Father, we pray for all those who suffer suspicion and hostility for their Christian faith, not only from extremists but from their own governments. We know that many are subject to repressive rules or overly harsh requirements, while others live in countries where the Christian faith is completely banned. Please sustain the faith of all of Your children in these situations, strengthening them with the reminder that none shall snatch them out of Your hands, for we ask it in the Name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. (John 10:28-9)**

MONDAY 4 “I am thankful to Barnabas for this gift for our poor people,” said Mariam, a pupil at one of 11 schools newly built by Barnabas for children of Pakistani Christian brick-kiln workers. “I am getting academic education but also having Biblical study.” Each of the new schools has three classrooms,

electricity, a secure yard, a washroom with piped water and a toilet. Give thanks that the education these schools provide is giving a brighter future to Christian children. It helps to break the cycle of poverty and illiteracy that ensnared previous generations, enables them to grow in their love of the Lord and strengthens the Christian community as a whole.

TUESDAY 5 Christians are among those most threatened by the strengthening of Pakistan's notorious "blasphemy" laws. As part of an agreement reached between Pakistan's coalition government and an Islamist opposition party, anybody charged with defiling the name of Muhammad, the prophet of Islam, will additionally be charged as a terrorist. The government also pledged to speed up "blasphemy" trials and create a new Counter Blasphemy Department. Baseless "blasphemy" accusations are often used as a means to settle personal grudges and stir up trouble. Pray that these new measures will not make Christians and other religious minorities more vulnerable to mob violence or the death penalty.

WEDNESDAY 6 Pakistani Christian Noman Masih was sentenced to death by a court in Bahawalpur, Punjab, on 30 May for alleged "blasphemy" against Muhammad, the prophet of Islam. The 23-year-old was arrested in July 2019 and charged under Section 295-C of the Pakistan Penal Code over images allegedly found on his mobile phone. He denies possessing or sending the images. Pray that the death sentence and the case against Noman will be overturned on appeal and he will be freed. Ask the Lord to protect him,

his family and the wider Christian community. Pray also for protection and wisdom for Noman's lawyers.



Noman Masih

THURSDAY 7 An Islamist terrorist group has threatened to "make Pakistan a hell for Christianity". "Neither the Church nor Christians will now remain safe in Pakistan," declared the Lahore-based Lashkar-e-Jhangvi. The threats were made in response to the burning of a Quran in Sweden by an Iraqi self-declared atheist in July, for which the Islamists held Christians responsible. Pakistani Christians, however, had condemned the Quran burning as an act of hatred. Pray that the Almighty will protect all those who seek their refuge in Him (Psalm 91:1-3) and that these threats against His people will come to nothing.

FRIDAY 8 At the time of writing, violence continues to rage in the north-eastern Indian state of Manipur. Believers among the Christian-majority Kuki people group (as well as the few Christians among the Meitei people group) have been targeted, with at least 120 people killed – most of them Christians – and at least 250 church buildings burned down. Violence

in the state began earlier this year on 3 May, and more than 60,000 people – again, mostly Christians – have been displaced from their homes. Ask that the Lord will provide for all those affected by the conflict, and especially His persecuted and suffering people.

SATURDAY 9 Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi condemned the actions of a mob in Manipur who forced two Christian women to remove their clothes and parade naked down the street. One of the victims, a 21-year-old woman, reported being gang raped, and the second woman, aged 42, said she was molested and assaulted. The father and brother of one of the women were killed trying to protect them. Modi described the incident as “shameful”, adding, “The guilty will not be spared.” Give thanks for this official condemnation, and pray that it will lead to greater protection for the Christians of Manipur. Pray that there will be peace for all in Manipur and in the neighbouring states of India.

SUNDAY 10 Sovereign Lord, we lift up before You Christian women who are particularly vulnerable in places of persecution. We pray for widows and those whose husbands are in prison, who are left with minimal or no support or protection for themselves and their children. Please enable them to lean on You, their heavenly husband, and know Your gracious provision. We ask that the abduction of Christian girls for forced marriage and forced conversion in Pakistan will cease, and that our sisters will develop and flourish in their relationship with their Saviour, in whose precious Name we pray. (Psalm 68:5; Isaiah 54:5)

MONDAY 11 Our brothers and sisters in Christian-majority Uganda were left in shock and in mourning after a brutal Islamist raid on a boarding school in the western district of Kasese on 16 June left more than 40 people dead, almost all of them pupils at the school. Fighters from the jihadi group Allied Democratic Forces, based in the neighbouring Democratic Republic of the Congo, struck as the boys and girls were singing evening hymns. Continue to weep with those who weep (Romans 12:15), joining the lament of those who have lost loved ones in such horrific circumstances. Pray that the Lord will comfort the mourning with His grace.

TUESDAY 12 International experts have warned of the emergence of an “African caliphate” as violent extremism rages across the continent. Hotspots of violent anti-Christian persecution include Nigeria, Mozambique and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, from where Islamists plotted and launched the Uganda school massacre. At least 20 African countries have suffered jihadi violence, with another 20 used to mobilise resources for terrorist groups. Pray that the Lord will restrain the hand of violent extremists for the sake of all people in Africa, especially Christian communities who are at particular risk.

WEDNESDAY 13 Twelve people were hacked to death by Islamist militants in Christian-majority North Kivu province, Democratic Republic of the Congo, on 8 June. Four women and four children were among those killed in the attack, which was carried out by the jihadi group Allied Democratic Forces on the village of Bukokoma. Pray that the Lord will comfort those bereaved and

bring an end to the actions of extremists who seem relentless in threatening and killing His people.

THURSDAY 14 At least 26 people were killed in separate attacks on a Christian area of Plateau State, Nigeria, in June and July this year. In the first of four raids in Mangu Local Government Area, 11 people were burned to death in the village of Chisu. Another three died in an attack on the village of Bwai, where gunmen also burned down a church building. Around three weeks later another 12 died in night-time raids on two more Mangu villages. Pray that our brothers and sisters will know the Lord's presence close to the broken-hearted and strengthening their hearts (Psalm 73:26). Ask that He will protect Christian communities in Nigeria's Middle Belt.



Stanislaus Mbamara [Image credit: Nnewi Diocese]

FRIDAY 15 “We see it as Divine providence to get this project,” said the head of a Nigerian Christian village. He was speaking as construction began on the first two of 11 health centres that Barnabas is planning, Lord willing, to build in Kaduna State, where Christians are regularly subjected to Islamist attack. The centres will provide

emergency treatment to survivors, as well as general medical care for the sick. The two centres will serve more than 67,000 Christians, and spare them from walking long distances, at risk of attack, to access medical care. Pray that construction progresses smoothly and the centres open as scheduled at the end of this year.

SATURDAY 16 Give thanks that a church minister who was abducted by gunmen in Anambra State, Nigeria, has regained his freedom. Stanislaus Mbamara was kidnapped while driving in early June but was set free just two days later. Praise the Lord for answered prayer in the release of Stanislaus. Pray that he will experience full recovery from his ordeal and be inwardly strengthened to continue his ministry with increased resolve.

SUNDAY 17 **Lord God and Heavenly Father, we pray for those of Your people who are imprisoned in Eritrea, where they suffer much abuse and many hardships. They are not known to us, but each one is known to You, and loved with a love that is “from everlasting to everlasting”. Please encourage and strengthen each one with the assurance that their imprisonment is for the furtherance of the Gospel, for we ask it in Christ’s precious Name. (Psalm 103:17; Philippians 1:12)**

MONDAY 18 Give thanks that heavy rains earlier in 2023 brought some relief to the Horn of Africa, which had been suffering from drought for several years. However, problems remain in areas such as Ethiopia, Somalia and northern Kenya. The long-term drought had hardened the ground, meaning that

much of the rain could not be absorbed by the soil and resulted in floods that displaced many from their homes and led to increased risk of waterborne disease. Continue to uphold in prayer our brothers and sisters, and all those affected by droughts and floods, as their difficulties persist.

TUESDAY 19 A congregation in Rumbek, Lakes State, South Sudan, asked for prayer after their church building was burned down by unknown attackers on 22 July. Gabriel Majok Mayom, one of the church leaders, said that “the church is not a structure, the church is the people”, but added that the loss of the building was a blow to the congregation. Gabriel added that the believers were praying for the forgiveness of those responsible. Join with our brothers and sisters in asking that the Lord provide for His people who have lost their building and equipment, as well as interceding for those who committed this crime.

WEDNESDAY 20 A British MP has warned that “a systemic ethnic cleansing” is taking place in the Republic of the Sudan (formerly North Sudan), as, at the time of writing, violence that broke out in April this year persists. Speaking in the House of Commons, Vicky Ford, chair of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Sudan and South Sudan, said that thousands had been killed in a violent campaign against the non-Arab population of Darfur. As many as 400,000 were killed in the Darfur genocide that began two decades ago. Many Christians are among the thousands from across Sudan who have fled into Egypt, Ethiopia and South Sudan in search of safety. Intercede for the Lord’s people, and all those suffering

the ongoing violence, asking that there will be peace in this troubled land.



Barnabas-funded food brings joy to Sudanese Christian refugees in Egypt

THURSDAY 21 Give thanks for Egyptian Christians Rania and her daughter Mira who every weekend prepare up to 900 sandwiches in their home with Barnabas-funded ingredients. On Sundays, Rania and her husband deliver the sandwich-based meals to six Cairo churches for the Sudanese refugees who attend those churches to eat after worship. For many of the impoverished Christian refugees it is their only food of the day. Lift up Rania and her family who take joy in seeing the happiness their sandwiches bring to others. Pray that we learn from their service to the Lord Jesus Christ in giving food to the least of His brothers and sisters (Matthew 25:35, 40).

FRIDAY 22 Give thanks that the government of Egypt has licensed a further 374 churches and church-affiliated buildings. This is the 27th batch of approvals made since the government committee overseeing the process began

work in 2017, and the largest single batch so far. Licences have now been granted to 3,189 of the 3,730 churches that applied for registration under a 2016 law that abolished Ottoman-era restrictions on church building. Praise God that the licensing process has passed the 3,000 mark, and that congregations are permitted to worship in unlicensed premises pending completion of the process. Continue to pray for the remaining 541 licences to be granted.

SATURDAY 23 Church leaders in Minya governorate, Upper Egypt, expressed their thankfulness at the laying of foundation stones for two new church buildings in the region. Dr Andrea Zaki Stephanous, Egypt's most senior evangelical leader, said, "Today events are brimming with joy." He also expressed his thanks to President Abdel-Fattah al-Sisi for his support for the Christian community. Before the repeal of Ottoman-era restrictions by President al-Sisi's government in 2017 it was extremely difficult for any new churches to be built. Give thanks for the opportunity to construct two new church buildings. Pray that the new buildings, when finished, will be a blessing to the Lord's people.

SUNDAY 24 Heavenly Father, we bring before You our brothers and sisters in Saudi Arabia. We ask for their continued protection as they follow You in secret in a country where converts to Christianity are in danger of the death penalty. We thank You for recent reforms in Saudi Arabia and pray that these will be extended so that the light of the Gospel will be more visible. We ask in the Name of the Light of the World, our Lord Jesus Christ. (John 8:12)

MONDAY 25 The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has described Lebanon's economic situation as "very dire". Inflation in June 2023 was reported as 254%, with food inflation running at 280%. The IMF report warned that the situation could worsen if no action is taken, presenting "the largest risk to Lebanon's economic and social stability, taking the country down an unpredictable road". Many Christians are among those suffering from this economic situation, which has led to desperate shortages of food, medicine and other necessities. Pray for wisdom for the leaders of Lebanon and for an end to this ongoing crisis.

TUESDAY 26 More than 50 Christian converts from Islam were arrested by security forces across five cities in north-western Iran in the period 11-18 July. The believers were arrested at their homes or venues for "house churches". At time of writing the charges against them are unknown and they remain in detention. Worship in Iran's majority language Farsi (Persian) is forbidden, and Farsi-speaking Christians are typically charged with "acting against national security" for their activities in unofficial "house churches". Ask that the authorities will release all those arrested unharmed, and that Christian converts will be able to live and practise their faith in peace.

WEDNESDAY 27 The ten-year prison sentence of a Christian in Iran was reduced to two years after a successful appeal. Joseph Shahbazian, an Iranian-Armenian believer, was sentenced in June 2022 for his role in a "house church" in the Yaftabad area of Tehran, Iran's capital. Give thanks for the reduction, and ask

the Lord to sustain Joseph throughout his imprisonment. Pray that the day will come when there will be no punishment for practising Christianity in Iran.



Joseph Shahbazian [Image credit: Article 18]

THURSDAY 28 Three years ago today Muslim-majority Azerbaijan launched a military attack against Nagorno-Karabakh, an Armenian Christian enclave within Azerbaijan, beginning the brief Second Nagorno-Karabakh War. This conflict ended in November 2020 with Azerbaijan having taken significant territories which had formerly belonged to Armenian communities. Azerbaijani soldiers were accused of various war crimes, including torture of prisoners, killing of civilians, and desecration of churches. An Azerbaijani blockade of Nagorno-Karabakh that began in December 2022 – and at the time of writing is continuing – has raised concerns of another attack and yet more devastation. Pray that the Lord will be a hiding place for His people if such a day of trouble comes (Psalm 27:5).

FRIDAY 29 “The humanitarian situation in [Nagorno-Karabakh] is deepening as a result of the ongoing bellicose and Armenian-hating actions of Azerbaijan and the complete blockade.” This was

the assessment of church leaders in Nagorno-Karabakh. At the time of writing the blockade of the Lachin Corridor – the only land route between Nagorno-Karabakh and Armenia – has been continuing for nearly eight months. This blockade has caused acute shortages of food and medicine. Babies have been stillborn owing to malnutrition. Two children died as their desperate parents hunted for food. Two others drowned as they were searching for food. Pray for an end to this barbaric siege. Give thanks for Barnabas Aid’s successful delivery of practical aid to our brothers and sisters.

SATURDAY 30 “Thank you for everything you do for helping people from Ukraine,” said a Barnabas Aid project partner in Ukraine. “Your support is highly appreciated by thousands of people who are helped by the funds you send, mostly with food, medicine and basic clothes.” Barnabas has recently funded the supply of food, drinking water, sleeping bags and sanitary products and temporary shelter to Ukrainian Christians affected by devastating flooding following the collapse of the Kakhovka Dam on 6 June. Praise God for what He is doing through Barnabas, and pray for an end to the conflict in Ukraine.

October

SUNDAY 1 **Gracious Lord, we lift up Your Church in Afghanistan as it shares in the nation’s grinding poverty. We pray that some way can be found to alleviate the hunger and desperation of millions in need of urgent help. Please enable the tiny minority of Christians, who we**

know face the death sentence for apostasy if their faith is discovered, to remain firm in that faith. Grant them Your protection and the wisdom to live godly lives in service of their Saviour, in whose Name we pray. (Romans 12:11)

MONDAY 2 A recent report from an India-based defence and security studies think tank has highlighted the threat posed to Central Asia by the Islamic State Khorasan Province (ISKP). The report argues that instability in Afghanistan since the Taliban takeover in August 2021 has given ISKP greater opportunity to expand jihad into the Central Asian countries (along with Pakistan) as well as radicalising and recruiting Central Asian men into its ranks. While this terror threat affects all people, the small Christian communities of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan are at particular risk. Pray that the plans of ISKP to establish an Islamic province (*wilyat*) across South and Central Asia will come to nothing.

TUESDAY 3 Residents of a Christian community in Punjab, Pakistan, were left fearing for their safety after they were blamed without evidence for producing posters with content offensive to Muslims. A Muslim resident of Sarghoda District discovered the offensive posters on the morning of Sunday 16 July and made a “blasphemy” complaint to police. Later that day extremists gathered to protest against the posters, blaming Christians for producing it, and threatening to burn down their homes. At the time of writing tensions remain. Give thanks that police prevented the mob from carrying out their threats. Pray for the safety of Christians in Sarghoda, and

across Pakistan, who are vulnerable to mob violence following such baseless accusations.

WEDNESDAY 4 A 16-year-old Christian girl, Muskan Bibi, went missing in Pakistan in May 2023 and is now married to an older Muslim man, Ahmad Ali. Ahmad had previously harassed Muskan and threatened to abduct her. Her family believe that she has been forced to marry Ahmad and convert to Islam. The police did not act to protect Muskan or her family, even when Ali threatened Muskan’s mother with a knife. The family are now appealing to the government to intervene. Pray that the Lord will protect Muskan from harm, that she will be returned safely to her family, and that He will sustain her inner Christian faith despite what she has been outwardly forced to say or do.

THURSDAY 5 Three Christians from the same church in Sri Lanka’s North Central Province were left injured in separate attacks by violent extremists. In the first, a trainee pastor and church volunteer was left with scratches on his neck by two men who also threatened to attack the church building. Only days later two Christians who were returning home from a Bible study were badly beaten by three or four men with iron bars. Pray for the recovery of the injured, and ask the Lord to spread His protection over this church and the wider Christian community of Sri Lanka (Psalm 5:11).

FRIDAY 6 A Sri Lankan Hindu nationalist group distributed leaflets in Northern Province that accused Christians and Muslims of fraudulently

seeking converts. This was one of ten anti-Christian incidents reported by the National Christian Evangelical Alliance of Sri Lanka in the first quarter of 2023. In another incident, around 50 villagers surrounded the home of a pastor to try to dissuade him from conducting worship services. In another, death threats were issued against a Christian worker. Ask the Lord to strengthen those who face these kinds of threats and intimidation, reminding them that the world hates them because it first hated Christ (John 15:18).

SATURDAY 7 Experts have warned that a rise in religious nationalism in the South Asian country of Nepal could threaten peaceful coexistence between different religious groups, with one Nepali journalist calling it “a clear and present danger”. If such warnings are accurate, then Nepal’s small but growing Christian community could be at risk. In April this year one Nepali news website published an opinion piece in which Christians were accused of “aggressive proselytising” and using aid programmes as a subterfuge to gain converts. The writer argued that that Christian evangelism hurts “the religious sentiments of the majority”, and called for more rigorous application of Nepal’s 2018 anti-conversion law. Ask the Lord to give wisdom to Nepali believers, especially church leaders, to be “as wise as serpents and as innocent as doves” (Matthew 10:16, ESV).

SUNDAY 8 **Sovereign Lord, we appeal to You as the God of justice on behalf of Christians who are unjustly accused and even given prison sentences for their loyalty to You. We pray that their faith in their**

faithful, upright God will not waver, even if justice is delayed, and that they will be comforted in knowing they are being tested for honouring You. We ask You to give their lawyers skill to navigate the complexities of stringent laws and present their cases with boldness and coherence. We pray for successful outcomes, knowing that they have a righteous Advocate on whom they can depend, the Lord Jesus Christ, in whose Name we pray. (Deuteronomy 32:4; 1 John 2:1-2)

MONDAY 9 Intercede for our brothers and sisters in the south-western Nigerian state of Ogun, where a pastor has been shot and killed in an attack on an early morning church service. Pastor Kayode Oluwakemi, 56, died immediately after being shot in the chest. The attackers also abducted seven worshippers, but these were rescued shortly afterwards by security forces. Dr Stephen Adeyemi, General Secretary of the Christian Association of Nigeria, called on the government “to look into this issue of insecurity”. Give thanks for the rescue of the seven Christians, and ask that the Lord will comfort those in mourning. Pray that the government will heed the words of Dr Adeyemi. Ask that the Lord will continue to lead His people even through the valley of the shadow of death (Psalm 23:4).

TUESDAY 10 Give thanks that two church ministers in Imo State, Nigeria, have been released by their kidnappers. Jude Maduka was taken as he was preparing to lead Sunday morning worship, and a few days later Mathias Opara was kidnapped while driving home from a funeral service. Both men

were released safe and unharmed a few days after their respective abductions. Praise the Lord for answered prayer, and ask that He will bring an end to the persistent abductions of church leaders and other Christians in Nigeria.

WEDNESDAY 11 “It was by the help of God that we were miraculously saved from the kidnappers.” These were the words of John, a Nigerian believer among 11 Christians in Kogi State who narrowly escaped being abducted by gunmen. The church members were journeying home from a wedding when their bus came under fire, but thankfully the attackers were driven back by security forces. Some of the passengers were treated for gunshot injuries. Give thanks for the quick action of the security forces and the failure of the abduction attempt. Join with our brother John in thanking the Lord for His help at this time of need.

THURSDAY 12 Niger has become the latest West African state to experience a coup, as President Mohamed Bazoum was detained by members of the Nigerien military on 26 July. In a televised address Colonel-Major Amadou Abdramane announced the takeover, adding that Niger’s borders had been closed and the constitution dissolved. The constitution of Muslim-majority Niger prohibited religious discrimination and enshrined freedom of religion. At the time of writing it is unclear what impact these events will have on Niger’s small Christian community, which represents around 0.4% of the population. Pray for a peaceful outcome for all Nigeriens and especially for our vulnerable brothers and sisters.



A Christian girl in Mali with a Barnabas-funded children's Bible. Believers in West Africa are at increased risk of violent extremism

FRIDAY 13 More than 4,000 people died in terrorist attacks in West Africa in the first half of 2023, according to a statement by Omar Touray, the President of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). Touray added that within the 15 countries that comprise ECOWAS are nearly 6.2 million internally displaced persons. The worst affected was Burkina Faso, where 2,725 people were killed by terrorists, with 844 such deaths in Mali. Christians represent around 30% of the population of Burkina Faso and only around 2% of the Malian population. Lift up to the Lord our brothers and sisters in these West African nations, asking that the growth in extremist violence will be stemmed and that all people will be able to live in peace.

SATURDAY 14 The number of church leaders registered with Barnabas Aid's The Shepherd's Academy (TSA) has grown, with more than 600 students receiving pastoral and theological training. Around two-thirds of these are undertaking short courses and a third studying for an undergraduate degree. The students represent 30 different countries, and each student

is linked to one of the 20 TSA study centres located in 12 countries. TSA is the undergraduate section of Barnabas Academia, also known as the Oxford Centre for Religion and Public Life. Church leaders in the Global South often lack opportunities to undertake training that will help them in their ministry for Christ and His Church. Join us in giving thanks that the Lord is providing these opportunities through TSA.

SUNDAY 15 Lord God, we pray for the success of Christian schools throughout the world, and especially in lands of great suffering and anti-Christian persecution. We ask You to fill those entrusted with leadership with Divine wisdom in governance and management so that values that reflect the Gospel are maintained. Please raise up and bless the work of godly teachers to train up children in the way they should go, to produce lasting fruit all their lives. Protect and renew pupils' minds and hearts to receive all the benefits of a Christian education through instruction, practical experience and healthy social interaction and grow in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ, in whose Name we pray. (Proverbs 22:6)

MONDAY 16 Medical experts in Bangladesh have raised concerns that the country looks likely to suffer a record number of deaths caused by dengue fever this rainy season. At the time of writing more than 200 people have died from the viral disease, which is spread by mosquitos in many tropical areas. Hospitals, especially in

the capital city of Dhaka, are becoming overwhelmed with patients suffering fever, severe joint pain and vomiting. Christians represent less than 1% of the population of Muslim-majority Bangladesh, and are often among the most impoverished. Pray for all those affected by this outbreak, and especially any Christians suffering from this debilitating illness.

TUESDAY 17 “I feel very sad, very sorry, and at the same time furious.” These were the words of a church minister in Kayah State, Myanmar, reflecting on the loss of a church building that was burned to the ground by the Tatmadaw (Myanmar military). “We lost our church, and it’s as if we are losing our lives,” he continued. Violent persecution of Myanmar’s ethnic-minority Christians shows no sign of coming to an end. Pray that the Lord will preserve the faith of His people despite their desperately difficult circumstances, and ask that He will continue to provide for the physical needs of believers who have been forced from their homes by military attack.

WEDNESDAY 18 “No matter where we run, we can’t escape. They shell the internally displaced people camps day and night,” said “Zarni”, a Christian mother who fled with her family two years ago after their village came under fire from the Tatmadaw (Myanmar military) and has been running ever since. Whenever she hears the booms of artillery she relives the deaths of her two daughters in a bombardment. Pray that the Lord will draw close to Zarni and the many others traumatised by the conflict. Pray that He will give our brothers and sisters the strength to endure and fill them with His peace (Psalm 29:11).

THURSDAY 19 “Please pray for the war to stop,” said our partner in Myanmar who leads teams of Christians delivering Barnabas-funded aid to some to the thousands of displaced people, many of them believers, who have fled into the jungle to escape attack. Give thanks that in the first half of 2023 we funded food parcels for 820 Christian families (around 4,100 individuals) and sleeping mats, tarpaulins and blankets for 235 families (1,175 individuals). Join with our project partners in praying for an end to the conflict.



After 68 years of praying, 83-year-old “Meng” received his own Bible, funded by Barnabas

FRIDAY 20 “After 68 years of praying, God has answered my prayers today. I received a free Bible. This is the happiest and most joyous day in my life.” This was the testimony of 83-year-old “Meng”, a Christian in Myanmar who received a Barnabas-funded Bible in his own language. However, many of Myanmar’s Christians are still without the Word of God. Through our project partners on the ground, Barnabas is funding the transportation and distribution costs to have another 200,000 Bibles reach Christians in Myanmar. Pray for the

success of this work, asking the Lord that our brothers and sisters in Myanmar will find His Word a lamp to their feet and a light to their path (Psalm 119:105).

SATURDAY 21 A Jakarta-based research and advocacy group has called for reform of Indonesia’s “blasphemy” laws. The Setara Institute for Democracy and Peace said that the controversial laws disproportionately target religious minorities in Indonesia, the world’s most populous Muslim-majority country, and can lead to “trial by mob”. Additionally, because the laws are so vaguely worded, police rely on fatwas (formal rulings) from Islamic scholars in order to interpret and understand them. Pray that the central government of Indonesia, which has often shown a supportive attitude towards Christians and other religious minorities, will consider these matters carefully.

SUNDAY 22 **Lord God and Heavenly Father, we lift up to You our brothers and sisters in South-East Asian lands such as Laos and Vietnam, who we know are viewed with suspicion and hostility by both authorities and the communities around them. We intercede for those displaced from their homes because of their faith, asking that You will provide for their needs and remind them that they follow in the path of their Saviour who had no place to lay His head. We pray for those denied vital food supplies because of their love for You, and ask that You, already knowing their need, will provide. Please sustain them in their most holy faith, because we ask it in the Name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. (Matthew 8:20; Matthew 6:8; Jude v.20)**



One of the Barnabas-supported Christian apprentices in Pakistan

MONDAY 23 “The apprenticeship programme is opening doors to a better future for our Christian apprentices,” said one of our project partners in Pakistan. Barnabas Aid has already funded around 1,500 young believers to undertake apprenticeships in various professions, of whom 909 have successfully completed their training. Another set of Barnabas-funded apprentices are, God willing, beginning their apprenticeships soon. Give thanks that Barnabas has enabled these young believers to break the cycle of poverty that afflicts many of our Pakistani brothers and sisters. Pray for those who have completed their apprenticeships, asking that the Lord will be with them as they begin careers in their chosen fields. Pray for the success of those still working towards completion and those who will shortly begin their training.

TUESDAY 24 Cry out to the Lord on behalf of the tiny Christian community of Yemen, who are sharing in what may be the world’s worst humanitarian crisis. A 2022 ceasefire agreement between the two warring parties in a civil war that began in 2014 led to hopes that conflict could be brought to an end. However, the ceasefire has only been observed intermittently, and the food

shortages and malnutrition that have devastated Yemen have continued. In July 2023 it was estimated that 500,000 Yemeni children under the age of five are suffering acute malnutrition. Pray for all those suffering in Yemen, and particularly Christians who also endure persecution as converts from Islam.

WEDNESDAY 25 Many Christians in Algeria are meeting for worship discreetly in homes owing to the closure of so many church buildings in recent years. The most recent reports are that 41 church buildings have been closed by the authorities – in many cases physically sealed shut – leaving only 13 still open. Lift up to the Lord our brothers and sisters who have suffered the loss of their church buildings or may shortly do so. Ask that our Saviour through the Holy Spirit will continue to meet with His people wherever they are gathered in His Name (Matthew 18:20).

THURSDAY 26 Only the Lord knows how many believers there are in the North African country of Morocco. The tiny Christian community of this Muslim-majority country are all converts from Islam, and as such face discrimination and possible reprisals from their neighbours, their family or their former friends. Moroccan believers must meet together in secret – they are not permitted to attend Morocco’s churches, which are reserved for foreign believers. Intercede for our Christian family in Morocco, especially those isolated from other believers, asking our Father to sustain them through all their trials.

FRIDAY 27 The official newspaper of Islamic State (IS – also known as ISIS, ISIL, Daesh) reported in July 2023

the killing of a Christian fisherman by IS fighters in Cabo Delgado Province, Mozambique. Jihadists from IS Mozambique captured two fishermen near the village of Litamanda on 9 July. One of the men, a Christian, was beheaded. The other was allowed to go free because he was a Muslim. IS Mozambique has been clear that it is willing to kill moderate Muslims, but this incident demonstrates that Christians are at particular risk from violent Islamism. Pray for the grieving family and friends of our brothers, and ask the Lord to bring an end to the Islamist insurgency in northern Mozambique.

SATURDAY 28 “Food scarcity and even famine is an ongoing and desperate situation,” our Haitian church partners told us. The government has collapsed and the Caribbean nation is, in effect, being run by violent gangs, making people afraid to leave their homes. Earthquakes and hurricanes add to their despair. Barnabas provided around 30,000 Christian families with rice, distributed safely through churches. “The practical relief is invaluable to our Haitian brothers and sisters,” said our partners. Give thanks for the successful distribution. Pray that the Lord will fill His people with His peace and drive away any fears (John 14:27). Ask that stability returns to the nation.

SUNDAY 29 **Lord Jesus, we intercede for brothers and sisters encountering apparent hopelessness through war, persecution, natural disasters or extreme poverty. We thank You that through Your glorious resurrection we are born again to a living hope in You that does not disappoint us. We ask for mobilisation of resources to**

support our Christian family facing such suffering and that You will use Your people to help them renew their hope in You, for we pray in Your mighty Name. (1 Peter 1:3; Romans 5:5)

MONDAY 30 Deaths from violent conflicts around the world have reached their highest level in almost two decades, according to a recent report. Researchers from the Institute for Economics and Peace based in Sydney, Australia, calculated that in 2022 nearly a quarter of a million people died in wars and armed conflicts. This represents the highest number since 1994, the year of the Rwandan Genocide. The war in Ukraine has contributed towards this figure, with conflict also worsening in Myanmar and Middle Belt Nigeria, areas of intense anti-Christian violence. While full world peace must await the return of our Lord Jesus Christ (Isaiah 2:4), pray that there will be increasing reconciliation and peace in all parts of our troubled world.

TUESDAY 31 Up to 783 million people worldwide are suffering from hunger and food shortages, according to a July 2023 UN report, with the Middle East, Africa and the Caribbean the worst-affected regions of the world. In total around 2.4 billion people – almost a third of the world’s population – are experiencing either moderate or severe food insecurity. Ask the Lord to bless the work of food.gives and other Barnabas food projects as we seek to alleviate hunger and malnutrition suffered by our brothers and sisters in Christ. Pray for the success of all those working to provide for the hungry and starving in all parts of the world.



International Headquarters

The Old Rectory, River Street, Pewsey, Wiltshire SN9 5DB, UK

Telephone 01672 564938 **Email** info@barnabasaid.org

Fax 01672 565030

Barnabas Aid Australia is a charitable institution but gifts are not tax deductible. Barnabas Aid Australia is a registered business name of Barnabas Fund Australia. ABN 70 005 572 485.

Australia

GPO Box 612, Adelaide SA 5001 **Telephone** (08) 8117 8079
or 1300 365 799 **Email** bfaustralia@barnabasaid.org

New Zealand

PO Box 276018, Manukau City, Auckland 2241
Telephone (09) 280 4385 or 0800 008 805
Email office@barnabasaid.org.nz

Published by Barnabas Aid 1934 Old Gallows Road
Suite 350 Vienna, VA 22182, USA

© Barnabas Aid 2023