



barnabasprayer

**BARNABAS AID - AID AGENCY FOR THE PERSECUTED CHURCH
BRINGING HOPE TO SUFFERING CHRISTIANS**

To help you
pray for the
persecuted
Church

SEPTEMBER/
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barnabasaid.org

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

September

SUNDAY 1 Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! Thank you for the new birth and living hope You have given us through the resurrection of Your Son. Thank You for the inheritance prepared for us in heaven. Thank you for the trials of many kinds that You allow us to have for a little while on earth to strengthen our faith. We rejoice in Your wisdom, far beyond ours, and that You know the end from the beginning. We want nothing more than to embrace whatever Your will is for us, that we may bring glory to our Lord Jesus, in whose Name we pray. (1 Peter 1:3-5; Matthew 25:34)

MONDAY 2 Almost every inhabitant of Sobame Da, a mainly Christian village in central Mali, was killed when Islamist militants attacked on June 10. Those who tried to escape were shot, those who stayed in their homes were burned to death. Pray for the few men who survived the attack, now grieving the loss of their entire families, that they will know God's comfort and

peace. Jihadists have announced their intention of establishing sharia throughout Mali. Ask the LORD, who makes wars cease, to restrain these men of violence (Psalm 46:9).

TUESDAY 3 "You have three days to go or you will be killed!" This was the message from Boko Haram militants to Christians in south-east Niger on June 11. It was delivered by a Christian woman the militants had kidnapped four days earlier and then set free. Islamist militias had already killed dozens of civilians in the Diffa region, where this message was brought, and on June 2, the governor had ordered churches to be closed due to the threat of terrorist attack. Pray that the Nigerien security forces will succeed in protecting the country's civilians and especially the Christians who are one of Boko Haram's main targets.

WEDNESDAY 4 The Niger Worship Bill has been drafted by the government of Niger with the intention of preventing Islamic extremism and violence. A famous sheikh mistakenly thought it promoted same-sex marriage and condemned it as "anti-Islam". The next day, June 15, Muslim protestors began attacking church buildings, and one in Maradi was severely burned. Sheikh Rayadoune was arrested, but released a few hours later, after issuing a statement that he had made an error and the bill said nothing on the subject. Sheikh Rayadoune and the governor of Maradi then visited the burned down church to make a public apology to the Christians. Thank the Lord for this gesture and pray that the political and religious leaders in Niger may succeed in maintaining a tolerant and moderate form of Islam in their country, which is about 90% Muslim. The Niger

Worship Bill includes the words: “the State ensures the exercise of worship, the peaceful coexistence of religions, as well as the promotion of dialogue within and between religions”.

THURSDAY 5 “Yaya” was elderly, blind and a convert from Islam. When floods destroyed his house in Chad in 2012, Barnabas Aid built him a new one. It was a great encouragement to Yaya’s faith that Christians far away had given him a new home. Later another terrible storm came, shaking the house and causing others nearby to collapse. Yaya stood in the middle of his home, holding the tall staff he would use to feel his way, and cried out to the Lord, “I don’t know the people who gave me this house – You brought them to me. If You allow this house to be destroyed, what is left for me?” The wind died down, the rain stopped, Yaya’s house survived, and his faith increased. On June 5, 2019, Yaya went to be with his Lord. At the funeral his widow spoke of the house, given by unknown people, which brought comfort to her and her children in their grieving. “We need to pray for this family that God will continue to take care of them,” says a Chadian church leader.

FRIDAY 6 Praise God that Pastor Balu Saste, his wife and ten other Indian Christians were acquitted of charges of making “forced conversions” at a court in Madhya Pradesh state on May 6. The twelve believers had been arrested in January 2016 and held for eight days, along with pastor Balu’s son, then aged two. Police came to the church when a mob attacked it, beating and harassing the worshippers and threatening to burn down the building with the Christians locked inside. This has been hailed as a

landmark victory, because Indian Christians are so often falsely accused of converting people by fraud, force or allurement, which is specifically banned by law in certain states.

SATURDAY 7 Radical Muslims in eastern Sri Lanka are pressurizing Tamils, both Hindus and Christians, to convert to Islam. Sometimes violence is used. At least ten villages that used to be Tamil are now 100% Muslim and have Arabized the village names, while 50 new Muslim villages have sprung up with Arab funding. Christians comprise about 15-20% of the Tamils in this part of Sri Lanka. Pray for full religious liberty in Sri Lanka and for peace between all religions and ethnic groups.

SUNDAY 8 **Our Father, help us to learn from our brothers and sisters who suffer for You without complaint, who even rejoice that they have been counted worthy to suffer disgrace for Christ’s Name. May we too rejoice if we have to suffer mockery, exclusion, humiliation, rejection or worse. Like them, may we grow in our faith, as earthly status or wealth is taken from us. Like them, may we cling ever more closely to Jesus, our Savior, knowing that no one can snatch us out of the hand of Him in whose Name we pray. (Acts 5:41; John 10:28)**

MONDAY 9 Eight converts from Islam to Christianity were arrested in the Iranian city of Bushehr on July 1. Their Bibles, laptops and phones were also seized by Ministry of Intelligence agents. Computer hard drives and security footage were taken from the workplaces of some. Khatoon (aged 61) was released the same day, but the younger ones were put into solitary confinement without access

to lawyers. Please pray for Sam (36), his wife Maryam (35), Sasan (35) and his wife Marjan (33), who are Khatoon's sons and daughters-in-law, also Pooriya (27) and his wife Fatemeh (27) and Habib (38).

TUESDAY 10 Praise God that the cross on top of a 100-year-old church building in Tabriz, Iran, was restored to its rightful place on July 9. It had been forcibly removed by security officials on May 9 when they also locked the Assyrian Evangelical congregation out of the building. After many protests, a senior legal adviser to the Iranian president said he had doubted the legality of what had been done in May, referring to several articles in Iran's Constitution and especially Article 13 which states that religious minorities are recognized and free to perform their religious ceremonies. He added that the move also went against Iran's



Workmen replace the cross on the top of the Assyrian Evangelical Church, Tabriz

Charter on Citizens' Rights, launched by President Rouhani in 2016. Pray that the Iranian authorities, who had changed the locks on May 9, will now give the keys to the congregation.

WEDNESDAY 11 Please continue to pray for 65-year-old Roksari who was arrested in her home in Iran in December 2018 by three intelligence officers who seized mobile phones, Bibles and other Christian material. She has already endured ten days of intensive interrogation although was later released on bail. Roksari appeared before the Karaj Islamic Revolutionary Court on July 27, charged with "propaganda against the system", and was sentenced to one year in jail on July 29. Friends who witnessed proceedings said that the judge was rude and tried to humiliate Roksari when she disagreed with him. She has the right to appeal the sentence. Pray that God will give grace and strength to Roksari, as she faces the prospect of imprisonment, and that she will have the legal support she needs to appeal. Pray also for four other Christian women arrested in Karaj at the same time as Roksari – their whereabouts are unknown at the time of writing, but the Lord knows.

THURSDAY 12 Praise God for answered prayer for Jiang Rong, the wife of Pastor Wang Yi. After six months in prison in China she was released on June 10. At the time of writing, only her husband and four other church members remain behind bars, out of more than 100 who had been arrested. Jiang Rong is required to live under surveillance at her brother's house. Pray for her as she adapts back to freedom, yet knowing her husband is still detained, and

for their son, Shuya (aged 11), now reunited with his mother.

FRIDAY 13 A month after his wife was released from prison (see above), further pressure was put on Chinese pastor, Wang Yi, held since December 9, 2018. A new charge – running “illegal business operations” – was added to the original charge of incitement to subvert state power. Two public prosecutors told his lawyer on July 17 that Wang Yi had lost a lot of weight in prison but that it was only “rumor” that his hair had turned white and his teeth were falling out. Ask that our heavenly Father, who knows the needs of His children, will support and strengthen Wang Yi, whatever his condition, and the other members of his congregation still in prison (Matthew 6:32).

SATURDAY 14 Christian publishers in the US warned in June that the 25% tariff proposed by the Trump administration on many products from China, including books, could threaten the production of Bibles. China prints more Bibles than any other country, and exports them to publishing houses around the world. The extra costs imposed might mean that the printing of certain languages was no longer viable. Pray for President Donald Trump that the Lord, who has allowed him to be raised up to such a powerful position, will give him “a discerning heart to govern ... and to distinguish between right and wrong” as He did for King Solomon (1 Kings 3:7-9).

SUNDAY 15 Loving Lord, we rejoice in the knowledge that You have Your people even in the hardest places of this world. Thank you for the Church in North Korea, which has not been extinguished by 70

years of terrible suffering. May our North Korean brothers and sisters, many of them starving in labor camps, experience the truth of Your promise to the apostle Paul, that Your grace is sufficient for them and Your power is made perfect in weakness. May they delight in insults, hardships and persecutions, always giving glory to Jesus, in whose Name we pray. (2 Corinthians 12:9)

MONDAY 16 On July 1 the Egyptian authorities agreed to license another 127 church buildings, making a total of 1,021 licenses issued under the Law for Building and Restoring Churches. That means there are 2,709 applications still waiting for a decision since the law was passed three years ago. From 1856 until August 30, 2016, legislation had made it extremely difficult for Egyptian Christians to get permission for places of worship, and the number of churches was grossly inadequate for the number of Christians. Christian worship in unlicensed buildings is illegal and liable to mob attack. Thank the Lord for the Egyptian politicians who are promoting this change, against the will of a section of the Muslim majority. Pray that the remaining applications will be processed quickly and for a change in the general public attitude to church buildings.

TUESDAY 17 Islamic State (IS) terrorists have hacked the Facebook accounts of dozens of Egyptian Christians, in order to insult and threaten them and spread the IS message. The hackers changed the personal information page of several of the Christian account holders to read “we promise to slay him soon”. Pray that the Christian victims of these incidents will not be fearful or

dismayed, but will rest in the LORD's promise to take hold of their right hand and help them (Isaiah 41:13).

WEDNESDAY 18 Fadi Youssef Todari (25) discovered in May that his Facebook page had been hacked and a message insulting to Islam had been placed there. He posted a video apologizing for any slur left by the hacker. But on June 10, a mob of up to 100 angry Muslims attacked his home in Minya province, Egypt. Fadi, with his wife and daughter, had escaped minutes before the arrival of the mob, which also attacked the home of one of his uncles. The police arrested 25 attackers, Fadi, his brother and two of their uncles. On June 11, Fadi and his relatives attended a "calming session" at the police station, involving village elders and security officials where it was agreed that the hacking would be investigated. Pray that those who persecuted him online and physically may be brought to justice.

THURSDAY 19 A Sudanese pastor writing to Barnabas Aid earlier this year expressed that his government is "still working hard to eliminate the church presence". He said that sharia is applied more to non-Muslims than to Muslims and that the government continues to seize church properties and expel church leaders. "Pray for the Body of Christ to stand with the Sudanese Church in this hard time," wrote the pastor.

FRIDAY 20 Pro-democracy protesters in Sudan celebrated a power-sharing deal announced in July. This should result in the Transitional Military Council gradually handing over power to civilians by October 2022. For the Christian minority (now 3%), who

have suffered severe persecution since the 1980s, the big question is whether sharia will continue to be the basis of Sudan's legislation. If so, they will continue to suffer discrimination, at the very least, and probably much worse. Pray that God's hand will be over events in Sudan, and that, if He wills, the Christians may have a period of respite from their suffering.

SATURDAY 21 A Sudanese prison ministry, supported by Barnabas, helps Christian women jailed because they have been sharing the Gospel or have broken sharia rules (which in classical Islam should not be applied to non-Muslims). Some of them have their children in prison with them. Many come out of prison with a stronger faith than when they went in, because of the ministry, both spiritual and practical. The ministry continues to care for them after release, to make sure they can settle back into their lives and find a way to make a living. Praise God that this ministry continues to be allowed to function and pray that it will continue to enable the women to grow in Christ-likeness through their suffering (Romans 5:3-4).



Released from prison in Sudan, "Martha" has resumed her work of selling tea

SUNDAY 22 Heavenly Father, we pray today for those who cannot join with fellow Christians to worship You, to hear Your Word, to pray with others and to encourage each other, except by putting themselves in danger. We pray for those who could be arrested by police, for those who could be attacked by angry mobs, for those who could be targeted by bombers. Give them courage to keep meeting together. Give them peace to focus on the worship without worrying. Give wisdom, boldness and vision to their pastors and ministers, always a primary target. In Jesus' Name we ask.

MONDAY 23 The severe repression and persecution of certain Christian denominations in Eritrea continues. These believers are only allowed to meet in twos or threes; a gathering of four or more is illegal. Even officially recognized denominations are persecuted, as when 21 church-run health facilities were seized by the army and five church ministers arrested on June 12-13. On Sunday June 23 an unregistered church in Keren was raided and several members arrested, including children and pregnant women. Ask our Father to take this cup of suffering from His Eritrean children, if that is His will (Matthew 26:39).

TUESDAY 24 Since Eritrea became independent from Ethiopia in 1991, after a 30-year civil war, it has been ruled by President Isaias Afwerki, whose first name means "Isaiah". Under his rule, severe human rights violations have been the norm. In 2002, a policy was introduced requiring religious groups to register. Unregistered Christian denominations have been severely targeted ever since. At least four religious groups have

submitted the complex and intrusive documentation to apply for registration but without result. The president himself must sign, for the registration process to be completed. The Old Testament prophet Isaiah warned against "those who make unjust laws ... those who issue oppressive decrees" (Isaiah 10:1). Pray for President Afwerki that he may use his immense power to bring justice and freedom for all his citizens.

WEDNESDAY 25 Thank the Lord for the long history of Christianity in Ethiopia, a continuous presence since the first century, and for the ongoing faithful witness of the growing Church, despite ethnic tensions. Islam also is growing and some extremists have attacked churches and killed Christians. Christians ask for prayer for peace in their country. Pray that Ethiopian Christians may be peacemakers, salt and light in their society (Matthew 5:9-16).

THURSDAY 26 Afghan Christians are in severe danger of being killed for apostasy from Islam, either murdered by the Taliban (now an insurgency, but ruling from 1996-2001) or executed by the state. Yet, praise God, they find ways to meet together. Pray for their protection. In the last decade, Afghan society at large, as well as many members of the Afghan parliament, have expressed extreme hostility to those who leave Islam, and demanded harsh punishments, even for converts who have left the country. Ask that God will soften their hearts.

FRIDAY 27 Long-delayed presidential elections are due to be held in Afghanistan tomorrow. At the time of writing, there are eleven

candidates. Pray for peaceful and fair elections, and that the winner will lead Afghanistan in ways of peace and freedom, protecting it effectively from the Taliban and other Islamic extremist insurgents, and enabling the underground Church to come out into the open in safety.

SATURDAY 28 Tunisia's prime minister has banned the *niqab* (Muslim women's full-face covering with eye-slits) in government offices. The *niqab* was also forbidden under the rule of President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, who was toppled in 2011 at the very beginning of the Arab Spring, but in the last eight years, women have been increasingly wearing it. The more conservative and religiously observant Muslims are, the harder it is for Christians living among them. Pray for the small Tunisian church (converts from Islam and their children) that the Lord will protect them from harassment and enable them to live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness (1 Timothy 2:1-2). Ask for the Lord to guide when parliamentary elections are held on October 6.

SUNDAY 29 We praise You, heavenly Father, for the spread of Your Kingdom in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Although humans have tried to suppress the faith of Christians, Your Holy Spirit cannot be quenched and is active in bringing Saudi people to put their trust in Your Son Jesus. Thank you, Lord! We rejoice also in the many faithful believers from other countries who live and work in Saudi Arabia, gathering together for worship even though they could be arrested for it. Protect, strengthen and keep each one. We pray this in the Name of Jesus Christ.

MONDAY 30 Amid the sporadic violence that continues in Syria, Christians remain a particular target. Islamic State (IS) claimed responsibility for detonating a car bomb in front of a church in the city of Qamishli, in north-east Syria on July 11. At least eight people were injured in the blast. Earlier in the same day, eleven civilians, including children, were killed by a bomb in the north-west city of Afrin. Pray that Syria may become a stable, peaceful country once more, with citizens of all backgrounds living together with mutual respect.

October

TUESDAY 1 Syrian Christian and retired school teacher, Suzan Der Kirkour (aged 60) was raped repeatedly, tortured and stoned to death by Islamist militants. Her body was found by members of her church on July 9, near her home in a Christian village in Idlib governorate. Forensic investigations showed that her ordeal had lasted about nine



Suzan Der Kirkour

hours. A church leader commented, “Attacks against Christians, mainly women and girls, are frequent here now, but this one has shocked the community. Suzan was an unmarried lady and a respected teacher who only remained in the village for the sake of her pupils, so that they could continue their studies.” Pray for an end to violence against Christian women and girls in this part of Syria. At the time of writing, Idlib remains the stronghold of Islamic State terrorists.

WEDNESDAY 2 After three decades of lobbying by Iraq, UNESCO voted in July to make the archaeological remains of Babylon a World Heritage Site. Babylon was the capital of a mighty empire around 4,000 years ago. Pray that the living presence of Christians in Iraq, which has continued unbroken for almost 2,000 years, may also be valued and treasured. Their numbers have dwindled to a quarter or less in the last 30 years, as hostility towards them has grown. Christians are the indigenous people of Iraq, as opposed to Muslims who came originally from Arabia. Pray that the Christian witness may continue to shine brightly in Iraq.

THURSDAY 3 “Dwura” and her family lived in fear since May 31, 2006, until they arrived in Australia three months ago. The family home had been in the Plains of Nineveh, the historic heartland of Christianity in Iraq. But 13 years ago, Dwura’s brother-in-law was shot dead by terrorists when they checked his ID card and saw he was a Christian. In 2014, Islamic State fighters took Dwura’s town and the family fled. By the time the Iraqi army liberated the

town, their home had been destroyed. This family was the 26th persecuted Christian family brought to Australia by Barnabas Aid’s Operation Safe Havens this year, with visas granted by the Australian government and help with airfares from Barnabas Aid. Pray that all will remain strong in their Christian faith as they enjoy peace and freedom in the country they felt God was leading them to.

FRIDAY 4 At least eight Pakistani Christians are on death row, sentenced to be hanged under the country’s notorious “blasphemy” law. Since 1991 there has been a mandatory death sentence for “defiling the name of” Muhammad (Pakistan Penal Code, Section 295-C) and false accusations to settle personal grudges have abounded. Christians and other non-Muslims are particularly vulnerable to false accusation by Muslims. No one of any religion has yet been executed under this law, but hundreds have been accused. The National Commission for Justice and Peace recorded that 776 Muslims, 505 Ahmadiyyas, 229 Christians and 30 Hindus were accused under various sections of the “blasphemy” law from 1987 until 2018. Christians are only 2% of the population of Pakistan but 15% of the “blasphemy” cases. Pray that they and all others falsely accused will be acquitted and released.

SATURDAY 5 Continue to pray for Stephen Masih, in prison in Pakistan accused of “blasphemy” because of the brain damage he suffered in a childhood illness which causes him to have outbursts of bad language. A court hearing on July 6 had to be postponed because the complainant

did not come. Pray that he will be granted justice and soon. Pray for his protection and security in prison and for wisdom for the Christian lawyers representing him.

SUNDAY 6 Lord Jesus, who stood before Your accusers in court, and endured interrogations and beatings, please be with Your followers who must answer accusations from hostile authorities. Free them from worry about how they will defend themselves or what they will say but keep them in Your perfect peace, fully trusting in Your promise that Your Holy Spirit will give them the right words to say when the time comes. May their words astound and amaze those who hear. May their words give glory to You. (Luke 12:11-12)

MONDAY 7 “The water lashing out all over. Situation is worsening! Helpless are praying!” This is the message that came to Barnabas Aid from a Pentecostal pastor in the Chittagong Hill Tracts of Bangladesh. The despised and impoverished Christians there – mostly tribal people or converts from Islam – struggled to make a living even before floods and landslides brought devastation in mid-July. “Your intense prayer and kind support



Flooding in the Chittagong Hill Tracts of Bangladesh

for them will be highly appreciated,” wrote the pastor. Barnabas has provided food, medicines and water purification tablets, as Christians are normally discriminated against when government relief is distributed in Bangladesh. But please respond to the pastor’s call for prayer. It takes years for poor communities to recover from this kind of natural disaster.

TUESDAY 8 The Islamization of sub-Saharan Africa is advancing in many ways, including literally extending Islam’s territory through Muslims buying land. Mosques are springing up everywhere, whether or not there are any local Muslims. South Sudan, established only eight years ago as a homeland for Sudanese Christians, now has an Islamic University. In Christian-majority Kenya, Muslims are purchasing the plots of land that lie along the main roads, offering owners double the normal price. Areas of the country that used to be non-Muslim have become Muslim-majority. In Muslim-majority Niger, Islamic missionaries from Kuwait are immigrating and establishing whole new “villages”. Pray for a strong and vibrant Christian witness that will draw Muslims to Christ.

WEDNESDAY 9 Twin attacks by Islamist extremists in northern Burkina Faso on June 9 and 10 left 29 people dead. The first attack killed 19 people in the town of Arbinda, bringing the number killed there to over 100 in six months. “It’s proven that they were looking for Christians,” said Barnabas Aid’s contact, “Families who hide Christians are killed.” After the June 9 attack, all the remaining Christians in Arbinda fled. Praise God for the courage of those who died trying to protect

innocent Christians, and pray that the Prince of Peace will bring an end to this violence.

THURSDAY 10 Gambian Christians hoped that the process of Islamic radicalization of their country would slow down when a new president took office in 2017. But this has not happened yet. The previous president had announced in 2015 that The Gambia was an Islamic republic, and Muslims from Asia visit to teach extremist Islam to the Muslim community (90%+ of the population). So far there is no anti-Christian violence, except against individual converts from Islam. Add your prayers to those of our Gambian brothers and sisters, asking God to intervene and reverse the trend towards a stricter and more intolerant form of Islam.

FRIDAY 11 A Kaduna State High Court declared on June 19 that the state's proposed Religious Regulatory law would be illegal. The government of this Nigerian state, which has a population that is roughly half and half Muslims and Christians, had wanted to issue licenses to preachers, which would have given them the opportunity to refuse to license some. This was challenged in court by the Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria. Praise God for the Muslim judge's ruling that the law would violate the right to freedom of association and freedom of religion.

SATURDAY 12 Liberia's 1847 Constitution acknowledged "the goodness of God, in granting to us the blessings of the Christian religion, and political, religious, and civil liberty". A new Constitution in 1986 rejected the previous pro-Christian bias and

established the country as a secular state with no state religion (Article 14). From 2003 to 2018, UN peacekeeping troops (up to 15,000 at a time) were present in the country; about three-quarters of these troops were Muslims. Some bought land and built mosques. Many impoverished Christians converted to Islam, and the number of Muslims in Liberia is now estimated by one church leader at over 30%. There are requests for a national holiday at the end of Ramadan. At the same time, there is a campaign to make Liberia a Christian state. Pray that Liberian Christians will be faithful to their Lord and Savior and will seek justice and equality for all.

SUNDAY 13 **King of kings and Lord of lords, we pray for all in authority in our country, asking that You will equip them and guide them so that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. But if Your perfect will for us is that we should grow in Christlikeness by experiencing troubles and difficulties that test our faith, then we ask that You will enable us to make the most of the opportunity that You give us to suffer, especially if you grant us the privilege of suffering for the Name of Christ, the Name in which we ask these things. (1 Timothy 2:1-2)**

MONDAY 14 Christians in Angola are preparing to go underground. They have until December 2019 to comply with a new law which will make every denomination illegal unless it can provide notarized identity documents for at least 62,000 members (which would cost hundreds of thousands of dollars for the documents alone). On the pretext of health and safety, the government can also close down

church buildings constructed of local materials instead of brick and corrugated iron or roof tiles. In Kabenda province, all the churches are now closed because of the rule against local building materials. Ask for wisdom for Angolan church leaders in this dramatically changed religious liberty situation and that, whatever happens to buildings and legal recognition, the Church will continue to grow.

TUESDAY 15 A recent census in Malawi showed that the growing Muslim community, mainly living close to the long coastline of Lake Malawi, is still less than 12%. However, Muslims dominate the economy and also the senior positions in all four of the main political parties. Pray that Malawian Christians will have wisdom and perseverance to play an active role in their country, and prevent the process of Islamization.

WEDNESDAY 16 When Boko Haram Islamist militants ransacked the mainly-Christian village of Roum in northern Cameroon on July 10, all the villagers escaped with their lives. This was because they were not sleeping in their houses but in the bush, a precaution they had taken because of recent attacks on other villages in the area. Praise God for delivering them, and pray that He will meet their practical and psychological needs. The jihadists sets fire to the villagers' homes, killed their livestock and plundered their food supply. With their clothes, bedding and other possessions destroyed, the villagers are now living in a local school. "These attacks led to great fear, psychosis, trauma and panic," wrote a Cameroonian church leader

to Barnabas Aid, which has sent food, blankets, sleeping mats and soap.

THURSDAY 17 "We need your prayers because it is not easy," said a Cameroonian church leader to Barnabas Aid, as he described the latest Boko Haram attacks on the mainly Christian village of Grossi in the north of his country. On June 1, a 16-year-old boy (perhaps a shepherd) was kidnapped and later killed. On June 8, a woman was murdered in the bush as she collected grass for her sheep and on the same day several houses were burned down. Grossi had already been attacked in May and January. Pray that the Lord of hosts will protect this village and provide for all those who have lost livestock, grain, and other essentials for survival.

FRIDAY 18 Felix Ngole, a 41-year-old Christian from Cameroon now living in the UK, won his freedom of speech campaign in a landmark judgment by the Court of Appeal on July 3. Felix had been expelled from his MA course in social work at Sheffield University, after referencing the Bible to defend a US official jailed for refusing to register a



Felix Ngole

same-sex marriage. He posted that the official was only expressing her beliefs as a Christian. The judges ruled that the university had “wrongly confused the expression of religious views with the notion of discrimination”. After three years of legal battles, pray that Felix, who came to the UK in 2003 to escape persecution as a Christian in his homeland, may now be able to get on with his chosen profession. “As Christians, we are called to care for and serve others,” he says.

SATURDAY 19 Gangs of Muslim prisoners in British jails are using threats and beatings to force other inmates to convert to Islam. “Their tactic is to befriend someone when they come in. If they don’t convert, they will then start spreading rumors about them that the person is a snitch [informer], so that they will be ostracized. Then the beatings follow,” said a non-Muslim prisoner. Pray that these Muslim gang members will meet the Lord Jesus and find salvation, healing, identity and belonging in Him.

SUNDAY 20 Lord Jesus Christ, we remember how You warned Your followers that they would be persecuted, just as You were. We know that at least one in ten of those who are called by Your Name today are living in situations where marginalization, discrimination, harassment, violence, torture, imprisonment or even death are an everyday possibility. We ask that You will wonderfully enable them to glory in their sufferings, as did the apostle Paul. May their suffering produce perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope so that You are glorified. (John 15:20; Romans 5:3-4)

MONDAY 21 Without his parents knowledge, a six-year-old boy in Azerbaijan took Christian booklets to school as gifts for his classmates. But the head teacher called the police, who then raided the boy’s home, seizing Bibles, other Christian literature and worship CDs. The police questioned the boy’s mother about a children’s party in their home on December 31, 2018 when each child had been given some candy and a cartoon book about the nativity story. Both parents were found guilty and fined. Their offences were storing unauthorized religious literature (Administrative Code, Article 451) and of holding a special meeting for children (Article 515.0.3). Pray that the laws of Azerbaijan may be changed so that such things are not illegal.

TUESDAY 22 Continue to pray for Eldos, who fled Kyrgyzstan with two Christian relatives after suffering terrible violence and threats of false accusations from Muslims enraged by his decision to leave Islam and follow Christ. Another operation (May 12, on his jaw) has helped him go one stage further with his physical recovery. But, at the time of writing, they have not yet been granted the visas they have applied for and are marooned in an intermediate country. Eldos is spending his time there reading the Bible, praying, learning the language of the country he hopes to settle in, and evangelizing in the streets. Pray that in God’s perfect timing, the three will be able to move to the safe country, far away, where they hope to re-start their lives.

WEDNESDAY 23 Thank the Lord that the constant threats against other Christians in the area of Kyrgyzstan where Eldos and his relatives lived (see above) have ceased, since Eldos wrote a statement that he had forgiven his attackers. One particular individual, who had threatened to kill most of Eldos's family because they were traitors according to sharia, has left the area because police are seeking him for various other things he has done. Pray that this man will have a life-changing personal encounter with the Lord Jesus, like Saul, another great persecutor of Christians (Acts 9:1-5).

THURSDAY 24 Christians in Kyrgyzstan are encouraged to see that new personnel at the State Commission on Religious Affairs seem more tolerant than the previous staff and often consult with church leaders. However, the Commission has expanded its network of local branches to have one in every region of the country, thus increasing its control of church activities. It is currently preparing regulations for the registration of Christian educational institutes, and last year many laws were amended to spell out in more detail the punishments for infringing them e.g. fines for pastors leading illegal meetings. Pray that church leaders in Kyrgyzstan will be as wise as snakes and as innocent as doves as they respond to the changing religious liberty situation.

FRIDAY 25 Traditionally in Kyrgyzstan, friendships formed at school last for a lifetime. It is a "culture of classmates". But now, Christian children and teenagers

are encountering hostility and even violence at school. Boys and girls are beaten and stoned by others, encouraged by the mullahs. One 12-year-old Christian was beaten up at school so the family moved to another city, but at his new school he was stoned. He received two severe punches to his head, and now has terrible headaches, but the doctors refuse to treat him. His youngest sister suffered concussion when she was severely attacked by her classmates. Pray for Christian children in Kyrgyzstan, learning at such a young age to suffer for Christ, that He will enable them to love their enemies and pray for those who persecute them (Matthew 5:44).

SATURDAY 26 Cuban pastor Ramón Rigal and his wife Ayda have both been jailed for home-schooling their children, Ruth (13) and Daniel (9). They wanted to avoid their children being bullied for their Christian faith and taught atheism at government schools in the communist country. The parents were charged with "acting against the normal development of a minor". This is the most severe punishment which Ramón has received so far for home-schooling his children. Pray for God's strength and peace for Daniel, now attending a government school again, for Ruth attending revision classes at the public library, their parents in prison, and the frail grandparents who now care for the children.

SUNDAY 27 Lord Jesus,
Your family are hungry,
They are in want of food.
Father, feed them

All: From Your gracious loving hand.
Lord Jesus,
Your family are thirsty,
They are in want of refreshment.
Father, give them water
All: In Your abundant mercy.
Lord Jesus,
Your family are strangers,
They are in want of acceptance.
Father, give them a home
All: According to Your lovingkindness.

MONDAY 28 Many Somali women lead wretched lives. In this strongly Islamic society, men often have four wives, whom they treat badly. The men expect their wives to provide for their children, but the women have no skills to earn a living, because years of war have disrupted normal life. Perhaps because of this suffering, some Somali women are turning from Islam to Christ. Although they keep their Christian faith secret, they are shunned as “bad Muslims” because they abandon normal Islamic prayer, fasting and mosque-attendance. Pray that Christ’s steadfast love will sustain and strengthen each one, giving them daily joy and hope.

TUESDAY 29 Somali Christian women – often divorced by their Muslim husbands – want to shield their children from Islam. But in Somalia children are expected to attend the mosque. This pressure is especially great for boys. Girls over the age of about eight can stop attending mosque because it is recognized that they might need to be at home helping their mothers. But if boys keep missing mosque prayers, questions are asked. Pray for their mothers, as they seek to help their children grow up as Christian believers. Ask that the blood of Jesus will protect these youngsters

from harm, if they are forced by their fathers or neighbors to participate in Islamic devotions.

WEDNESDAY 30 Modern Indonesia, the most populous Muslim state in the world, is founded on a philosophy called Pancasila. This requires, among other things, that all citizens believe in God. Islam, Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism and Confucianism are the recognized religions. But Pancasila is increasingly rejected by some university students, school pupils and even a small percentage of the army, who say they would prefer an Islamic state established by jihad. The city of Yogyakarta, formerly held up as an example of harmonious Christian-Muslim relations, has now become one of the least tolerant cities, with Islamic vigilante groups active. Pray that Indonesian Muslims, especially the young who cannot remember when this was a reality, will yearn for a harmonious society, where followers of all religions are treated equally.

THURSDAY 31 The Church in China continues growing, with about half a million baptisms a year. Chinese Christians love to read the Bible, and typically go through it many times a year. They also love to give away copies of the Bible to their friends, and many Chinese come to Christ through reading the Word of God. Praise God that the authorities allow millions of Bibles to be printed in China for distribution there, this year 3.34 million, and for all that His Spirit is accomplishing in this land of 1.4 billion people.



USA

80 Abbeyville Road, Lancaster PA 17603
Telephone (703) 288-1681
or toll-free 1-866-936-2525
Fax (703) 288-1682
Email usa@barnabasaid.org

UK

9 Priory Row, Coventry CV1 5EX
Telephone 024 7623 1923
Fax 024 7683 4718
From outside the UK
Telephone +44 24 7623 1923
Fax +44 24 7683 4718
Email info@barnabasfund.org
Registered charity number 1092935
Company registered in England
number 4029536
For a list of all trustees, please contact
Barnabas Fund UK at the Coventry
address above.

Australia

PO BOX 3527,
LOGANHOLME, QLD 4129
Telephone (07) 3806 1076
or 1300 365 799
Fax (07) 3806 4076
Email bfaustralia@barnabasfund.org

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BIC: GENODEF1EK1

New Zealand

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

Northern Ireland and Republic of Ireland

Office address: Office 113 Russell
Business Centre 40-42 Lisburn Road,
Belfast BT9 6AA. Please send mail to
our UK office address.
Telephone 028 91 455 246
or 07875 539003
Email ireland@barnabasfund.org

Singapore

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Account Number: 140-901-654-0

South Africa

Office 301, 3rd Floor, Eikestad mall, 43
Andringa Street, Stellenbosch 7599
Telephone +27 21 808 1668
Email bfsa@barnabasfund.org

International Headquarters

The Old Rectory,
River Street, Pewsey,
Wiltshire SN9 5DB, UK
Telephone 01672 564938
Fax 01672 565030
From outside UK:
Telephone +44 1672 564938
Fax +44 1672 565030
Email info@barnabasfund.org