



The 2022
**WORLD
WATCH
LIST**

52 WEEKS OF PRAYER FOR
PERSECUTED CHRISTIANS



OpenDoors®

One thing I ask from the LORD,
this only do I seek: that I may dwell
in the house of the **LORD** all the
days of my life, to gaze on the
beauty of the **LORD** and to seek
Him in His temple. For in the day of
trouble He will keep me safe in His
dwelling; He will hide me in the
shelter of His sacred tent and
set me high upon a rock.

PSALM 27:4-5





ABOUT US

For more than 60 years, Open Doors has served persecuted Christians. Now in more than 60 countries, Open Doors supports God's people with what they need: Bibles, emergency relief aid, trauma counseling, advocacy, training and much more. We're committed to those who suffer for following Jesus, and we believe the persecuted church is part of the DNA of every Christian. No matter where they live, we believe God's people are **one Church, one Family.**

I recently traveled to Turkey, and while there,

I visited the ancient biblical region of Cappadocia. In the mountains and caves of this area, persecuted Christians fled over hundreds of years—finding refuge from invaders, attackers and others who targeted them just because they followed Jesus.

And I've been thinking: Not much has changed.

The World Watch List is always sobering to read, just because the problem is so *big*. But it's not *new*; Satan has targeted God's people since the beginning. It's just gotten worse, and more sophisticated.

In Psalm 24, the lyricist talks about his assurance that God will keep him "safe in His dwelling." That's the other thing that came to mind while I was in Cappadocia; God always keeps His people in His care. Sometimes, that's literal—safe shelter from invaders in a cave home.

But sometimes, His shelter is harder to see; yet that's where He invites us to help. When we pray for our sisters and brothers living in the countries on the World Watch List, we help God provide a place of safety—a family that will never forsake or forget them. No matter what, our prayers strengthen Christians, even in the hardest places.

So take this book, and use it to pray over the next year. Help God prepare a dwelling for His people through your prayers. You'll be amazed at what He does in your life—and what He does in the lives of persecuted Christians around the world.

In Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "De David Curry".

Dr. David Curry,
CEO/President, Open Doors USA

WHAT *is* CHRISTIAN PERSECUTION?

A woman in India watches as her sister is dragged off by Hindu nationalists. **She doesn't know if her sister is alive or dead.**

A man in a North Korean prison camp is shaken awake after being beaten unconscious; **the beatings begin again.**

A woman in Nigeria runs for her life. She has escaped from Boko Haram, which kidnapped her. She is pregnant, and when she returns home, her community will **reject her and her baby.**

A pastor in Afghanistan gets a text message, letting him know the Taliban knows he is a Christian—**and they're coming for him.**

These people don't live in the same country or continent. But they share an important characteristic: They are all Christians, and they suffer because of their faith. While Christian persecution takes many forms, it is defined as any hostility experienced as a result of identification with Jesus Christ. From Sudan to Afghanistan, from Nigeria to North Korea, from Colombia to India, followers of Christianity are targeted for their faith. They are attacked. They are discriminated against at work and at school. They risk sexual violence, torture, arrest and much more.

In just the last year*, there have been:

- Over **360 million** Christians living in places where they experience high levels of persecution and discrimination
- **5,898** Christians killed for their faith
- **5,110** churches and other Christian buildings attacked
- **6,175** believers detained without trial, arrested, sentenced or imprisoned
- **3,829** Christians abducted

These numbers are heartbreaking. And yet, they do not tell the whole story. When we pray with persecuted Christians, we stand with them in solidarity, and remind them they are not alone. We join in God's mission to provide them a place of safety through our support, knowing He will not leave them or forsake them—and neither will we.

*2022 World Watch List reporting period





WHY WE COMPILED *this* PRAYER GUIDE

When the Taliban took over Afghanistan in August 2021, Christians knew they were in immediate danger. Some fled; some ran, but couldn't get out; and others decided to stay, knowing they were committing to a place where they could be killed for their faith at any moment.

“Saad” and “Fatima” are two Afghan Christians who stayed. “For us, everything has been taken away,” Saad says. “We need you to ask God on our behalf.”

“When you pray, you meet us in the room of God’s throne where we can have communion,” Fatima says.

HOW TO USE *this* PRAYER GUIDE

Christians like Saad and Fatima are all over the world, and many of them tell us the same thing: Their lives were turned upside-down because they prayed, and suddenly saw who Jesus is.

The power of prayer can't be overstated—that's why the Bible is filled with commands to pray:

- **Pray without ceasing** (1 Thess. 5:16).
- **Seek His face always** (1 Chron. 16:11).
- **Always keep on praying** (Eph. 6:18).

That's why it's always the first thing persecuted Christians ask for—not money, or emergency aid, or even Bibles. They want to know we are praying with them.

The 2022 World Watch List is set up to do just that. Over the course of the next year you'll pray through the top 50 countries on the World Watch List, and the biggest issues facing your brothers and sisters around the world. You'll find something to lift up on each day.

You'll also find short devotions to connect you with your persecuted family. Sit and pray with these stories and see how God changes your heart.

Over the next year, be encouraged that you are standing with God's persecuted people. They already know the power of prayer—Saad and Fatima are proof of that. As you pray, look for the ways God strengthens your faith, and look for the ways He provides help and refuge for persecuted Christians all over the world.

ABOUT THE WORLD WATCH LIST

What is the World Watch List?

The World Watch List is an annual report on the global persecution of Christians that ranks the top 50 countries where Christians are persecuted for their faith. Released at the beginning of each year, the list uses data from Open Doors field workers and external experts to quantify and analyze persecution worldwide.

How are the countries ranked?

Countries are ranked by the severity of persecution of Christians, calculated by analyzing the level of violent persecution plus the pressure experienced in five spheres of life. For the detailed methodology, visit [ODUSA.org/WWLMethodology](https://www.odusa.org/WWLMethodology).

How can I help?

- 1. Pray.** Use this book to learn how you can pray with your persecuted family, and then lift them up throughout the next year.
- 2. Share.** Share this book with your friends, your church and your family. Ask other believers to join you on this journey of prayer.
- 3. Give.** At [OpenDoorsUSA.org](https://www.opendoorsusa.org), you can find many ways to get involved financially, if you feel God leading you to do so.

Throughout the country profiles, all Christian population data is taken from Johnson T M and Zurlo G A, eds, World Christian Database (Leiden/Boston: Brill, accessed April 2021), unless otherwise indicated.

¹Where marked, Christian population data is an Open Doors estimate



EXTREME PERSECUTION

- 1** Afghanistan
- 2** North Korea
- 3** Somalia
- 4** Libya
- 5** Yemen
- 6** Eritrea
- 7** Nigeria
- 8** Pakistan
- 9** Iran
- 10** India



VERY HIGH PERSECUTION

- | | | | |
|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------------------|---------------|
| 11 Saudi Arabia | 21 Uzbekistan | 31 Central African Republic | 41 Mozambique |
| 12 Myanmar | 22 Algeria | 32 Burkina Faso | 42 Turkey |
| 13 Sudan | 23 Mauritania | 33 Niger | 43 Mexico |
| 14 Iraq | 24 Mali | 34 Bhutan | 44 Cameroon |
| 15 Syria | 25 Turkmenistan | 35 Tunisia | 45 Tajikistan |
| 16 Maldives | 26 Laos | 36 Oman | 46 Brunei |
| 17 China | 27 Morocco | 37 Cuba | 47 Kazakhstan |
| 18 Qatar | 28 Indonesia | 38 Ethiopia | 48 Nepal |
| 19 Vietnam | 29 Bangladesh | 39 Jordan | 49 Kuwait |
| 20 Egypt | 30 Colombia | 40 Dem. Rep. of the Congo | 50 Malaysia |

1

AFGHANISTAN

TOTAL POPULATION
38,914,000

POPULATION CHRISTIANS
Thousands¹

MAIN RELIGION
Islam



Why is Afghanistan on the 2022 World Watch List?

The situation in Afghanistan made headlines around the world, as the Taliban captured the capital, Kabul, in August 2021. Christian persecution is extreme in all spheres of public and private life. The risk of discovery has only increased, since the Taliban controls every aspect of government—including paperwork from international troops that may help identify Christians.

What is life like for Christians?

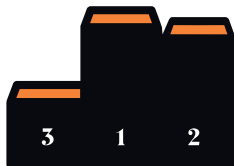
It is impossible to live openly as a Christian in Afghanistan. Leaving Islam is considered shameful, and Christian converts face dire consequences if their new faith is discovered. Either they have to flee the country or they will be killed. This was true before the

Taliban takeover: The situation has become even more dangerous for believers this year.

The Taliban will make sure that Islamic rules and customs are implemented and kept. Christian converts don't have any option but to obey them. If a Christian's new faith is discovered, their family, clan or tribe has to save its honor by disowning the believer, or even killing them. This is widely considered to be justice. Alternatively, since leaving Islam is considered a sign of insanity, a Christian who has converted from Islam may be forcibly sent to a psychiatric hospital.

Where is God at work in Afghanistan?

The night of the Taliban takeover, a baby was born to a secret Christian couple in Afghanistan. The parents of the little girl said they felt the birth showed God hasn't given up on the country. God will also uphold His people, even in the most devastating circumstances.



This is the first time Afghanistan has been No. 1 on the World Watch List.



Photo by IAMB

MEET “SHARIFULLAH”:

“The Taliban
are killing
our souls
and spirits.”

How can I pray with Christians in Afghanistan?

Day 1: Pray for secret believers in Afghanistan, that they will be protected from the violence of the Taliban.

Day 2: Pray that Taliban leaders will uphold and preserve human life, and that God would turn their hearts from hate to love.

Day 3: Pray Open Doors partners supporting Afghan refugees will be filled with grace and love as they care for people fleeing.

Day 4: Ask God to care for Christians who may be on lists now owned by the Taliban. Ask that they would be ignored by the Taliban.

Day 5: Pray for Christian women as they must live life under a regime with no interest in education or equal treatment for women.

Day 6: Pray for Afghan refugees who have been forced to flee, that God will heal their trauma.

Day 7: Pray that isolated Christians in Afghanistan will be able to find secret fellowships, and know they are being prayed for by believers around the world.

Go deeper: AFGHANISTAN

READ

How long, Lord? Will you forget me forever?

How long will you hide your face from me?

How long must I wrestle with my thoughts
and day after day have sorrow in my heart?

How long will my enemy triumph over me?
Look on me and answer, Lord my God.

Give light to my eyes, or I will sleep in death,
and my enemy will say, “I have overcome him,”
and my foes will rejoice when I fall.

But I trust in your unfailing love;
my heart rejoices in your salvation.

I will sing the Lord’s praise,
for He has been good to me.

—**Psalm 13:1-6**

REFLECT

“Zabi” is a Christian from Afghanistan, ranked No. 1 on the 2022 World Watch List. Her story shows why the country is so brutal for Christians.

“I grew up in Afghanistan and was very well educated,” she says. “My family are secret believers. A few years ago, the Taliban came and they took my father away, because he was a Christian. They tortured him for months and then they killed him. A few months later, my brother also disappeared. We never heard of him again. In the meantime, I continued to serve international organizations who were active in our country. When the Taliban took over in August [2021], [the organizations] departed and I was left behind. My mother and I managed to cross the border into another country.

“Our situation is desperate. I have money in my bank account, but cannot access it from here. I have a visa, but it will expire soon. What will happen to me? I don’t know. I’m praying I can leave this country and go somewhere safe. I may have to go into hiding. Or I’ll be deported to Afghanistan. I may be killed if that happens. We don’t have food [or] extra clothes. We cannot pay the rent of the apartment.

“I feel alone and hopeless. What am I supposed to do? I feel depressed, if I’m honest. I can only think about survival. How are my mother and I going to live?”

Zabi is like a modern-day psalmist, crying out to God: “How long, O Lord?” The situation in Afghanistan and other places high on the 2022 World Watch List seems impossible; and it can seem hopeless. Where is God in these situations?

The Bible gives us a way to ask these questions. We do not serve a God who refuses to let us question Him—instead, He gave us Psalm 13. When Zabi feels alone and helpless, she echoes the psalmist. And when she thanks God, she recalls God’s “unfailing love” (Psalms 13:5).

Open Doors partners were able to help Zabi with some emergency aid—and this seemed to help her see God at work in her life. “Thank God for your food and clothes deliveries, your financial support and your prayers and encouragement,” Zabi says. “You are a strand of hope to me. There’s a chance I may live.”

Christians have so many examples of how to live in the pages of the Bible. When believers like Zabi continue to glorify God in the heat of persecution, it gives us another example: following Jesus, no matter what.



PRAY

God, we pray for our sister, Zabi. We ask that you would preserve her faith, help her find hope and not feel alone in her situation. Thank you for the example of people in the Bible, that they give us permission to ask questions and to depend on your hope. I ask you to remind me of your unfailing love, even in the midst of hardships. Please help me to have an attitude of thankfulness like Zabi, where I still look to you for your grace in the storms of life. I ask you all these things in the name of Jesus, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

2

NORTH KOREA

TOTAL POPULATION
25,941,000

POPULATION CHRISTIANS
400,000¹

MAIN RELIGION
Agnosticism



Why is North Korea on the 2022 World Watch List?

North Korea has been at or near the top of the World Watch List for more than 20 years. That's because any North Korean caught following Jesus is at immediate risk of imprisonment, brutal torture and death.

Where is God at work in North Korea?

North Korean believers are under so much pressure—and yet, the church is growing. Christian radio broadcasts make their way into the country via illegal radios, and small groups of Christians stand ready to preach the gospel if the country opens up.



The persecution score for North Korea actually went up, even though its ranking went down.

How can I pray with Christians in North Korea?

Day 1: Pray for Christians who worship secretly, Christians who are in prison and the families of Christians who have been arrested or killed.

Day 2: Pray for the heart of Kim Jong Un and the other leaders of the North Korean regime.

Day 3: Open Doors' networks in China are vital to keep the North Korean church up and running. Pray for the success and safety of these safe houses.

Day 4: Pray for the North Korean people as they deal with famine conditions and the COVID-19 pandemic.

Day 5: Pray for Christian parents as they struggle to tell their kids about Jesus.

Day 6: Pray for Christians who try to travel to Open Doors safe houses in China. Ask God to keep them safe.

Day 7: Ask God to help North Korean refugees heal from their trauma.

Go deeper: NORTH KOREA

READ

But Joseph said to [his brothers], *“Don’t be afraid. Am I in the place of God? You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives. So then, don’t be afraid. I will provide for you and your children.”* And he reassured them and spoke kindly to them.

—Genesis 50:19-21

REFLECT

When “Timothy” first arrived at a Christian safe house in China and saw a cross on the wall, he was terrified. He still remembered the lessons he’d learned as a student in North Korea: Christians were evil spies, the cross was a cursed object and all followers of Jesus were human traffickers.

He fled.

Several years later, when he was in a Chinese jail after being captured yet again for fleeing North Korea, Timothy would hear the gospel again. But this time, he was ready to listen.

He eventually made it to South Korea, and now lives in the United Kingdom, where he’s worked with Open Doors and as an advocate for persecuted Christians still inside North Korea.

He traces his journey back to that moment of terror in the safe house. “That was the first time I saw a cross or a missionary,” he says. “And I followed the group in reading the scriptures during lunch, and in a prayer. There was no coincidence why I ended up in a safe house in China—that is where my faith started.

Through all my experiences, I was able to see what faith in God means and it stems from that safe house.”

God has a habit of using things in our lives to bring us closer to Him—even the scary, devastating, horrific things. That’s part of the miracle of His love for us: We are broken, but He can redeem (and mend) even broken things. Whether it’s Joseph being sold into slavery or Timothy running away from a place that terrified Him, God used those events to show His glory. And He can do so in each of our lives, redeeming the things we’re most scared of and hurt by to bring us to Him and His love.



PRAY

God, thank you for redeeming the broken places in our lives—for the examples of Joseph and Timothy, and for the times in my own life where you’ve shown your love when I’ve felt scared or hurt. Thank you for your love, grace and mercy. Please continue to show yourself to the Christians around the world who risk so much to follow you. I pray all of this in Jesus’ name, Amen.

3

SOMALIA

TOTAL POPULATION
16,589,000

POPULATION CHRISTIANS
Hundreds¹

MAIN RELIGION
Islam



Why is Somalia on the 2022 World Watch List?

The small number of believers in Somalia are largely Christians who have converted from Islam. Christians are viewed as high-value targets by Islamic radical groups. Even when Christian converts are not targeted by extremists, they are intensely pressured by their family and community.

Where is God at work in Somalia?

Even in the midst of the incredible persecution in Somalia, we have stories from believers like “Nala,” who tells us: “Jesus has changed me. Previously, I didn’t have happiness, but now I have joy. They called me weak, and that is true. I know that until I came to know Jesus, I knew nothing at all.”



Somalia is one of the few places in the world that has banned the celebration of Christmas.

How can I pray with Christians in Somalia?

Day 1: Pray for peace in Somalia. The country continues to struggle with unrest and violent attacks from Islamic extremists.

Day 2: In Somalia, Islam is the state religion and every part of society is stacked against Christians. Pray for believers living in this reality.

Day 3: Open Doors has been working across the Horn of Africa (which includes many countries, including Somalia) since the 1990s. Pray for our work and ask God to let it bear much fruit.

Day 4: Pray for the fighters in al-Shabab, that they would see the truth of Jesus and His love for them.

Day 5: Pray for secret Christians who must hide their faith from everyone.

Day 6: Pray for Christians who are targeted by Islamic extremists. Ask God to protect them and grant them hope.

Day 7: Ask God to encourage His people in Somalia, that they would sense they belong to a global family.

4

LIBYA

TOTAL POPULATION
6,746,000

POPULATION CHRISTIANS
34,600

MAIN RELIGION
Islam

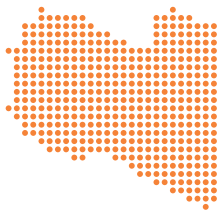


Why is Libya on the 2022 World Watch List?

When a person in Libya leaves Islam to follow Christ, they face immense pressure from their families to renounce their faith. Their neighbors and the rest of the community ostracize them, and they can be left homeless, jobless and alone. Targeted kidnappings and executions are always a possibility for believers.

Where is God at work in Libya?

An Egyptian man was killed in Libya in 2021—simply because he followed Jesus. And yet, his martyrdom has encouraged other believers. “It is very painful for all of us, but the only thing that comforts us is that he didn’t renounce the faith and he kept the faith until his last breath,” says the martyr’s uncle. “He was martyred in the name of Jesus Christ. We are all proud of him and very happy for him.”



There has been a Christian presence in Libya since Roman times.

How can I pray with Christians in Libya?

- Day 1:** Pray for believers who must keep their faith in Jesus secret.
- Day 2:** Libya’s government has been unstable for a decade. Pray for some stability and rule of law in the country.
- Day 3:** Ask God to turn the hearts of militants in Libya to Him.
- Day 4:** Pray for Christian migrant workers in Libya, that they would be protected and not discriminated against.
- Day 5:** Even being a foreign Christian in Libya is difficult. Pray for an openness to religious freedom in the hearts of average Libyans.
- Day 6:** Pray for believers to find a sense of community, even if they can’t attend a physical church.
- Day 7:** Pray that God would reach people through dreams and visions in Libya.

5

YEMEN

TOTAL POPULATION
30,911,000

POPULATION CHRISTIANS
A few thousand¹

MAIN RELIGION
Islam



Why is Yemen on the 2022 World Watch List?

The persecution against Christians in Yemen has been extreme for years, leading to a jump of two spots on 2022 World Watch List. Pressure on converts from Islam is at the highest levels in every part of life.

Where is God at work in Yemen?

Even in the midst of the COVID-19 crisis on top of the high persecution, Yemeni believers see God's hand. "We feel that the Lord Jesus is with us," says one believer. "We feel His mercy and closeness to us. A lot of people complain about emptiness and boredom because of the need to stay at home more, but I've found it to be a valuable opportunity to pray, draw closer to God and feel the affection of His hand outstretched to His children."



Yemen has been embroiled in a civil war for more than seven years.

How can I pray with Christians in Yemen?

Day 1: The civil war has lasted for nearly a decade.

Pray for peace, pray for stability and pray for an openness to religious freedom.

Day 2: Pray for the secret Christians in Yemen who live under constant threat.

Day 3: Ask Jesus to bring comfort and hope to Christians in this war-torn country.

Day 4: Pray for all people in Yemen who are secretly searching for truth—that they would find it through satellite TV, dreams, chance encounters or another way.

Day 5: Pray for wisdom and boldness for believers looking for a way to share their faith in Yemen.

Day 6: Thank God that the COVID-19 pandemic has made Him feel closer to Christians in Yemen. Ask Him to continue this.

Day 7: Pray God will change the hearts of Islamic extremists in Yemen.

6

ERITREA

TOTAL POPULATION

5,555,000

POPULATION CHRISTIANS

2,611,000

MAIN RELIGION

Islam

*Photo by: IAMB

**Why is Eritrea on the 2022 World Watch List?**

Despite almost half the population identifying as Christian, believers in Eritrea continue to suffer extreme persecution, making it one of the hardest places in the world to follow Jesus. Christians not part of recognized denominations are at risk of severe persecution. Gatherings are raided and believers arrested. The conditions facing Christians in prison can be inhumane.

Where is God at work in Eritrea?

Christians imprisoned in Eritrea's notorious prison system are *still* living for Jesus. "Until you adapt to life in prison, you face some 'difficulties,'" says one brother who was in prison for six years. "But, once I had adapted, I had consistent prayer and Bible reading. In prison, one of my main purposes as a Christian was to evangelize. You continue teaching."



Eritrea has had only one president since it gained independence in 1993.

How can I pray with Christians in Eritrea?

Day 1: Pray that imprisoned Christians and their families will be sustained by God's grace and presence.

Day 2: Pray for wisdom, discernment and boldness for believers as they seek to meet together.

Day 3: Ask God to protect Christians who convert from Islam, or who join a church outside of the Orthodox tradition.

Day 4: Pray for leaders in the Eritrean Orthodox Church, that they would embrace all followers of Jesus as brothers and sisters rather than as competitors.

Day 5: Pray for a change of heart in the long-time dictator of Eritrea, President Isaias Afwerki.

Day 6: Pray that God would protect the congregations of believers who are watched by the police.

Day 7: Pray for Christian youth who are required to serve in the military, even if they don't want to.

7

NIGERIA

TOTAL POPULATION
211,447,000

POPULATION CHRISTIANS
98,006,000

MAIN RELIGION
Christianity



Why is Nigeria on the 2022 World Watch List?

Christians continue to be attacked indiscriminately and brutally in northern Nigeria, and Nigeria's rank has risen accordingly. The violence has continued unabated—one of the only places in the world where COVID-19 travel restrictions and lockdowns had little impact on attacks against Christians.

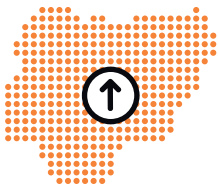
What is life like for Christians?

Persecution in Nigeria is, simply put, brutally violent. In much of northern Nigeria, Christians live their lives under the constant threat of attack from Boko Haram, the Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP), Fulani militants and criminals who kidnap and murder with few consequences. The violence is so bad it has begun to travel south, as well.

While all citizens of northern Nigeria are subject to threats and violence, Christians are often specifically targeted *because* of their faith—ISWAP and Boko Haram want to eliminate the Christian presence in Nigeria, and Muslim Fulani militants attack Christian villages specifically. In addition to the risks of violence, Christians in some of Nigeria's northern states also live under Shariah law, where they face discrimination and treatment as second-class citizens. Christians who convert from Islam also face rejection from their families and often are pressured to recant their faith in Jesus; sometimes, they are even violently attacked.

Where is God at work in Nigeria?

Nigeria is home to countless horrific attacks. And yet, God is working through His people. "Faith," a woman who experienced sexual assault when she was kidnapped by militants, found healing through a trauma care center supported by Open Doors. The trauma counseling she received does not remove the pain—but it showed Faith how God is with her even in the darkest times. Christians in Nigeria are showing the reality of God's faithfulness, no matter what.



This is Nigeria's highest ever ranking on the World Watch List.



MEET ROSE:

“When I lost my husband, my in-laws never cared about me; they didn’t come to check on me or the children. When [our daughter] Patience died, I thought they would rally around me, but nobody came. I felt so pained in my heart ... But I decided to let go of my bitterness and let God heal me.”

How can I pray with Christians in Nigeria?

Day 1: 2021 was dominated by reports of increased lawlessness. Pray that national and local authorities would work to find solutions and uphold justice.

Day 2: The level of trauma among Christians is reaching crisis levels as men are killed, women are raped and abducted, and youths are left in despondency over the future. Pray for healing and hope.

Day 3: Pray that Open Doors’ work in the country will bear fruit.

Day 4: Pray for the many militant groups who attack Christians in Nigeria. Ask God to change their hearts as only He can.

Day 5: The goal of the Enemy is to weaken the Church through repeated attacks. Ask God to preserve His people, that the violence would not shake the faith of Nigerian Christians.

Day 6: Ask God to be with believers who have been kidnapped. Pray for their release and their wounds.

Day 7: Pray for Christians who are rebuilding after an attack. Ask God to help them know they are part of a worldwide family of believers.

Go deeper: NIGERIA



READ

“Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”

—**Matthew 11:28 (RSV)**

REFLECT

One evening in September 2020, Ruth David and her daughters were home while Pastor Steven David was on church business. A loud banging interrupted the women’s conversation. It was Fulani militants. And when they realized the Davids had no money, they took all four women as hostages.

They released Ruth after a brutal hike. But they kept the three daughters as hostages, and demanded ransom. Eventually, the Davids managed to raise the funds, but the nightmare wasn’t over: Faith and Damaris, the two oldest daughters, were sexually assaulted before they returned home.

Reeling from the attack, the Davids were invited to a trauma center supported by Open Doors. While there, Faith and Damaris were reminded how much God loves and values them. And the whole family was invited to give their burdens to God, and to cry out to Him.

Healing is not instant, but we serve a Savior who bears our burdens for us and gives us rest. One part of the good news is that Jesus suffers with us—and rejoices with us when He offers us healing. The Davids found rest in Jesus, and show that no matter how horrific the circumstances, God is gentle and kind in His love for us.

*Representative photos used to maintain security



PRAY

Heavenly Father, thank you for the David family. I pray for the ongoing healing of the whole family, and particularly for Faith and Damaris. Wherever they are right now, I pray they would experience a strong sense of your love for them. Let them know they are precious in your sight. I ask that you would help me to remember that my suffering is never in vain—that you redeem it because you promise you are with me in my hardest trials. Be with me today, Jesus. Help me see your face, and know the lightness of following you. In Jesus' name, Amen.

8

PAKISTAN

TOTAL POPULATION

212,107,000

POPULATION CHRISTIANS

4,080,000

MAIN RELIGION

Islam

Why is Pakistan on the 2022 World Watch List?

In Pakistan, Christians are considered second-class citizens and are discriminated against in every aspect of life. Church leaders can be arrested if they don't abide by the authorities' wishes. These arrests act as warnings to the Christian minority and intimidates them further. Violence against Christians continues to happen at extreme levels.

Where is God at work in Pakistan?

“Matthew” is a minister who works with very poor Christians in Pakistan’s brick kilns—people who are basically slaves, who are rarely disciplined. And Matthew has seen God move. “[These Christians] didn’t convert to Islam, but also didn’t [know Jesus well,]” Matthew says. “Today, they are bold in their growing awareness of who Christ is and the hope He gives them to walk forward and onward beyond the slavery of the brick kiln.”



Hundreds of Christian women and girls are abducted, raped, forced to “marry” their abductor, and converted by force each year.



How can I pray with Christians in Pakistan?

Day 1: Pray for believers who are working dangerous and unsanitary jobs, that God will keep them healthy and safe.

Day 2: Pray for any believers who are accused of blasphemy.

Day 3: Pray for the entire Christian community of Pakistan, that they would be encouraged and kept from exhaustion and despair.

Day 4: Ask God to soften the hearts of Pakistan’s leaders, that they would allow different religions to peacefully worship.

Day 5: Pray for the women and girls who are kidnapped, forced to convert to Islam and marry Muslim men.

Day 6: Pray for healing for believers traumatized by kidnapping and sexual violence.

Day 7: Ask God to protect His people who live at constant risk in Pakistan.

9

IRAN

TOTAL POPULATION
84,308,000

POPULATION CHRISTIANS
800,000¹

MAIN RELIGION
Islam

Why is Iran on the 2022 World Watch List?

The severity of persecution facing Christians in Iran remains largely unchanged. Converts from Islam are most at risk of persecution, especially by the government, and to a lesser extent, by society and their own families. Sadly, things may get worse following changes to the country's penal code, which further strangles religious freedom.

Where is God at work in Iran?

"Taher" is a believer who was arrested for leading a house church in Iran. But even when he was told he could lose his family, he still refused to tell authorities anything. The underground church in Iran is on the move, and continues to grow—no matter what happens to the leaders of the movement.



There are no church services permitted in Farsi, the national language of Iran.



How can I pray with Christians in Iran?

Day 1: Pray that the new president will honor the rights and contributions of Iran's religious minorities.

Day 2: Pray that God will open the eyes of the authorities to see that Christians aren't a threat to Iran.

Day 3: Pray that house churches will continue to powerfully equip believers for serving Jesus.

Day 4: Ask God to continue to grow His church in Iran—and give courage to leaders.

Day 5: Pray for believers who are in prison because of their faith. Ask God to give them hope and peace.

Day 6: Pray for the religious leaders of Iran, that they would have their hearts changed to recognize Jesus as Lord.

Day 7: Pray for believers forced to flee Iran—pray they would heal from the trauma of prison and forced expulsion.

10

INDIA

TOTAL POPULATION
1,397,423,000

POPULATION CHRISTIANS
68,863,000

MAIN RELIGION
Hinduism

Why is India on the 2022 World Watch List?

Although there has been a slight reduction in the levels of violence against Christians in India since last year's World Watch List, overall violence remains at an extreme level, and levels of pressure in all spheres of life remain very high or extreme.

A key factor in this is the use of social media. When an extremist Hindu mob attacks Christians, one of the first things they'll do is snatch the victims' phones, to stop them from recording the incident. However, the group will record the violence and add it to social media to promote their extremist agenda.

What is life like for Christians?

The persecution of Christians in India has intensified, as Hindu extremists aim to cleanse the country of their presence and influence. The extremists disregard Indian



India was hit incredibly hard by COVID-19—some estimates place the death toll at more than 3 million people.



Christians and other religious minorities as true Indians, and think the country should be purified of non-Hindus. This has led to a systemic—and often violent—targeting of Christians and other religious minorities, including use of social media to spread disinformation and stir up hatred. The COVID-19 pandemic has offered a new weapon to persecutors. In some areas, Christians have been deliberately overlooked in the local distribution of government aid and have even been accused of spreading the virus.

Where is God at work in India?

“Vaani” has faced many challenges in her life, including abuse, unemployment, and more recently, the COVID-19 pandemic. But she has also seen how God has brought her through it all. Her story shows God has not forgotten His people in India. She received some aid from Open Doors partners and gave this powerful testimony: “God held my head high and has rescued me from my suffering through the kind aid,” she says. “I also praise God for the suffering and pain that I went through. Though it is painful to think of those times, I am assured of God’s hand on me in all my pain.”



**MEET “SUMI,”
A 25-YEAR-OLD WOMAN WHOSE HUSBAND
WAS MURDERED FOR HIS FAITH:**

**“If needed, I will die
for Jesus; but I will
never leave Him.”**

How can I pray with Christians in India?

Day 1: Give thanks to God that many people are coming to know Jesus after being healed of sickness; pray that this will continue.

Day 2: Pray social media companies will do more to combat the spread of disinformation and hatred on their platforms.

Day 3: Pray for continued protection, strength and encouragement for Open Doors partners as they serve the church in India.

Day 4: Pray for the healing of the many victims of religious violence in India. Ask that God would heal both hearts and bodies.

Day 5: Ask God to soften the hearts of the Hindu extremists, that they would see Indian Christians as valuable members of India.

Day 6: Pray for those in authority, that they would truly commit to the freedom of people of all faiths.

Day 7: When a Hindu converts to follow Jesus, it can mean losing everything. Pray for believers who make this difficult choice.

11

SAUDI ARABIA

TOTAL POPULATION
35,263,000

POPULATION CHRISTIANS
1,200,000¹

MAIN RELIGION
Islam



Why is Saudi Arabia on the 2022 World Watch List?

Christian persecution in Saudi Arabia has actually gotten worse in the last year. The country remains an extremely difficult place to be a Christian, especially for any native Saudi who finds Jesus.

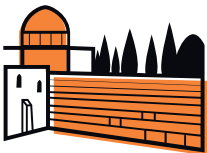
What is life like for Christians?

The majority of the Christians in Saudi Arabia are foreigners who temporarily live and work in the country. Christian foreign workers can be targeted for their faith, and all foreign Christians are heavily restricted from sharing their faith or gathering for worship—and any actions outside of the norm can lead to detention and deportation. There are converts from Islam in Saudi Arabia. Foreigners who came from majority-Muslim countries likely live and work in communities

that reflect the cultural norms of their home—so they can be at risk if their social context is opposed to conversion. The few converts who are Saudi Arabian are usually forced to live out their faith in secrecy, risking violence, divorce and more. Nevertheless, there have been some Saudi Christians in recent years who have been bold enough to share their faith, at great risk to their lives.

Where is God at work in Saudi Arabia?

“Abdul” found Jesus through dreams and visions. Several times, he dreamed about being in front of a huge throne. Each dream drew him closer to the person on the throne, until he discovered the person of Christ there. Not much later, he was baptized: a wish was fulfilled. He found a few other believers he could safely meet with—their small fellowship is fragile, but it’s a place where they seek God together.



Non-Muslims are banned from entering the Islamic holy cities of Medina and Mecca.



**MEET “SUAD,” A BELIEVER LIVING
ON THE ARABIAN PENINSULA**

(LOCATION NOT SPECIFIED FOR SECURITY REASONS):

“We must be patient,
as Christ’s character grows in us
and in our brothers and sisters.
Although we don’t always see
the fruit of our prayers, the
prayers of the saints do rise,
reaching heaven, and the Lord
answers in His own way
and in His own time.”

How can I pray with Christians in Saudi Arabia?

Day 1: Many Christians in Saudi Arabia are migrant workers who are already abused for their minority status. Pray for foreign Christians, that they will be protected from mistreatment.

Day 2: Pray for the secret Saudi believers who must hide their faith from friends and family.

Day 3: Ask God to soften the hearts of religious leaders and the monarchy.

Day 4: Pray for the underground churches of foreign Christians. Ask the authorities to allow them to worship God in peace.

Day 5: Pray that believers who feel isolated would sense the prayers of God’s people around the world.

Day 6: Pray for Muslim seekers who visit the Islamic holy cities of Mecca and Medina. Ask God to reveal Jesus to these seekers.

Day 7: Thank God He reveals Himself to people, no matter what.

12

MYANMAR

TOTAL POPULATION

55,269,000

POPULATION CHRISTIANS

4,409,000

MAIN RELIGION

Buddhism



Why is Myanmar on the 2022 World Watch List?

2021 has been a momentous year for Myanmar and for the Christian community in the country. After the military coup in February 2021, fighting has continued in predominantly Christian states like Kachin State, Karen State or in northern Shan State. Churches have been destroyed and Christians killed in Chin State (another majority-Christian region) and churches and pastors have been targeted.

What is life like for Christians?

Converts to Christianity in Myanmar find themselves persecuted by their Buddhist, Muslim or tribal families and communities because they have left their

former faith and have thereby removed themselves from community life. Communities who aim to stay “Buddhist only” make life for Christian families impossible by not allowing them to use neighborhood water resources. Christians also worry that the coup will return the country to a military rule that was brutal for many believers.

Where is God at work in Myanmar?

Even during all the violence of the military coup, Jesus is still with His flock in Myanmar. “In the midst of all the violence, we thank the Lord that we still see pockets of wonderful things happening in the country,” says “Lwin,” an Open Doors partner in Myanmar. “We had a children’s camp in a remote area, and 40 children accepted the Lord! We are also able to minister to families through our marriage and family enrichment training in rural areas, far from the conflict.”



The military ruled Myanmar from 1962–2011, leading with brutality and anguish.



**MEET “MIN NAING,”
A CHRISTIAN FROM YANGON,
THE LARGEST CITY IN MYANMAR:**

“Every day I hear gunshots and grenades. The sound comes only one bus stop away from my house. At night, most homes do not turn on lights after 8 p.m. And nobody makes any noise. Please pray for the safety of me and my family.”

How can I pray with Christians in Myanmar?

Day 1: Pray that God will touch and soften the hearts of Myanmar’s military leaders and give them a desire for peace and reconciliation.

Day 2: Pray for the church in Myanmar to be on their knees and praying for peace in the country.

Day 3: Praise the Lord for the persecution-preparedness training that Open Doors partners held in a safe place during the tumultuous months of 2021.

Day 4: Pray for Christians who converted from Buddhism. Ask that they would be protected from oppression and violence.

Day 5: Ask God to protect believers and churches targeted by the military.

Day 6: Pray that God will encourage church leaders who struggle with the horrific memories of the previous military regime.

Day 7: Pray that God will strengthen each believer and revive their spirits that have been dampened from the political turmoil.

13

SUDAN

TOTAL POPULATION
44,592,000

POPULATION CHRISTIANS
1,984,000

MAIN RELIGION
Islam



Why is Sudan on the 2022 World Watch List?

Persecution remains incredibly high in Sudan and hasn't changed much in the last year. Churches were burned down, and Christians reported being beaten or attacked. Since the 2019 coup, the situation for Sudanese Christians has somewhat improved—but there are still systemic issues for believers.

Where is God at work in Sudan?

In Sudan, leaving Islam for Christianity can mean rejection from your family and your community. During the COVID-19 crisis, these converts faced starvation without access to aid. Fortunately, Open Doors partners were able to reach more than 1,500 believers, many of whom converted from Islam, showing them through the relief that they are not alone. The church was strengthened.



Sudan eliminated punishments for apostasy in 2020.

How can I pray with Christians in Sudan?

Day 1: Pray for the political changes to be implemented and respected in lower government levels and society in general.

Day 2: Pray for believers who converted from Islam, that they would know they aren't alone.

Day 3: Pray that Christians who came out of Muslim families would grow in their faith.

Day 4: Pray for protection over our partners and much fruit from their work.

Day 5: Pray for Sudanese believers who have no access to aid during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Day 6: Ask God to ease the ongoing political tension and uncertainty. Pray for peace and reconciliation.

Day 7: In 2019, everyone was so hopeful that Sudan might finally open to religious freedom. Ask God to make that hope a reality.

14

IRAQ

TOTAL POPULATION
42,612,000

POPULATION CHRISTIANS
166,000

MAIN RELIGION
Islam



Why is Iraq on the 2022 World Watch List?

Persecution levels in Iraq have largely remained the same. Iraq remains plagued by conflict, despite the recent territorial losses of the Islamic State group, which continues to gravely affect the country's minority Christian population. However, encouragingly, there has been a substantial drop in reported incidents of violence in the last year.

Where is God at work in Iraq?

Iraqi politicians have passed a bill to make Christmas Day a national holiday, and a committee has been set up to enable Christians displaced by the Islamic State group insurgency to return to their homes (more than 80% have fled the country since 2003). These are positive developments that suggest Iraqi leaders may view Christians as vital parts of society.



Iraq is where the biblical prophet Daniel interpreted Nebuchadnezzar's dreams.

How can I pray with Christians in Iraq?

- Day 1:** Pray for peace and stability so that displaced Christians can return to their homes.
- Day 2:** Pray for the protection of all believers—pray that each one will be strengthened and encouraged in their faith.
- Day 3:** Pray that the new Iraqi government will protect the rights of Christians and other religious minorities.
- Day 4:** Pray that all religious minority groups would be able to live in peace with one another.
- Day 5:** Ask God to bless the efforts of Open Doors partners in Iraq.
- Day 6:** Even though Christians can legally return to their cities, many believers remain fearful about the possibility of violence. Pray for calm and security in these regions.
- Day 7:** Thank God for the positive political developments for Iraqi believers.

15

SYRIA

TOTAL POPULATION
19,586,000

POPULATION CHRISTIANS
638,000

MAIN RELIGION
Islam



Why is Syria on the 2022 World Watch List?

Violence against Christians decreased in Syria, which is news worth celebrating. And yet, the country remains high on the World Watch List. The pressure on all Christians is extreme, and church leaders are targeted for abuse and persecution. Christians who leave Islam continue to bear a large burden placed on them by government, society and their families.

What is life like for Christians?

In the parts of Syria where Islamic extremists maintain control, Christians remain under significant pressure. Places where Turkey has supplied fighters and military support after its invasion in late 2019 are also



The constitution of Syria stipulates that the president must be a Muslim.

dangerous for Christians. Christians who leave Islam to follow Jesus are at risk throughout Syria.

Where is God at work in Syria?

“Jamila” lost her family when she became a Christian. And yet, God hasn’t left her loved ones by the wayside. “I prayed and prayed for my family, and praise the Lord, my husband is a believer now too,” Jamila says. “He saw how my life changed and how I improved in all aspects of life. He wanted to know how and why, and now we come to church together.”



Photo by DMB

MEET “ANWAR:”

“Jesus is everything to me. When I had no one, He was with me, my brother, my companion, my best friend. I talk to Him all the time, I rely on Him, Jesus truly saved my life. When I wanted to kill myself, He pulled me back and gave me hope for the future. When things go wrong, I escape to Jesus. I know He has a good plan for my life.”

How can I pray with Christians in Syria?

Day 1: Lift up the political and military situation in Syria. The civil war has continued for more than a decade.

Day 2: Pray for Christians in Syria, particularly church leaders and converts from Islam. Pray God would protect them from violence.

Day 3: Pray that Christians would be lights in Syria, which has been so devastated by civil war and Islamic extremism.

Day 4: Pray for believers who have lost families or friends because of their faith. Pray these Christians would know they aren't alone.

Day 5: Some parts of Syria are still under the control of Islamic radicals. Pray for the hearts of these extremists, that God would break through with His truth.

Day 6: Ask God to inflame the hearts of Syrian believers with love for Him, and to give them the knowledge the worldwide Church is with them.

Day 7: Pray that God will bring peace to Syria and soften the hearts of those in power to provide for the most vulnerable members of Syrian society.

Go deeper: SYRIA

READ

Jesus sat down opposite the place where the offerings were put and watched the crowd putting their money into the temple treasury. Many rich people threw in large amounts. But a poor widow came and put in two very small copper coins, worth only a few cents. Calling His disciples to Him, Jesus said, *“Truly I tell you, this poor widow has put more into the treasury than all the others. They all gave out of their wealth; but she, out of her poverty, put in everything—all she had to live on.”*

—Mark 12:41-44

REFLECT

Sister Manal has endured a brutal civil war in Syria, her home. “The Syrian church has suffered in many ways,” she says. “The war drove the youth to leave the country; they see no future here. This puts the future of the church and the country in jeopardy.”

But Sister Manal also manages the work at a Center of Hope. The Center is like an oasis in a desert, aiming to empower Syrian youth through vocational courses and psychological help. “We talk to them, ask about their dreams, hopes, ideas and even their fears,” Sister Manal says. “We offer courses according to their needs.”

Sister Manal thanks everyone who supports this vital work. “Your support is like the widow’s pennies,” she says. “We need it so much in Syria and it means a lot to us to have you thinking of us and praying for us.”



Sister Manal’s words offer an important truth: When the members of the Church support one another, God uses those gifts to further His Kingdom in ways we can’t imagine. The story of the widow’s offering in Mark shows how much Jesus values a gift that prioritizes Him and His people. When we pray and stand with our persecuted brothers and sisters, we’re following in the widow’s footsteps—and strengthening believers like Sister Manal.

PRAY

God, help me to see places where I can help strengthen your Kingdom. Thank you for the opportunity to do your work and help your people. Help me to lift up my brothers and sisters in prayer, that they would know they have a family around the world. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

16

MALDIVES

TOTAL POPULATION

466,000

POPULATION CHRISTIANS

Hundreds'

MAIN RELIGION

Islam

**Why is Maldives on the 2022 World Watch List?**

Converts have no space at all to live out their Christian faith and expatriate Christians (often migrant workers) lack possibilities for worshipping together without fearing arrest and deportation. Government officials in Maldives proudly emphasize that the country is 100% Muslim.

Where is God at work in Maldives?

It's hard to see God's hand at work in Maldives. It's hard to even talk about any specific positive or negative developments in the country because persecution is so severe for secret believers. And yet, we trust that God has not forgotten His children in Maldives, and that people are finding Him, even when we can't talk about it.



Persecution in Maldives happens on the places out of sight of the tourist islands.

How can I pray with Christians in Maldives?

- Day 1:** Pray for believers in Maldives who must sustain their faith in isolation and secrecy.
- Day 2:** Pray that President Solih and his government would soften their stance toward Christians and other religious minorities.
- Day 3:** Ask God to guide and protect expatriate migrant worker believers as they interact with tourists and Maldivian residents.
- Day 4:** Pray for access to the Bible for Christians in Maldives. The full Bible is not available in the native language.
- Day 5:** Ask God to help fan revival among the people in Maldives, through whatever means He can use.
- Day 6:** Lift up Christians who risk everything to follow Jesus. Ask God to give them a sense of His presence today.
- Day 7:** Thank God for His goodness, even in a place that seems as dark as Maldives.

17

CHINA

TOTAL POPULATION
1,428,481,000

POPULATION CHRISTIANS
96,700,000¹

MAIN RELIGION
Various



Why is China on the 2022 World Watch List?

Persecution levels in China have gone up slightly, largely because Christians are facing increased pressure from the Chinese authorities. In other areas of life, persecution has remained almost or completely stable, with church life still the place where Christians face the most persecution.

What is life like for Christians?

Surveillance in China is among the most oppressive and sophisticated in the world. Church attendance is rigorously monitored, and many churches are closed down—whether they are independent or belong to the Three-Self Patriotic Movement (the officially state-sanctioned Protestant church in China). It remains illegal for under-18s to attend church.



No one under 18 is permitted to attend church in China.

All meeting venues had to close during the COVID-19 crisis, but some churches were forced to remain closed once restrictions began to lift, and were quietly phased out. Christian leaders are generally the main target of government surveillance, and a very small number have been abducted. Converts from a Muslim or Buddhist background from minority ethnic groups arguably face the most severe violations of religious freedom, because they are persecuted, not only by the authorities, but also by their families and communities.

Where is God at work in China?

“Herman” is a Chinese missionary who works in the Chinese Buddhist community. Conversion from Buddhism can lead to persecution from family and neighborhood, in addition to pressure from the government on all Chinese Christians. And yet, Herman practices radical obedience, inspiring in its simplicity. God honored Herman’s faith. After one outreach, Herman reported: “More than two dozen monks and devout Buddhists came to Christ!”



**MEET “HERMAN,”
A CHINESE MISSIONARY TO A
BUDDHIST COMMUNITY:**

“We’ve decided to hold an evangelistic meeting for a group of Buddhist monks and their followers. If they surrender to Jesus, there is every chance they will be persecuted. We might be attacked too. But like Jesus, that won’t stop us from declaring that the Kingdom of God has come.”

How can I pray with Christians in China?

Day 1: Pray that, despite intense surveillance, faith will flourish in China and more people will discover God’s love.

Day 2: Pray that local Open Doors partners will be able to reach vulnerable Christians with vital Christian literature, training and fellowship.

Day 3: Ask God to be with converts from Buddhism and Islam, as they are doubly persecuted.

Day 4: Pray for the authorities in China to recognize the importance of religious freedom, and allow the church to gather and worship without restrictions.

Day 5: Pray for church leaders who are monitored and harassed for their ministry. Ask God to give them strength and wisdom.

Day 6: COVID-19 gave Chinese authorities a reason to shut down many churches—and keep them shut. Ask God to soften the hearts of officials, to allow believers to worship again.

Day 7: Pray for unity in the Chinese church, that their witness would be powerful in a place with constant pressure.

Go deeper: CHINA

READ

Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everyone. If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. Do not take revenge, my dear friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: *"It is mine to avenge; I will repay," says the Lord.*
—Romans 12:17-19

REFLECT

This passage seems obvious on its surface—but for believers living in places where it's hard to follow Jesus, this command can be incredibly difficult. Our field tells us a story that shows this reality:

"One of our contacts, Brother 'Jacob,' is a wonderful pastor in his 60s. One time, representatives from several [governmental] departments came to investigate Jacob and asked him to hand over a contact list of all the believers in their church. Jacob simply said: 'Sorry, I have no legal right to disclose other people's private details, but I can give you a list of our church leaders. Please contact us with anything you'd like to discuss. We are always happy to take responsibility for church matters. And anyway, when the others are in trouble will you go to help them? Will you visit them when they are sick? If there is a death in the family, will you take them clothes and help with the funeral?'

"He stresses that both inside and outside the church, Christians must have a good reputation. 'We must be polite,' Jacob said. 'If anyone comes to us, we will serve them the best we can, but we will never compromise our message or deny our brothers and



sisters just to protect ourselves. God is always with us, so we are not afraid of anything. Besides, believing in Jesus is not a crime. We go about our work quietly, serving others with all our hearts ... but if we are opposed in some way, we will never be afraid. That is when we are bold, strong and courageous!"

PRAY

Heavenly Father, we thank you for believers like Brother Jacob, who risk so much to follow you. Thank you for their clear commitment to loving everyone, no matter what—and to loving you above all else. Please give us the same spirit of trust and faith. In Jesus' name, Amen.

18

QATAR

TOTAL POPULATION
2,840,000

POPULATION CHRISTIANS
372,000

MAIN RELIGION
Islam



Why is Qatar on the 2022 World Watch List?

Qatar jumped 11 spots from last year's World Watch List. Violence against Christians rose sharply because many churches were forced to stay closed after COVID-19 restrictions. The rest of the pressures faced by believers in Qatar are intense and a daily burden on those who follow Jesus.

Where is God at work in Qatar?

"Samuel" is a minister who works with migrant believers in Qatar. Even though sharing the gospel is forbidden (and worshiping can be hard outside of a few legal places), God is using leaders like Samuel to bring more people to Him. "In this Muslim country, we are limited in evangelizing too openly," Samuel says. "But nobody can stop us from talking to our fellow workers and witnessing to them in our everyday lives. Every day, God gives us opportunities to show His love to others."



Many believers in Qatar are migrant workers—and those Christians are persecuted at different levels, depending on their home context.

How can I pray with Christians in Qatar?

- Day 1:** Pray for the migrant Christians in Qatar. Pray they would be protected from the brutal and abusive treatment that so many foreign workers face in Qatar.
- Day 2:** Any native Qataris who convert to Christianity must do so in deep secrecy or risk intense persecution from their family and society. Pray that these believers would know they are not alone.
- Day 3:** Pray for the monarchy in Qatar. Ask that God would soften the hearts of the Emir and his government.
- Day 4:** Ask God to remind secret believers that He is there and in control.
- Day 5:** As Qatar prepares to host the World Cup this year, ask that God would use this event to show the world what's happening to His people.
- Day 6:** Pray for opportunities for Christians in Qatar to share their faith.
- Day 7:** Pray that pastors like Samuel would have wisdom and boldness as they serve God.

19

VIETNAM

TOTAL POPULATION
99,284,000

POPULATION CHRISTIANS
9,159,000

MAIN RELIGION
Buddhism



Why is Vietnam on the 2022 World Watch List?

The level of persecution stayed largely the same in Vietnam during the 2022 World Watch List reporting period. The COVID-19 pandemic continued to affect all residents of the country, and some Christians in rural areas reported discrimination in government pandemic assistance. Ethnic minority Christians still face violence and social consequences when they convert to Christianity, and the Vietnamese church remains under pressure throughout the country.

What is life like for Christians?

The level of persecution Vietnamese Christians experience may depend on their denomination or background. Historical Christian communities (like Roman Catholic churches) enjoy a certain



Vietnamese law guarantees freedom of religion—but also heavily restricts what “freedom” means.

amount of freedom. But evangelical and charismatic Protestants—along with converts from indigenous religions—often face intense pressure and violence for their faith, especially in the remote areas of central and northern Vietnam. Christians are harassed in the workplace and may face discrimination for their faith, while Christian children are ostracized at school and may be pressured to reject their faith.

Where is God at work in Vietnam?

“Poh” is a Hmong believer from Vietnam. He was attacked by his father for boldly proclaiming his faith, and he and his family were forced to leave his village. Finances are hard, and his family still rejects him. But God has begun a good work in Poh’s life. Thanks to your prayers and support, Open Doors local partners were able to buy a piece of land where Poh built a new home for his family. “Despite these challenges, I am now serving the Lord,” he says. “I am now a full-time church worker. The Lord has also blessed us with another baby last year.” God is raising up His workers in Vietnam.



MEET “POH,”

A HMONG CHRISTIAN WHO WAS KICKED OUT OF HIS VILLAGE FOR HIS CONVERSION TO CHRISTIANITY:

“A few months ago, I went back to my old village to visit my parents and siblings, but my family and the villagers still hate me—they forbade me from going near them. My parents still despise me and have renounced me as their child.”

How can I pray with Christians in Vietnam?

Day 1: Pray for Christians in Vietnam who suffer persecution, especially those from ethnic minorities.

Day 2: Pray for wisdom and strength for our ministry partners, and for the hearts of all Christians who will benefit from ministry efforts.

Day 3: Pray for Christians who lose their families and homes, that they would feel the reality that God has given them a global family of believers who prays for them.

Day 4: Pray for the government of Vietnam, both local and national.

Day 5: Ask God to protect Christians who follow Jesus in places where doing so is seen as a betrayal of culture and family.

Day 6: Pray for new projects planned by Open Doors partners in Vietnam.

Day 7: Pray for Christians who have experienced discrimination in COVID-19 relief. Ask God to protect and strengthen them.

20

EGYPT

TOTAL POPULATION

104,692,000

POPULATION CHRISTIANS

16,250,000¹

MAIN RELIGION

Islam

Why is Egypt on the 2022 World Watch List?

The challenges facing Christians in Egypt remain largely unchanged from previous years, although there has been a drop in levels of violence. This is most likely linked to COVID-19 restrictions. Christian activities have significantly decreased, which invites less provocation, and would-be perpetrators have been off the streets due to lockdowns. The biggest threat for converts from Islam to Christianity continues to come from family members.

What is life like for Christians?

The persecution of Christians in Egypt commonly occurs at community level. Incidents range from Christian women being harassed while walking in

a street to whole communities of Christians being forced to move out of their homes by mobs of Muslim extremists. Such events typically happen in Upper Egypt, where ultra-conservative Islamic Salafist movements are active in rural communities. Christians from a Muslim background face enormous pressure from their families to return to Islam. The state also makes it impossible for them to get any official recognition of their conversion.

Where is God at work in Egypt?

Ten-year-old “Adel” was ridiculed for being from a Christian family before he ever really knew Jesus. It was only when he started attending a children’s ministry, with support of Open Doors partners, that he found out more about Jesus. Now he loves to tell others about his faith! “Knowing God makes me feel happy,” Adel says. “I know I have a father in heaven I can always talk to. That’s amazing.” God is moving among His people in Egypt!



Egyptian children as young as five get Christian tattoos to show their identity as Christ followers.





**MEET “SARA,”
WHO MIRACULOUSLY SURVIVED A KNIFE ATTACK
BY A MUSLIM EXTREMIST WHO SAID TO HER,
“DIRTY CHRISTIAN, DIE!”**

**“If someone
is willing to kill
me for my faith,
my God must
be powerful.”**

How can I pray with Christians in Egypt?

Day 1: Pray for stable and fulfilling work for Christian men, so they can provide for their families.

Day 2: Pray for our ministry partners in Egypt, that they would strengthen the Egyptian church.

Day 3: Pray for the protection and flourishing of Christian women.

Day 4: Ask God to deliver Christian women who have been forced into marriage with a Muslim man, that He would give them hope in this devastating circumstance.

Day 5: It’s hard for Christians to build new churches or other buildings in Egypt. Pray that God would smooth the path for these vital places of discipleship.

Day 6: When an Egyptian Christian is martyred, they leave behind a family and community that heals slowly. Ask God to help these believers recover.

Day 7: Pray that God will change the hearts of influential local leaders, to recognize and value the contribution Christians make to society.

21

UZBEKISTAN

TOTAL POPULATION

33,649,000

POPULATION CHRISTIANS

347,000

MAIN RELIGION

Islam



Why is Uzbekistan on the 2022 World Watch List?

Christians who are a part of non-registered churches may be viewed as “extremists,” and the government believes church members are spies trying to destroy the government. A new criminal code was drafted in 2021 that penalizes the distribution of religious literature, meeting for worship without government permission and “talking about faith.”

Where is God at work in Uzbekistan?

When “Aziz” became a Christian, his brother rejected him. His brother tried to burn down Aziz’s house, and they had no contact for 20 years. But the brother’s heart seems to be softening, and when he got sick, Aziz visited him and prayed for him. Now, the brothers have regular contact—showing that even when restoration seems slow from a human perspective, God is always on the move.



A recent law in Uzbekistan makes it illegal to “produce, store or import” unauthorized religious materials

How can I pray with Christians in Uzbekistan?

Day 1: Pray for Christians who are discriminated against in work or society because of their faith.

Day 2: Ask God to bring the knowledge of Him to the leaders of Uzbekistan.

Day 3: Pray for Open Doors’ ministry in Central Asia, that Christians across the region would feel encouraged and strengthened from the help and aid they receive.

Day 4: Pray for Christians who lose their jobs, or who are required to keep their faith a secret.

Day 5: Pray for Christians who convert from Islam in Uzbekistan, that they would be protected and know the peace of God.

Day 6: Ask God to cause authorities to rethink the new religious laws, and instead open up freedoms for all faiths.

Day 7: Pray that God will bless churches across Central Asia as they grapple with oppressive regimes.

22

ALGERIA

TOTAL POPULATION
43,969,000

POPULATION CHRISTIANS
134,000

MAIN RELIGION
Islam



Why is Algeria on the 2022 World Watch List?

While Christians make up a tiny percentage of the population of Algeria, they face increasing obstacles to religious freedom. Laws regulating non-Muslim worship ban anything that would “shake the faith of a Muslim” or be used as “a means of seduction intending to convert a Muslim to another religion.”

Where is God at work in Algeria?

An anonymous pastor brings us a report from Algeria. Algeria was known for many years because of the growth of the church. And that hasn't changed, even with restrictive laws in place: “I don't think this situation affects the number of conversions. This can be seen in the contacts we have on social networks. Many people seek to know and hear more about the gospel.”



Algeria has one of the biggest communities of converts from Islam to Christianity in the wider Middle East.

How can I pray with Christians in Algeria?

Day 1: Pray for churches that have been closed to reopen, and for laws forbidding religious freedom to be repealed.

Day 2: Ask God to bring release for Christians arrested or detained for something as simple as selling Christian books.

Day 3: Pray for Christians living in places where they are targeted by Islamic extremists. Ask God to keep them safe.

Day 4: Pray that the church closures would cease.

Day 5: Pray for the leadership of Algeria, that they would be open to religious freedom for people of all faiths.

Day 6: Ask God to reach people with the gospel, through the Internet or television or any other way He sees fit.

Day 7: Pray that Algerian Christians who've converted from Islam will be protected from harassment, violence and rejection.



TRENDS *IN* GLOBAL PERSECUTION

IS ISLAMIC EXTREMISM ... WINNING?

A REFLECTION ON THE 2022 WORLD WATCH LIST

A worrisome trend

When the Taliban took control of Afghanistan, it was a victory for Islamic extremists. The country had been in tumult for 20 years, and the violent radicals were overjoyed to retake the capital city of Kabul, flying their flag above government buildings, and erasing the rights of women and religious minorities. And the Taliban wasn't the only extremist group that made strides in 2021. In Nigeria and Cameroon, Boko Haram continues to wreak havoc, the Islamic State group is active in

West Africa and Mozambique, and al Shabab controls large portions of Somalia. It seems like nothing can be done to stop the advance of Islamic extremism.

What does this mean for Christians?

We know what radical Islamic ideology looks like for believers because we've seen it in Iraq and Syria. When ISIS took over parts of the Middle East, Christians were executed, abducted, sexually assaulted and hunted. Where groups like Boko Haram and al Shabab are active, similar threats are inevitable. When the Taliban took control of Afghanistan, they tried to appear moderate—but there's no sign that Christianity will be anything other than a death sentence.

Where is God at work?

Even though it seems hopeless, we serve a God who specializes in turning our pessimism upside down. Just as we've seen what brutality is possible through the experiences of believers in Iraq and Syria, we've also seen

“When the Taliban took control, it was everything we feared. You cannot understand it like I do. I cannot explain it in words.”

—“SAAD,”
A CHRISTIAN IN AFGHANISTAN



Some level of violent
Islamic radicalism
is present in 7 out of
the top 10 countries
on the 2022 World
Watch List

that hope is possible. Christians there are rebuilding, and the faith of many hasn't been shaken. It's bringing people to faith in Jesus. In Nigeria and Cameroon, joy endures even in Boko Haram territory. God's Church is never destroyed, even by Islamic extremism. It might go underground—but it grows outward, attached to Jesus at the root.

How can I pray with Christians living in danger of Islamic extremism?

- Day 1:** Pray for the militants who target Christians. God can do a miracle and turn their hearts to Him. Boldly ask Him to do so.
- Day 2:** Pray for Christians in Afghanistan, who have lived in danger for decades—and now face even more risk.
- Day 3:** Pray for those affected by violence. Ask God to heal their hearts.
- Day 4:** Ask God to lead governments to take steps to stop extremism.
- Day 5:** When Christians are targets, it can feel like a pressure cooker. Pray that, right now, Christians would have just a moment of supernatural peace.
- Day 6:** Pray for secret Christians, that they will be safe and find community.
- Day 7:** Thank God for the courage of His people in the face of such unrelenting pressure.

23

MAURITANIA

TOTAL POPULATION
4,908,000

POPULATION CHRISTIANS
10,900

MAIN RELIGION
Islam



Why is Mauritania on the 2022 World Watch List?

Little has changed in Mauritania from the standpoint of persecution. Any deviation from Islamic belief is strongly opposed in communities and through family pressure. Pressure on converts from Islam to Christianity can be very high, particularly in rural areas where tribal and family ties are especially strict. Violent Islamic extremist groups, like al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) and Movement for Unity and Jihad in West Africa (MUJAO), are particularly active in the country's eastern border regions.

What is life like for Christians?

It is illegal in Mauritania to convert from Islam to another faith. The restrictive environment makes it impossible

for Christians (especially converts from Islam) to openly meet and worship together. Any expression of faith by non-Mauritanian Christians (such as migrants or aid workers) also carries the risk of being seen as proselytizing Muslims and can lead to prosecution.

Where is God at work in Mauritania?

As noted in the "Historical Dictionary of Mauritania," "dozens of nuns and priests in a handful of mission posts have found themselves widely accepted by the local population through their social commitment and support." Even in a place as opposed to Christianity as Mauritania, God can still move through the love and hope offered by followers of Jesus.



In 2012, the United Nations estimated that 10–20% of the people in Mauritania were slaves.



AN EXCERPT FROM A 2019 UNITED NATIONS
HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE REPORT
ON MAURITANIA:

“The Committee remains concerned that the exercise of the freedom of conscience and religion is not formally guaranteed for Muslim Mauritians, for whom a change of religion is classified as apostasy and punishable by the death penalty.”

How can I pray with Christians in Mauritania?

Day 1: Pray for the secret believers of Mauritania as they seek to worship God.

Day 2: Pray for a new openness toward religious expression among government officials. Ask God to open their hearts.

Day 3: Pray that God would provide creative ways for believers to find and support each other in their difficult walk of faith.

Day 4: Ask God to allow more churches to open in Mauritania, and to allow the churches that do exist to worship without fear.

Day 5: Slavery is still rampant in Mauritania. Ask God to overturn this vile practice and to help enslaved people find Him.

Day 6: Conversion to Christianity from Islam is illegal, and carries with it a sentence of death (though no one has actually been executed for this). Pray for any seekers scared of what it means to choose Jesus.

Day 7: Pray that God will strengthen Christians who risk an accusation of blasphemy at every turn.

24

MALI

TOTAL POPULATION
20,893,000

POPULATION CHRISTIANS
476,000

MAIN RELIGION
Islam



Why is Mali on the 2022 World Watch List?

Mali continues to live under threat of Islamic extremist groups that took control of the country's northern region 10 years ago. Pressure against the church is rising, and missionaries are at constant risk for abduction.

Where is God at work in Mali?

Even under threat, Muslims are still coming to Christ in Mali. New believers continue to receive their first Bibles and learn to read it in literacy classes. And Christians are secretly participating in leadership training.



Mali has the world's highest rate of child marriage, with 54% of girls married by age 18.

How can I pray with Christians in Mali?

Day 1: Pray with the church of Mali to stand strong—that they would sense God's worldwide Church surrounding them.

Day 2: Pray for stability, which is critical to suppressing extremist groups and returning peace to communities.

Day 3: Lift up believers who have been internally displaced by violence and are attempting to start over in new areas after losing everything.

Day 4: Ask God to comfort believers who have lost loved ones and their livelihoods and make a way for them.

Day 5: Pray for our local partners. Open their eyes to believers in need and guide them as they bring relief and refreshment.

Day 6: Pray for new believers who leave Islam to follow Jesus. Pray for protection and that they will quickly find Christian community.

Day 7: Pray that God would confuse persecutors' attack plans and that He would draw them to Himself.

25

TURKMENISTAN

TOTAL POPULATION

6,117,000

POPULATION CHRISTIANS

67,300

MAIN RELIGION

Islam

*Photo by: IMB

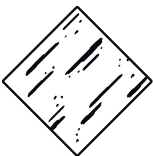


Why is Turkmenistan on the 2022 World Watch List?

The government in Turkmenistan cracks down on anything perceived to be a threat to its rule. Church leaders in Turkmenistan are especially targeted for persecution because Muslims hold them responsible for leading people away from Islam. And Christians who have converted from Islam face significant pressure, even violence, from family and their communities.

Where is God at work in Turkmenistan?

Pastor Ilmurad gives us a picture of God's restoration. Falsely accused of fraud, he served four years in prison and was even told he would be released if he denied his faith. Ilmurad's refusal led to hard labor during the day and sleeping on a cement floor at night. Today, he has largely recovered and continues to pastor despite the risk, discipling believers and training them to disciple others.



The capital city of Ashgabat has the highest density of white marble buildings in the world—initiated after the country gained independence from the Soviet Union in 1991.

How can I pray with Christians in Turkmenistan?

Day 1: Pray for church pastors who risk false accusations and jail. Ask God to give them both wisdom and courage as they lead.

Day 2: Pray with ex-prisoners like Pastor Ilmurad to be able to stand strong and return to lead their communities through the pain of persecution.

Day 3: Ask God to reach the hearts of Turkmenistan authorities. The president acts as a dictator, and his rule stretches over every part of society.

Day 4: Pray that Christians would be able to reach out freely and that their lives would reflect the truth of the gospel.

Day 5: Pray for Open Doors partners in the entire Central Asian region as they work among Muslim-majority areas.

Day 6: Pray that Christians would be strengthened with the knowledge that they are part of a global Church, and not on their own.

Day 7: Pray for peace and order in the former Soviet republic, where its citizens are subjected to the current president's random whims and edicts.

26

LAOS

TOTAL POPULATION
7,262,000

POPULATION CHRISTIANS
203,000

MAIN RELIGION
Buddhism



Why is Laos on the 2022 World Watch List?

Despite Laos dropping four places on the World Watch List, an increasing number of converts are being displaced from their homes as they face rejection by their villages. In certain provinces, local authorities remain determined to silence any Christian witness.

What is life like for Christians?

Christian freedom in Laos is severely curtailed by intense monitoring of the Communist authorities. Anyone who belongs to a house church must worship in secret because unregistered house churches are considered “illegal gatherings.” Even the majority of registered churches do not have permanent church structures and must conduct worship services in homes.



Laos is one of the world’s five remaining Communist countries. The red flag with hammer and sickle can be seen flying on official buildings.

Converts to Christianity take the brunt of persecution in Laos—seen as guilty of betraying their community’s Buddhist-animist traditions. New believers frequently face pressure and violence from their families and the local authorities, who often stir up opposition from the local community or religious leaders. Too often, this kind of conflict can lead to converts being expelled from the village and losing their homes and families.

Where is God at work in Laos?

Recently, 250 Lao believers received their very first Bibles—a day they had been praying would come. One believer said she never had a chance to own a Bible. “I now realize that God’s Word can comfort and encourage anyone,” she says, sharing that when she was 14, she was imprisoned for a week because she had accepted Christ.

“I can do things now I have never done before. I now share and preach His Word, which I’ve never done in the past.”



MEET 14-YEAR-OLD “SOY:”

“After I accepted Jesus Christ, I felt like a normal person. My heart and soul were completely healed! However, my happiness was crushed because of harsh persecution. My friends and my non-believing cousins hate me and say mean things to me.”

How can I pray with Christians in Laos?

Day 1: Pray for Christians imprisoned in Laos—that they will be strengthened in body, mind and spirit.

Day 2: Pray for the imminent release of those who are detained and behind bars for their faith.

Day 3: Pray that Christians will find increasing favor with local religious leaders and government officials.

Day 4: Pray for the protection of Open Doors partners and wisdom as they serve our family in Laos.

Day 5: Pray for new believers who, right now, are experiencing persecution for their decision to follow Jesus.

Day 6: Pray that God would bring an end to the trafficking of Lao girls to China and give those who have been sold a way to escape their situation.

Day 7: Pray for house churches and pastors. Ask God to hide them from surveillance, attack and detainment and embolden them as His faithful witnesses.

27

MOROCCO

TOTAL POPULATION
37,498,000

POPULATION CHRISTIANS
31,400

MAIN RELIGION
Islam

*Photo by INB



Why is Morocco on the 2022 World Watch List?

In Morocco, Christians who talk to others about their faith risk arrest and prosecution—due to the country’s law that criminalizes “shaking the faith of a Muslim.” This year, several believers were forced to leave the country. Life for Christians in Morocco remains very difficult.

Where is God at work in Morocco?

Despite the threat, God’s plan of salvation is still being spoken in Morocco. Our local partners shared about two young women who accepted Jesus in college after a Christian woman shared the gospel with them. When their families found out, they beat them. Yet the students continue to follow Jesus.

“Thank God we found a way to meet with Christians,” they say. “It is so good to have these moments together.”



Morocco has the world’s oldest university founded in 859 AD; yet only three-fourths of the country can read and write.

How can I pray with Christians in Morocco?

- Day 1:** Pray with isolated believers in Morocco who must sustain their faith alone or risk house arrest, physical attacks, arrest and imprisonment.
- Day 2:** Ask the Lord to draw close to His people and fill their hearts with the knowledge of His presence and love.
- Day 3:** Pray for tolerance of faiths other than Islam in Moroccan society, with freedom to gather.
- Day 4:** Ask God to guide and protect our local partners in Morocco as they reach out to believers who are rejected by their Muslim families or community.
- Day 5:** Ask God to wrap His arms around believers in Morocco who ache to share their faith and lives with other believers. Pray they would discover other Christians they can talk to.
- Day 6:** Pray for wisdom and discernment for secret believers as they secretly gather for fellowship.
- Day 7:** Pray for house church leaders’ safety. Pray that God would give them vision for new believers and a passion to disciple them.

28

INDONESIA

TOTAL POPULATION
274,854,000

POPULATION CHRISTIANS
33,620,000

MAIN RELIGION
Islam

*Photo by: INB

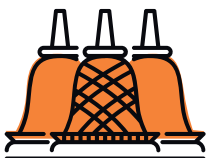


Why is Indonesia on the 2022 World Watch List?

Sadly, the persecution of Christians in Indonesia has worsened considerably due to an increase in violence. After two years without bomb attacks, there were three attacks on Christians within a six-month period between 2020 and 2021, killing eight believers, while Indonesian society has become increasingly hardline Islamic, putting added pressure on Christians.

Where is God at work in Indonesia?

As persecution increases, the church in Indonesia is rising to come alongside believers whose families have abandoned them for their decision to leave Islam and follow Jesus. “Wanda” was forced to move out when her Muslim family discovered her faith. When COVID-19 hit, Wanda struggled to provide for herself until the local church stepped in to help.



Indonesia is one of the biggest risers on the 2022 World Watch List, jumping 19 places from last year.

“One thing that I am so overwhelmed with is the love from my Christian friends,” Wanda shares. “I feel like I have a new family when my biological family abandoned me. I don’t feel alone in this new journey of my life.”

How can I pray with Christians in Indonesia?

Day 1: Pray for God’s comfort and healing for all those affected by the recent attacks on Christians.

Day 2: Ask God to give Christians wisdom and boldness as they follow Jesus in an increasingly hardline Islamic society.

Day 3: Pray that the influence of extremist Islamic groups will be snuffed out.

Day 4: Ask the Lord to reveal Himself to those who oppose Him in ways that speak to their hearts.

Day 5: Pray for converts from Islam who experience pressure from their families to return to Islam.

Day 6: Pray for churches that often face targeting by Islamic extremist groups for sharing the gospel.

Day 7: Pray for church leaders who are prominent in their communities and risk false accusations of “inciting religious hatred.”

29

BANGLADESH

TOTAL POPULATION
171,500,000

POPULATION CHRISTIANS
1,103,000¹

MAIN RELIGION
Islam



Why is Bangladesh on the 2022 World Watch List?

Bangladesh has risen significantly on the World Watch List in the past few years, and violence is increasing. Attacks against church buildings have continued across Bangladesh—and authorities frequently ignore complaints when Christians bring them.

What is life like for Christians?

In Bangladesh, Christians who have converted from a Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist or tribal background suffer the most severe restrictions, discrimination and attacks. To avoid attack, converts often gather

in small house churches or meet secretly in groups. Tribal Christians are doubly vulnerable to persecution (because they belong to both an ethnic and religious minority), and are often the victims of land-grabbing or targeted violence.

Where is God at work in Bangladesh?

Our local partners were present when a group of new believers were secretly baptized in a remote area. That day, men and women took great risks to declare their commitment to follow Jesus and celebrate their freedom in Christ. Every person who was baptized had converted from other religions.



Bangladesh has the world's fourth-largest Muslim population. The capital, Dhaka, is known as "the City of Mosques."



**MEET PASTOR SWAPAN,
WHOSE CHURCH (ALSO AN ORPHANAGE) WAS VICIOUSLY
ATTACKED AT NIGHT BY HINDU EXTREMISTS:**

**“We have been
enduring and
praying for God
to protect us.”**

How can I pray with Christians in Bangladesh?

Day 1: Pray for Bangladeshi converts who often face hostility and even violence for their decision to leave their family’s religion and follow Jesus.

Day 2: Pray for blessing on the lives of converts and opportunities to share the Jesus they’ve found with others.

Day 3: Ask God to show believers creative ways to meet and worship together, and build up one another in fellowship.

Day 4: Pray for church attacks to cease and that church buildings would be known as places to safely worship God.

Day 5: Pray for wisdom for Open Doors local partners as they support persecuted believers in Bangladesh, and for energy and creativity as they carry out their work.

Day 6: Pray for believers still recovering from the medical and economic impact of COVID-19.

Day 7: Pray with leaders of house churches. Pray they would grow in their faith and passion to disciple new believers.

Go deeper: BANGLADESH

READ

Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has ascended into heaven, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet he did not sin. Let us then approach God’s throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.

—Hebrews 4:14-16

REFLECT

“You have lots of money. You have received lots of money when you converted to Christianity, so you do not need relief.”

This is what Kasem, a believer who grew up as a Muslim in Bangladesh, was told during the COVID-19 lockdowns when he went to ask for government aid. The local authorities told him to return to Islam or receive nothing. “We see many villagers and neighbors receive relief aid from government support but we Christians do not get any support,” he says.

Kasem desperately wanted to be able to provide for his wife, Rokshana, and their three children. “As a father and husband, it is hard to see my family starving for food. We kept praying and waiting for God to help,” he remembers.

That help came through Open Doors local partners, who provided Kasem and his family with emergency food aid, including rice, oil, salt, potatoes, beans, other dry food, and soap. “We are very happy and thankful to Open Doors for supporting us during our needy moment,” Kasem says. “This support helped us to survive. It brought peace in my family because really there is no peace with hungry stomachs.”

Kasem says: “Without that support, it would have been very hard for me to manage food for my family. It helped us to overcome that crisis moment. It also helps us to grow in faith and depend on Christ. He is faithful.”

This story from Bangladesh can help us see the power of prayer, and the reality of a Savior who knows our every hurt and every need. Jesus starved in the desert for 40 days, being tempted by Satan by bread. He and His disciples traveled from place to place, and were often hosted by friends and followers. He said in Matthew 8:20 that He had “nowhere to lay His head.” Jesus was familiar with want and poverty.

Because of that, the author of Hebrews reminds us that Jesus is our high priest who allows us to approach God’s throne with confidence, asking for what we need. This is what Kasem and his family did. And God answered their prayer in a tangible way, with food and emergency aid!

God does not always answer our prayers so obviously and with an explicit “yes.” But He does always promise to answer us when we pray—and He’s given us a Savior who helps us endure all things, and a global Church to support us when we falter. Praise God for His promises, and that His mercies endure even in the midst of our struggles.



PRAY

Dear Father, Thank you for giving us your Son, Jesus, who has endured everything we go through in this life. Thank you that He enables us to ask you for whatever you need, and that you delight in giving us good gifts. Thank you for helping Kasem and his family. I ask that you would give me eyes to see your hand in my life, and a grateful heart for when you have preserved me in ways I don't always recognize. Thank you, Lord. In Jesus' name, Amen.

30

COLOMBIA

TOTAL POPULATION

50,576,000

POPULATION CHRISTIANS

48,011,000

MAIN RELIGION

Christianity

Why is Colombia on the 2022 World Watch List?

Last year saw protests in Colombia, partly against corruption and controversial government measures. Church leaders were among those who supported the demonstrators, which led to threats and violence. Violence remains high, with seven Christians killed for their faith between January and September 2021.

What is life like for Christians?

Though Colombia has a high percentage of Christians, believers still face persecution from criminal gangs and indigenous groups. Guerrilla groups threaten, harass, extort and even murder church leaders, who are targeted because they denounce corruption, defend human rights and oppose cartels. Their children may also be targeted, to discourage church leaders from speaking out against organized crime and corruption.



Violence associated with armed groups conflicts has forcibly displaced more than 8.2 million Colombians since 1985.



The fight for the control of illicit crops, drug trafficking and illegal mining have led to intensified conflict. Many Christians are affected, and are among the thousands of displaced families.

Where is God at work in Colombia?

One of the clearest examples of God's hand moving in Colombia is the ministry of Open Doors' Children's Center, where families often bring their children to keep them safe. The Center also reaches out to former child soldiers and serves as a respite for families who have walked through so much. After 13-year-old Daniela's father was murdered for his faith, the family spent four weeks at the Center.

"I felt good for the first time in a long time and I was able to explore new places, new cities and new people," Daniela says. "I met many children, I went hiking, I put my feet in the river ... I also learned that, although there are difficult times in life, there are also times when Jesus helps us to overcome through people and prayer."



Photo by DMB

MEET PASTOR ANDRES:

“The proclamation of the gospel has never been easy, but in our region, it is a matter of life or death. However, we don’t stop.”

How can I pray with Christians in Colombia?

Day 1: Pray for protection for pastors and communities who are targeted by organized criminal groups.

Day 2: Pray for wisdom and the presence of the Holy Spirit so that indigenous Christians can remain steadfast in the gospel.

Day 3: Pray that the faith of new believers would increase as they trust God in areas so hostile to Christians.

Day 4: Ask God to equip local Open Doors partners to stand alongside and serve the persecuted church in Colombia. Pray specifically for the Children’s Center.

Day 5: Pray that God would thwart the plans of guerrilla gangs and draw them to Himself.

Day 6: Pray for the families of believers who were martyred for their faith and commitment to serve their community.

Day 7: Pray for the children of persecuted believers—that no hair on their head would be touched.

31

CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC (CAR)

TOTAL POPULATION

5,023,000

POPULATION CHRISTIANS

3,780,000

MAIN RELIGION

Christianity

Why is CAR on the 2022 World Watch List?

Christians in CAR remain in a precarious situation. In the northeast and southwest regions, they continue to be specifically targeted for their sole allegiance to Christ. Nearly everywhere else, they are caught regularly in the crossfire between the abundance of rebel splinter groups that battle each other for territory. Meanwhile, the humanitarian crisis is worsening in the country, and in June 2021, was at a five-year low—making life even harder for vulnerable believers.



CAR is home to an estimated 14 armed groups, making it one of the most dangerous countries in the world.

What is life like for Christians?

Despite Christians comprising three-quarters of the population, they are still vulnerable to persecution. Since 2013, CAR has been embroiled in conflict and fighting, and most of the country is occupied by armed militia groups. When Christian leaders publicly denounce the violence, they are often threatened, and their churches ransacked and torched. Conflict in the country has resulted in thousands of Christians losing their homes and livelihoods, and many continue to live in Internally Displaced People (IDP) camps.

Converts to Christianity face further pressure from family members. Women and girls can be put under house arrest to prevent them from meeting with other Christians, or forcibly married to a much older Muslim. There are reports that sometimes a Christian mother is only allowed to attend Christian gatherings on the condition that her children are sent to the mosque. The local community will often ostracize Christian converts and might also use violence to try to force them to renounce their faith.

Where is God at work in CAR?

CAR has been hit hard by the COVID-19 pandemic. In many areas, Christians were denied government aid and told to convert to Islam if they wanted to eat. That's when God used the worldwide Church to come alongside His people.

During an organized food distribution, CAR Pastor Dango shared: "The Bible declares that if He cares even for the animals, how much more we, children who are created in His image? We have never thought [we would receive] such assistance, but it is God who has put in the hearts of our brethren to support us."



MEET PASTOR OUSMAN:

“Our fate has been sealed for several years by [extremist] Muslims who harassed us on all fronts.”

Members of Pastor Ousman's church were attacked by an Islamic rebel group that killed 10 people and burned a church and 70 houses belonging to Christians.

How can I pray with Christians in CAR?

Day 1: Pray that God will bring lasting peace and stability to CAR.

Day 2: Pray for comfort and healing for believers who have lost loved ones to the violence, pandemic and hunger crisis.

Day 3: Pray for protection for Christians as they live out their witness to Christ.

Day 4: Pray for the pastors and their families who often face the gravest danger.

Day 5: Ask God to speak to Islamic extremists in dreams and visions, transforming their hearts and actions.

Day 6: Pray for those who are internally displaced. Ask God to give them assurance He is walking with them in their chaos.

Day 7: Ask God to strengthen Open Doors' local partners who are working to equip the church in CAR—while facing many of the same risks.

32

BURKINA FASO

TOTAL POPULATION
21,497,000

POPULATION CHRISTIANS
5,093,000

MAIN RELIGION
Islam



Why is Burkina Faso on the 2022 World Watch List?

Burkina Faso is located in Africa's Sahel region, where Islamist extremist groups have a huge and growing influence. Jihadist violence has been rapidly increasing in recent years, and extremists have exploited the government's weakness during the COVID-19 crisis to gain control of the country's infrastructure. This has led to numerous attacks on churches (often during worship services) and predominantly Christian villages, and hundreds of church closures.

Where is God at work in Burkina Faso?

Even amid violence, churches have continued meeting, with some reaching out to share the gospel. "We know what the enemy can do; his ways and strategies are widely revealed to us in the Scriptures," says Pastor Phillipe Bamogo. "Pain may endure for the night, but joy comes in the morning. We are suffering today, but our hearts are strong in the Lord. He will come to our rescue in due course. We believe this situation will strengthen the church."



There are over 1 million internally displaced people in Burkina Faso, many of whom are Christians.

How can I pray with Christians in Burkina Faso?

Day 1: Pray for wisdom for the government and its international partners as it seeks to bring an end to Burkina Faso's insecurity.

Day 2: Ask God to halt the stream of violence in the country so that believers can worship without fear.

Day 3: Pray that the Lord will be at work in the lives of traumatized believers to bring healing and comfort.

Day 4: Pray for protection over Open Doors partners as they travel to volatile regions, and for God's blessing on plans and logistics.

Day 5: Pray that Christians would not be tempted to give in to tribalism and anger towards Muslims but would continue to trust the Lord to fight for them.

Day 6: The extremist ideologies sweeping across the Sahel have brought widespread destruction. Pray that the Lord would use these circumstances to display His glory.

Day 7: Pray for the role the church plays in ministering to people. Thank the Lord for their determination to continue sharing Christ with the lost. Pray for wisdom and courage.

33

NIGER

TOTAL POPULATION
25,006,000

POPULATION CHRISTIANS
64,700

MAIN RELIGION
Islam



Why is Niger on the 2022 World Watch List?

The persecution dynamic is changing rapidly in Niger, due to a dramatic rise in violence against Christians. Since 2020, the country has experienced a series of attacks by Islamic militants and protesters who take their revenge by burning churches. The unpredictability of the situation makes Christians vulnerable. If Christians gather, they must do so in secret and with extreme caution due to an increased threat of violence from militant groups like Boko Haram.

Where is God at work in Niger?

With the threat of violence always looming in Niger, people are still coming to Christ and God is still using His Church to help Nigerien believers learn how to prepare for battle. After attending persecution survival training, a Nigerien believer shared: "I thought persecution was something that happens elsewhere, like Nigeria, Iran, or Egypt. But now I realize it is in my room, even under my bed."



Once a country known for cross-religious harmony, Niger jumped 21 places to enter the 2022 World Watch List.

How can I pray with Christians in Niger?

Day 1: Pray for violence against believers to stop and the influence of militant Islamist groups to diminish rapidly.

Day 2: Pray for comfort and strength for believers who have lost family and friends to attacks. Pray that they will get connected with trauma counseling.

Day 3: Pray that Open Doors training programs will equip believers to withstand persecution and serve Jesus in the places where they live.

Day 4: Ask God to use His church in Niger in bold and powerful ways for His glory in both their families and communities.

Day 5: Pray for the restoration of peace in the communities, churches and lives of Nigeriens.

Day 6: Pray specifically for those caught under the rule of extremist groups. Ask God to grant abundant grace.

Day 7: Pray for the salvation of these groups. With God, all things are possible!

34

BHUTAN

TOTAL POPULATION

844,000

POPULATION CHRISTIANS

30,000¹

MAIN RELIGION

Buddhism

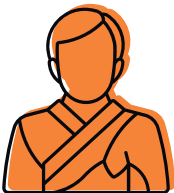


Why is Bhutan on the 2022 World Watch List?

In Bhutan, all citizens born in the country are expected to be Buddhists. Anyone who converts to Christianity faces intense pressure to return to their former religion. And in the past year, violence has increased, causing it to rise on the World Watch List.

What is life like for Christians?

Local authorities often make it extremely difficult for believers to live in Bhutan by refusing to issue Christians a “non-objection certificate,” which is needed for loan applications, registering property, applying for jobs and renewing ID cards. For Christian converts, family pressure can be overwhelming.



Bhutan’s government doesn’t officially recognize any churches.

Because conversion is perceived as bringing shame on the whole family, new believers are often disowned, which makes an enormous difference in a Bhutanese person’s life. The culture is very communal, and the protection one’s family brings is crucial.

Where is God at work in Bhutan?

When Miriam left Buddhism to follow Jesus, every consequence she had heard about for those who convert became her reality. She was rejected by her family and community and had to move into the city. Today, she reflects the light of Christ in Bhutan as she travels with her husband, an Open Doors local partner, encouraging and discipling other believers, especially Bhutanese Christian women.

“It’s not very easy to become a Christian, especially with the kind of rigorous pressure from the family and the community,” Miriam explains as she asks for prayer. “You are always being left out by your family and community. But because of my faith in Christ, I am willing to endure all of this and still continue in my faith.”



MEET MIRIAM:

Miriam was rejected by her family when she converted from Buddhism, but still follows Jesus.

“When I heard about Jesus, it was like removing the blindfold from my eyes.”

How can I pray with Christians in Bhutan?

Day 1: Pray with believers who have been rejected by their families and communities to find new communities that offer them family, love and hope.

Day 2: Pray that God would use the practical support provided by Open Doors’ local partners in Bhutan to strengthen Christians facing persecution.

Day 3: Pray for religious freedom in Bhutan, and for the government to officially recognize Christian churches.

Day 4: Pray that local authorities would be convicted of their actions and issue certificates to Christians so they can find employment and live with the same rights as every citizen.

Day 5: Pray that more Bhutanese would see the truth of the gospel and take the courageous step of faith.

Day 6: Pray for the children of Bhutanese Christians—that God would place people in their paths to raise them up to lead the church in Bhutan.

Day 7: Pray with Miriam for the light of salvation to come to Bhutan.

35

TUNISIA

TOTAL POPULATION
12,019,000

POPULATION CHRISTIANS
22,800

MAIN RELIGION
Islam



Why is Tunisia on the 2022 World Watch List?

For Christians in Tunisia, the pressure they face is widespread and constant. The situation is particularly dire for Christians who have converted from Islam. It can be dangerous to espouse their faith, so many believers are forced to worship Jesus secretly. They must also be careful when gathering for worship—as they are monitored by Tunisian security services.

Where is God at work in North Africa?

In North Africa, discipleship training is secretly happening as leaders look for creative ways to continue their ministry during the pandemic. “Kabil” is one of the key trainers who has taken to the internet to teach believers. He shares a message after a training:

“Because of the help these believers experience—because of your obedience to the gospel by giving—they glorify God. They pray for you. Thank you for traveling with us on this journey.”



Tunisia is home to the ancient port city of Carthage, established by the Phoenicians in ninth-century BC.

How can I pray with Christians in Tunisia?

- Day 1:** Pray with Christians in Tunisia who have converted from Islam. Ask God to encourage them, even when they must follow Him in secret.
- Day 2:** Pray for women who worry they will be forced to marry a Muslim man because they have decided to follow Jesus.
- Day 3:** Pray for the Tunisian government and society as political turmoil continues. Ask God to prick the hearts of those in authority.
- Day 4:** Pray Tunisians will be protected from political instability.
- Day 5:** Pray for Open Doors’ partners in Tunisia, that they’d be encouraged and strengthened to continue doing God’s work in a difficult place.
- Day 6:** Pray for discipleship training and leaders like Kabil. Ask God to multiply the church.
- Day 7:** Pray for the church to hold fast and keep their eyes turned toward Christ, listening for His voice.

36

OMAN

TOTAL POPULATION
5,270,000

POPULATION CHRISTIANS
190,000

MAIN RELIGION
Islam



Why is Oman on the 2022 World Watch List?

In 2021, the Omani government intensified its monitoring of Christians and their activities, placing Christians, especially converts from Islam, under higher pressure and catapulting the country eight spots on this year's World Watch List. Additionally, violence rose as several Christians were forced to leave the country.

Where is God at work on the Arabian Peninsula?

We continue to meet believers who are praying fervently, often in secrecy. Suad, a Christian convert who lives on the Arabian Peninsula told us: "Now that I follow Christ, I have discovered the scriptures that describe prayer as incense, like Psalm 141:2.

"My neighbors may not see me burning the incense, but the fragrance often reaches them, and those who enter my home will walk away with the fragrance on them."



In Oman, when a man leaves Islam, by law he automatically loses custody of any children.

How can I pray with Christians in Oman?

Day 1: In Oman, fear is a barrier to the growth of the church. There is fear that doubting Islam will prevent you from entering Heaven. Pray for the bondage of fear to be broken.

Day 2: Ask God to bless converts from Islam who risk everything to follow Christ in Oman. Pray for their safety and livelihood.

Day 3: Pray that God would bring other believers into their paths who will help them grow in faith.

Day 4: Pray for unmarried women whose families are pressuring them to marry a Muslim man to force them to return to Islam.

Day 5: Ask God to comfort Christians in Oman who are lonely, or who are currently living at great risk for their faith.

Day 6: So many Christians in Oman come from other countries and live and work as migrant workers. Pray that these believers would find a community of faith.

Day 7: Ask God to change the hearts of the Sultan and the other leaders of Oman. God can do anything, including reaching Oman's powerful leader with the hope of the gospel.

37

CUBA

TOTAL POPULATION
11,500,000

POPULATION CHRISTIANS
7,127,000

MAIN RELIGION
Christianity

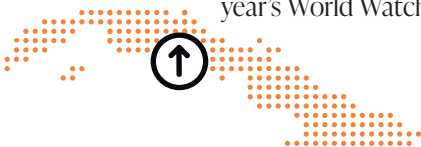


Why is Cuba on the 2022 World Watch List?

Persecution in Cuba continues to worsen. Last year, Cuba was just outside the top 50 countries on the World Watch List. The continued rise is the result of highly restrictive measures against churches deemed to be opponents of the regime, especially non-registered Protestant churches.

The COVID-19 crisis has been used as a pretext to hinder church and community activities, monitor church leaders, make arbitrary arrests, confiscate private property and impose extortion fees. Christian leaders from different denominations were among those arrested during anti-government demonstrations in July.

Cuba jumped 13 spots to enter the top 50 of this year's World Watch List.



What is life like for Christians?

For Christians in Cuba, life is dictated by Communist government control. So, when church leaders or other Christians criticize the regime, they face a gamut of difficult consequences: arrest, church and business closures, government harassment, even prison sentences.

Where is God at work in Cuba?

Few new churches are granted legal registration—a strategy by authorities to control and limit the church's influence. But that doesn't stop pastors who feel called to plant a church. Leaders like Pastor "Luiz:"

"We meet in my house's garage and in homes around different neighborhoods, because to this day we do not have a building, not even the possibility of legally registering our church."



MEET PASTOR “JORGE,”
A CHURCH LEADER WHO HAS EXPERIENCED
SEVERE CHURCH RESTRICTIONS:

“Government officials
have joined some
of the WhatsApp
groups the churches
have set up, and
they do so to monitor
our activities.”

How can I pray with Christians in Cuba?

Day 1: Pray that God will bring about change in Cuba’s political landscape, so that religious freedom will be honored.

Day 2: Pray for resilience and wisdom for church leaders as their congregations continue to worship God together despite all the restrictions placed on them.

Day 3: Pray that new churches would be allowed to register and operate legally.

Day 4: Pray with Pastor Luiz and church leaders like him who are following their callings and planting new churches in a hostile environment.

Day 5: Pray with children of church leaders whose faith and last name make them doubly vulnerable to persecution.

Day 6: Pray that God would bring opportunities for local Open Doors partners to serve the persecuted church in Cuba.

Day 7: Pray that persecuted believers in Cuba would deeply sense and know the truth of Romans 8:37—that they are “more than conquerors through Him who loved us” (Romans 8:37).

38

ETHIOPIA

TOTAL POPULATION
115,403,000

POPULATION CHRISTIANS
69,234,000

MAIN RELIGION
Christianity



Why is Ethiopia on the 2022 World Watch List?

Pressure on Christians in Ethiopia intensified in 2021. In some places, Islamic extremist groups attacked churches. Meanwhile, political violence in the country—focused largely on the conflict in Tigray—has also taken its toll on Christian communities, with many Christians killed and churches destroyed.

What is life like for Christians?

The severity and form of persecution varies by region. Ethiopian Christians in Amhara and Tigray are especially vulnerable to persecution from the Ethiopian Orthodox Church (EOC), whereas in places like Oromia, Afar and the Somali region, persecution largely stems from Islamic extremists. The most severe cases of persecution tend to come in areas just south of the capital Addis Ababa.



Ethiopia is the only African country to never have been brought under colonial control.

Pressure can also come from the government. In areas where Muslims or Ethiopian Orthodox Christians are the majority, local officials may oppose the growth of Protestant Christianity and refuse to grant permits for meetings and worship.

Where is God at work in Ethiopia?

The gospel is being preached through persecuted believers like “Hiwot,” a widow and mother of eight. Hiwot and her family have faced persecution from their local community, including their home being burnt down.

“Hiwot freely tells people what God has done for her,” says Pastor Michael, who leads Hiwot’s church. “She testifies to her neighbors that God is the only helper who would not leave anyone in the dark. She is a good example. In this way the gospel is being preached.”



MEET “RODA:”

She became a Christian after attending Bible studies and boldly declared her new faith by wearing a cross necklace. That’s when the persecution began, but Roda continues to bravely stand firm in her faith.

“From now on,
I will bow down
to the Messiah,
the One who has
saved me.”

How can I pray with Christians in Ethiopia?

Day 1: Pray for wisdom and provision for the Ethiopian government as they lead a country greatly affected by war, drought, plagues and political instability.

Day 2: Pray that Christians facing intense pressure to renounce their faith will have the strength to hold onto Jesus and trust Him for their futures.

Day3: Pray for the ministry among women and youth. Ask God to raise up more women and young people to strengthen the church.

Day 4: Ask God to bring peace and stability throughout the country.

Day 5: Pray that God would send rain to cover arid ground caused by drought.

Day 6: Ask God to protect pastors and evangelists serving in hostile environments; may they see His power breaking through.

Day 7: Thank God that many people are coming to know Him in Ethiopia through the powerful witness of believers like Hiwot.

39

JORDAN

TOTAL POPULATION
10,320,000

POPULATION CHRISTIANS
180,000¹

MAIN RELIGION
Islam



Why is Jordan on the 2022 World Watch List?

Despite dropping a place on the World Watch List, hostility toward Christians has marginally increased. There has been a rise in reported incidents of violence and less acceptance of public expressions of Christian faith, such as openly displaying Bible verses.

What is life like for Christians?

Compared to Christians living in other Middle Eastern countries, most Christians in Jordan enjoy a relatively high level of religious freedom, but Christians from Muslim backgrounds, in particular, can encounter opposition. A Christian from a Muslim background's

public declaration of faith can lead to beatings, arrest or even death. And the presence of Islamic extremists, including returning jihadists from Syria and Iraq, continues to pose a threat to the Christian community.

Where is God at work in Jordan?

You don't have to look much farther than Al Hadaf, a Jordanian organization reaching out to the most vulnerable, specifically Al Hadaf's refugee program. It aims to restore dignity to Christian refugees from Iraq and Syria by ministering to children and their traumatized mothers.

The program helps through a variety of classes, including art therapy. "Many of these kids saw ISIS take down the crosses from their churches," says Maran, the founder of Al Hadaf. Maran is just one example of how God is using His church in Jordan to offer comfort and strength.



Jordan is home to 800-foot Mount Nebo, where Moses was given a view of the Promised Land.



MEET “TAREQ:”

“I used to be a bully, a troublemaker. But now I am a committed member of these groups, joining the Bible study meetings twice a week. I am a new creation now in Jesus Christ. I look more and more like Him.”

How can I pray with Christians in Jordan?

Day 1: Pray that Christians from Muslim backgrounds will be equipped, encouraged and empowered to stand strong and flourish in their faith.

Day 2: Pray for opportunities to increasingly open up for Christians to tell others about Jesus.

Day 3: Pray that the Lord will continue to raise up new leaders to serve the Jordanian church.

Day 4: Pray for your Jordanian family who have experienced suffering because of their faith to know the depths of Christ’s love and His power at work in them.

Day 5: Pray for heart transformations like Tareq’s among Muslims as believers are disciplined and learn to disciple others.

Day 6: Pray for local congregations facing harassment by authorities, particularly those churches that actively share the gospel.

Day 7: Ask God to stifle the threat of Islamic extremist groups and continue to build His church in Jordan.

40

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO (DRC)

TOTAL POPULATION

92,336,000

POPULATION CHRISTIANS

87,845,000

MAIN RELIGION

Christianity



Why is DRC on the 2022 World Watch List?

Violence against Christians remains very high and continues to be the main form of persecution in DRC. In 2021, the government announced a state of siege in the northeastern provinces to curb the violence perpetrated by the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF)—but attacks on communities and churches continued. The particularly high level of violence is why DRC is in the World Watch List top 50.



The DRC is Africa's second-largest country and represents more than 200 ethnic groups and nearly 250 languages.

What is life like for Christians?

Christians face violent persecution from the ADF which are particularly active in the eastern part of the country. The ADF is actively working to uproot the Christian population and expand its own foothold. Its goal is to drive out Christians and supplant them with radical believers of Islam. Those who leave Islam or tribal religions to follow Jesus are often specific targets.

Where is God at work in DRC?

It's difficult to describe just how violent the DRC, especially in the east, is for Christians. The very fact that people still follow Jesus in this region is evidence of God's hand. DRC believer Antonisha Kambale recently shared how she's praying:

"Our prayer request is for God to help Christians not to compromise their faith, because we observe that it is about an Islamic threat. Let people not compromise their faith to save their lives."



Photo by DMB

**MEET GEORGINE, WIDOWED BY
ISLAMIC EXTREMISTS IN DRC:**

“I am pleased to know that people are praying for me, for God to comfort me and my children.”

How can I pray with Christians in DRC?

Day 1: Pray with grieving widows like Georgine, who must parent alone and provide for their families.

Day 2: Pray that pastors in the east of the country will have courage to remain in the area and lead their churches.

Day 3: Ask God to give leaders wisdom to prepare their churches for persecution.

Day 4: Pray that God will strengthen the church through the training and trauma care programs run by Open Doors partners.

Day 5: Pray that the government will seek real and lasting solutions to the deepening security crisis in DRC.

Day 6: Pray for those who are counseling traumatized believers. Ask God to equip them with compassion and insights to minister to these Christians who have walked through so much for their faith.

Day 7: Pray that Christians and local congregations in DRC would reflect Christ’s light in the darkness, bringing both hope and healing.

41

MOZAMBIQUE

TOTAL POPULATION

33,233,000

POPULATION CHRISTIANS

18,012,000

MAIN RELIGION

Christianity



Why is Mozambique on the 2022 World Watch List?

For Christians in Mozambique, Islamic oppression is the most common form of persecution. The brutality of these groups has only increased, including a prominent extremist group responsible for burning churches and religious schools, and the displacement of thousands of people from the north

Where is God at work in Mozambique?

The atrocities Christians in Mozambique have seen are almost impossible to fathom. It's believers like Josephina who remind us that God is moving in Mozambique. Josephina's husband was violently killed in an extremist attack.

"Today, I feel like a real person. God really exists. With this support, I will stop worrying so much about how to feed my children."



An estimated half of Mozambique's population is under age 17.

How can I pray with Christians in Mozambique?

Day 1: Pray with followers of Jesus as they grapple with the brutal violence inflicted on them.

Day 2: Pray with churches and their leaders who have taken in thousands of families displaced by extremist violence.

Day 3: Pray for wisdom for leaders reaching out to displaced and traumatized families.

Day 4: Pray for economic development in the region. Unemployment and lack of basic services have left youth disillusioned and vulnerable to Islamic extremist groups.

Day 5: Pray for wisdom and provision for Open Doors as we determine the appropriate interventions. Pray for protection over staff as they travel to volatile regions.

Day 6: Pray that God would wreck the plans of these groups working to establish an Islamic Caliphate in Mozambique.

Day 7: Ask God to help persecuted believers be salt and light in an environment where they may be at risk.

42

TURKEY

TOTAL POPULATION

84,515,000

POPULATION CHRISTIANS

170,000

MAIN RELIGION

Islam

*Photo by ANB



Why is Turkey on the 2022 World Watch List?

Turkey continues its status as a place where Christians can expect to encounter significant opposition for their faith. Increasingly, Turkish identity is tied to Islam, so anyone outside of that brand of religious nationalism encounters suspicion and discrimination. All Christians are under pressure in Turkey, but converts from Islam are certainly the most vulnerable, along with Christian refugees from countries like Iran, Iraq and Syria.

Where is God at work in Turkey?

As Turkey continues to be a place of refuge for Iranian and Syrian Christians, these believers are praying to be used by God in their new surroundings. Believers like Kouroush who fled from Iran and is now building a center—a safe place—for Iranian believers.

“I am really looking forward to what God is going to do here, to see the fruits of this center,” Kouroush says. “All to glorify the name of our triune God!”



Turkey is home to an estimated 67,000 Iranians, including 39,000 refugees.

How can I pray with Christians in Turkey?

Day 1: Pray for Christians in Turkey as they live, work and worship in a place that doesn't seem to want them.

Day 2: Pray for deliverance from discrimination and an increasing awareness of God's love and grace.

Day 3: Ask God to protect converts from Islam and to bring them to a place where can worship Him freely.

Day 4: Pray that God would strengthen Open Doors' ministry to refugee communities in Turkey, particularly our support of Iranian believers.

Day 5: Pray that God will lift the Centers of Hope now operating in Turkey and that He will use those communities to bring more people to Him.

Day 6: Pray for the leadership of Turkey, that they would realize Turkish Christians are part of the fabric of their country.

Day 7: Pray with Christians who have left everything in their native countries to seek refuge in Turkey. Ask God to hold them close and send His Holy Spirit anew upon them.

43

MEXICO

TOTAL POPULATION
135,384,000

POPULATION CHRISTIANS
129,627,000

MAIN RELIGION
Christianity

Why is Mexico on the 2022 World Watch List?

In Mexico, criminal groups struggle for territorial control. Christians are perceived (and rightly so) to be against criminal operations and violence, which keeps them at constant risk of being targeted for elimination.

What is life like for Christians?

In rural indigenous communities, anyone who turns from traditional religious beliefs can face rejection and punishment in the form of fines, imprisonment and forced displacement.



Mexico is home to the world's largest pyramid and the world's smallest volcano.



Where is God at work in Mexico?

Pastor Carlos was imprisoned for preaching in Oaxaca, Mexico. He was told that he was jailed for “preaching and teaching doctrines contrary to the traditional religion professed by the majority of people in our community.” Though Pastor Carlos was freed fairly quickly, he didn’t let his imprisonment keep him from living for Jesus.

In a jailhouse note sent to his family and other believers, he wrote: “We are in jail now for preaching the gospel; that is the reason we are locked up in this place, but we are glad. We are content because we are not here because of any crime we’ve committed but for preaching God’s Word.”



MEET PASTOR IMELDO
(BEFORE THE COMMUNITY ASSEMBLY):

“When I said to them, I could not pay, they asked me to sign a document renouncing my Christian faith. I told them I couldn’t do it because I strongly believed in Jesus Christ.”

How can I pray with Christians in Mexico?

Day 1: Pray for believers who face difficult choices when confronted with organized violence in their communities. Ask God to give them wisdom and courage to confront it in a Christ-honoring way.

Day 2: Ask God to give indigenous believers courage to maintain their faith, even when their villages turn against them.

Day 3: Pray for open minds in Mexico when Christian voices speak out about social issues. Pray that people would listen and move toward God.

Day 4: Pray that Christians’ positive influence and Christ-honoring response to corruption would turn the tide of persecution.

Day 5: Pray with pastors and their families as they are consistently targeted. Ask God to protect them and their churches from intimidation and attack.

Day 6: Pray with believers displaced from their communities because of their faith. Pray that they could quickly resettle and experience life anew.

Day 7: Pray that God’s glory would permeate all the country through the bold witness of believers who step forward with biblical standards. Give them graceful and persuasive words.

44

CAMEROON

TOTAL POPULATION

26,614,000

POPULATION CHRISTIANS

16,366,000

MAIN RELIGION

Christianity

Why is Cameroon on the 2022 World Watch List?

Christians who have converted from Islam suffer persecution across Cameroon and are at great risk if they tell anyone about their new faith, or if Bibles are discovered in their possession. They face this risk both from the wider community and their immediate family. In the north of the country, the Islamic extremist group Boko Haram is a violent presence.

Where is God at work in Cameroon?

Where there is forgiveness, God is present. When Open Doors brought relief for 15 villages who have suffered multiple Boko Haram attacks, believers asked for prayer not only for themselves, but also their persecutors. Amadou was one of many believers who expressed forgiveness: "We pray that the Lord will bring all the enemies to faith, so that they will be part of us. Because I know that also the Apostle Paul persecuted the Christians [before he met Jesus]."



Cameroon's official languages are English and French, although more than 200 languages are spoken.

**How can I pray with Christians in Cameroon?**

Day 1: Pray that Cameroon's government will take concrete measures to protect vulnerable communities.

Day 2: Pray for God's wisdom and strength for church leaders in the far north as they minister to the persecuted, displaced and traumatized.

Day 3: Pray for discernment for local Open Doors partners as they determine and implement ways to serve the persecuted church.

Day 4: Pray for believers like Fadi who are waiting for their kidnapped loved ones to return.

Day 5: Pray for all those in captivity. Ask God to surround them with His peace that passes understanding each day and give them His supernatural strength to endure.

Day 6: Ask God to change the hearts of Boko Haram. May they feel conviction for their actions and turn to Jesus.

Day 7: Pray for the young widows whose husbands were killed in attacks. Pray they will not lose faith and that they will trust God to help them raise their children.

Go deeper: CAMEROON

READ

As Jesus and His disciples were leaving Jericho, a large crowd followed Him. Two blind men were sitting by the roadside, and when they heard that Jesus was going by, they shouted, “*Lord, Son of David, have mercy on us!*” The crowd rebuked them and told them to be quiet, but they shouted all the louder, “*Lord, Son of David, have mercy on us!*” Jesus stopped and called them. “*What do you want me to do for you?*” He asked. “*Lord,*” they answered, “*we want our sight.*” Jesus had compassion on them and touched their eyes. Immediately they received their sight and followed Him.

—Matthew 20:29-34

REFLECT

Boko Haram’s reign of terror has continued unabated for more than a decade. The Islamic terrorist group has spread beyond its initial attack area of Nigeria: The Far North region of Cameroon has been especially hard hit. In 2020, Open Doors registered at least 41 attacks against villages. And Christians always face the danger of individual assault or kidnapping while they cultivate their farms. Many people have been forced to flee multiple times. One of them is Fadi Zara.

Fadi lived in four different villages in the Far North region. And in each place, she was forced to flee after a Boko Haram attack.

The last village she lived in, Zeveled, was so dangerous that she and other Christians were forced to sleep



in the mountain forests each night. They’d return each morning to their homes and farms. Boko Haram periodically attacked, killing people and burning churches. Finally, Fadi and her family fled again, to the town of Koza.

Fadi bears the scars left by Boko Haram. Her sister was kidnapped by Boko Haram, and both of her parents are dead. “Even when I want to sleep, I can’t,” Fadi says. “Many things come like a vision or dreams. And every time I am crying because I am an orphan. My father has died, and Boko Haram kidnapped my sister, and my mother also died. I am the only one.”

In 2021, Open Doors delivered relief aid to 449 Christian families in Koza in Far North Cameroon. Receiving the

emergency aid was one of a few happy moments for Fadi these days. It had been a long time since she and other displaced people received help. “All these things, I am surprised for getting it in my life today,” she says. “I am very, very happy.”

With all the burdens she bears, you might think Fadi would be mostly concerned about physical needs, but her main prayer request is bracing in its faithfulness. “I need God [to stay] with me in every situation, to do His

wonderful power in my life,” she says. “For me to see His face at the end of the day.”

Fadi echoes the requests of the blind men in Matthew 20: “Lord, we want our sight!” While the blind men needed literal and spiritual sight, Fadi’s prayer is one many of us can echo: a prayer for spiritual sight to see Him in our lives, every day. Fadi’s simple request is powerful because it reminds us how much we need to see God in our lives every day.

PRAY

God, your unfailing love for us is staggering. Even when it seems like everything is so hard, I’m grateful for how you bring examples like Fadi into my life to show how your people around the world long for you. I ask you would give me eyes to see your face—that, like Fadi, I would yearn for you to stay with me in every situation. Thank you, God. In Jesus’ name, Amen.



45

TAJIKISTAN

TOTAL POPULATION

9,657,000

POPULATION CHRISTIANS

65,300

MAIN RELIGION

Islam

**Why is Tajikistan on the 2022 World Watch List?**

Tajikistan authorities put significant pressure on Christians through tightening existing laws and strictly enforcing the ones that already exist, such as greatly restricting the public training of church leaders. Converts from Islam are also at risk from their families and communities who see them as “traitors.”

Where is God at work in Tajikistan?

Pastor Bahrom is a Tajik church leader in Tajikistan whose church was raided by authorities; the church building was confiscated. But the gospel won't be stopped. Instead of disbanding, the church has come together powerfully.

“Our church is now gathering inside a 40-ton shipping container,” Bahrom shares. “We pray for a new building for our church.”



Tajikistan has been ruled by one president for the last 28 years.

How can I pray with Christians in Tajikistan?

Day 1: Pray for church leaders like Pastor Bahrom. Many Christian leaders in Tajikistan follow Jesus under a significant amount of risk. The government could crack down on their ministry at any point.

Day 2: Pray for President Emomali Rahmon. Ask God to break through the hardness of his heart and give him fresh eyes to see the truth of the gospel.

Day 3: Pray for Open Doors partners in Tajikistan and across Central Asia, that they would be able to reach and encourage believers who risk everything to worship Jesus.

Day 4: Pray for the church in Tajikistan to feel both peace and hope that comes from trusting in Jesus.

Day 5: Pray for pastors imprisoned for their faith. Ask God to give them supernatural strength to get up each day and keep their eyes on Him. Pray that they would feel our prayers.

Day 6: Pray for the families of imprisoned believers. Pray for their provision and for the spouse who's left to take care of the family.

Day 7: Pray for believers' protection, especially converts from Islam, that they would bear fruit and carry the light of Christ wherever they go.

46

BRUNEI

TOTAL POPULATION

450,000

POPULATION CHRISTIANS

42,600¹

MAIN RELIGION

Islam

**Why is Brunei on the 2022 World Watch List?**

The implementation of Shariah law has increased insecurity and fear among Brunei's Christian population, and has ratcheted up the pressure felt by Christians in public and private. Non-traditional Christian communities cannot register as churches. Leaving Islam is illegal in Brunei.

Where is God at work in Brunei?

"Elora" is a young believer in her 20s who lives in Brunei. She's the future of the church here. And with Christians like her praying and interceding for Brunei, God can do great things. "My heart beats faster when it comes to Brunei," Elora says. "There is a burden I can't explain. Pray for the salvation for the people of Brunei. Pray for the Sultan, the governments and authorities of this country."



Public Christmas celebrations are banned in Brunei.

How can I pray with Christians in Brunei?

Day 1: Pray young Christians would resist the temptation to convert to Islam so they can marry.

Day 2: Pray for pastors to be strengthened and continually equipped to serve and lead their congregations.

Day 3: Pray for the Sultan of Brunei, who regards himself as the protector and defender of Islam.

Day 4: Pray that churches would be able to register more openly.

Day 5: Ask God to encourage younger believers to remain in the country for the long-term health of the church.

Day 6: Pray for Christians grappling with the reality of living under Shariah law.

Day 7: Thank God that He is more powerful than Shariah law and is not weakened by strict laws.

47

KAZAKHSTAN

TOTAL POPULATION

18,957,000

POPULATION CHRISTIANS

4,847,000

MAIN RELIGION

Islam

Why is Kazakhstan on the 2022 World Watch List?

While there has been a drop in reported incidents of violence against Christians, this is almost offset by marginal increases in opposition in all other areas. The past year has also seen proposed changes to the country's Religion Law, which will make it more difficult for Christians to hold gatherings away from state-approved places of worship.

Where is God at work in Kazakhstan?

Some churches noticed that officials sometimes attend church to monitor the service. As reported by Forum 18, at one Baptist church, members asked an official not to film or record the meeting for worship. But they don't mind if she attends—because she can hear the gospel! “Let her come and hear the word of God,” the pastor said. What a bold witness.



Churches in Kazakhstan can be fined for meeting without registration.



How can I pray with Christians in Kazakhstan?

Day 1: Pray that Kazakh authorities will recognize the good intentions of Christians, and give them more freedom to express their faith.

Day 2: Pray for the Lord to provide for those who've been fined for Christian activities.

Day 3: Ask God to touch the hearts of Kazakh officials who monitor church meetings.

Day 4: Pray that God would bless the ministry of groups doing ministry across Central Asia.

Day 5: Pray for believers who have converted from Islam, who are pressured by the state and their families. Ask that God would comfort them.

Day 6: Pray that Christians would be able to access needed Christian books in Kazakhstan.

Day 7: Pray for the changes to the religious laws in Kazakhstan, that unjust laws would be overturned.

48

NEPAL

TOTAL POPULATION
30,578,000

POPULATION CHRISTIANS
1,341,000

MAIN RELIGION
Hinduism



Why is Nepal on the 2022 World Watch List?

Nepal's fall in rank (it fell by 14 places) belies its persecution score, which stayed nearly as high as last year. Despite a decrease in violence, pressure in almost every sphere of life went up, showing that daily life remains difficult for Christians, especially converts from Hinduism.

What is life like for Christians?

Though Nepal is no longer an official Hindu state, most Christian persecution in Nepal comes from radical Hindu groups who want the country to return to Hinduism. Many of the Christians in Nepal are converts from Hinduism, and these converts experience significant pressure from their families

and communities. If a family discovers a member is a Christian, the convert might be expelled from their family home or even violently attacked. Also limiting religious freedom are anti-conversion laws and the destruction and forced closures of churches. Churches where foreigners gather are treated with more tolerance, though members of some Protestant churches still experience significant pressure.

Where is God at work in Nepal?

Christians in Nepal have horrifying stories of persecution, but powerful stories of faith and redemption. "When my family members knew that I had accepted Christ, they despised me," says Samjhana, a widowed Christian in Nepal. "Bearing their hatred and loathing, I remembered the verse from Matthew 11:28: 'Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.' This verse encouraged me to keep all my burdens in God." This is just one example of the power of the Holy Spirit moving in Nepal.



Nepal was officially a Hindu Monarchy until 2006.



**MEET “KABITA KHATRI,”
WHOSE HUSBAND LEFT HER AFTER
SHE CAME TO FAITH IN JESUS:**

“My family members constantly pressured me to give up my faith. One day, my father-in-law gathered some villagers and provoked them against me. He told me to leave my house if I wouldn’t leave my faith. But those threats didn’t shake my faith [...] all these hardships couldn’t waver my faith in Christ.”

How can I pray with Christians in Nepal?

Day 1: Ask that God would touch the hearts of Nepalese leaders, and that they would allow true religious freedom to flourish.

Day 2: Open Doors’ work through partners in Nepal provides help for so many people. Ask God to bless these ministries.

Day 3: Pray that Christians from a Hindu background will know the reality of their global family in Christ and will sense Christians around the world praying with them.

Day 4: Ask God to comfort Christians who lose their families when they convert to follow Him.

Day 5: Recent anti-conversion laws have made following Jesus even more difficult. Ask God to cause these laws to be repealed.

Day 6: Thank God for the brave testimonies of Christians in Nepal.

Day 7: Pray for Christians in Nepal who lost so much in the COVID-19 pandemic. Ask that God would protect and restore them.



TRENDS *IN* GLOBAL PERSECUTION

WORSHIP WHEN THEY'RE ALWAYS WATCHING

A REFLECTION ON THE 2022 WORLD WATCH LIST

Exporting technological control

For a long time, China's surveillance system has encroached on the religious freedom of Christians and other religious minorities. But it's only gotten worse: There are reports from two provinces that cameras are present in all state-sanctioned religious venues. In 2021, some Bible apps were taken down from online stores in China, Christian content was taken off social media and the restrictions of online life have grown tighter. China also has implemented a program where average citizens can access security cameras and

report anything "suspicious" to police. As China exports its technology around the world, it's a worrisome trend this level of surveillance and technological control will become the status quo for persecutors of Christians.

What does this mean for Christians?

In some places, it's meant rapid discovery and detainment. For instance, in Vietnam, authorities used a COVID-19 outbreak and contact tracing technology to quickly shut down a church and pursue criminal charges against church leaders. In China, an online church service was interrupted by authorities and the pastors arrested. And as China's technology has spread to places like Laos, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia, the possibilities for pressure are immense.

Where is God at work?

The Chinese church has always been creative, skirting regulations with quick thinking and clever leadership. The current situation is no different. For instance, when one Christian page was banned on social media, it



“What’s never been possible before, really, is a surveillance technology that enables the regime to ban private forms of religion.”

—CHRIS MESEROLE,
FELLOW, BROOKINGS INSTITUTE

simply rejoined under a different name. Chinese churches aren’t supposed to meet online, but many do so anyway. This kind of creativity is on display around the world: Wherever there is a technological challenge, the Church is there to meet it.

In 2021, Chinese authorities investigated all customers of an online Christian bookstore

How can I pray with Christians living under surveillance and technological persecution?

Day 1: Pray for Christians in China who are monitored. Ask God to help them stay safe and to remain under the radar of any officials who might oppose Christianity.

Day 2: As China exports more and more technology, pray that other nations would not use the systems to persecute Christians, but would instead open themselves more to religious freedom.

Day 3: Pray for pastors and churches who are harassed and restricted because of technology and surveillance. Pray for them to have courage and strength.

Day 4: Ask God to speak to average citizens in China who monitor their neighbors. Ask Him to change their hearts, that they would see the Christian community as a benefit.

Day 5: Pray for the government in China, that it would have a change of heart and stop persecuting and monitoring religious minorities.

Day 6: Pray for Christians who speak out online in places it may not be safe. Pray for wisdom, boldness and safety.

Day 7: Thank God for the creativity shown by His Church around the world, and ask Him to sustain that spirit.

49

KUWAIT

TOTAL POPULATION

4,361,000

POPULATION CHRISTIANS

520,000

MAIN RELIGION

Islam



Why is Kuwait on the 2022 World Watch List?

Little has changed for Christians in Kuwait, despite the country dropping a place on the World Watch List. While expatriate believers remain relatively free to practice their faith, converts from Islam continue to face severe opposition from both their families and communities—and, if anything, this hostility has only increased over the past year.

What is life like for Christians?

In Kuwait, conversion from Islam to another faith is not officially recognized and is likely to lead to legal problems in personal status and property matters. Converts to Christianity from Islam face discrimination and harassment from their family and community, intimidation from Islamist groups, and even police monitoring. Expatriate Muslims who convert to

Christianity experience the same levels of pressure as they would face in their home countries, as they often live within their own national or ethnic communities. Although expatriate Christians are relatively free to worship, finding a place to meet is often difficult; additionally, they must be very careful when sharing their faith, since proselytizing is illegal and they could be expelled from the country.

Where is God at work in the Arabian Peninsula (we cannot specify which country for security reasons)?

“Tamer” is a Christian who came from Islam. During the Muslim holy month of Ramadan, he fasts and prays for Muslims. “My wife is not yet a follower of Christ, but she knows that I’m a Christian,” he says. “She knows that I’m not fasting because of a legalistic Islamic law, but because I desire fellowship with Christ and I’m interceding for the Muslims that I love so much. I know Satan doesn’t like this, but I know and I’m believing that a miracle will happen and that she will surrender her life to Christ.” In this unnamed country, Tamer is living out God’s purposes in secret.



It’s estimated that Kuwait’s population is made up of 70% non-Kuwaiti residents.



**MEET “TAMER,” A BELIEVER LIVING
ON THE ARABIAN PENINSULA**

(LOCATION NOT SPECIFIED FOR SECURITY REASONS):

“Believers are isolated, or feel isolated, because they think they are the only believers in the Arabian Peninsula. Because they are new believers, some are afraid to evangelize for fear of being expelled by their family, arrested or even killed. Others are very zealous and may evangelize in an unwise way.”

How can I pray with Christians in Kuwait?

Day 1: Pray for secret believers in Kuwait, that they would be able to find other Christians to help them grow in their faith.

Day 2: Pray for the protection of Christians in Kuwait.

Day 3: Ask God to work in the hearts of the monarchy and authorities, that they would allow Kuwaitis to choose their own faith.

Day 4: When Muslims decide to follow Jesus in Kuwait, they can be rejected by their families. Pray these believers would know they have a global family who prays for them.

Day 5: Pray that the sexual abuse of migrant workers will stop. Ask the Lord to heal all those who have experienced this.

Day 6: Pray for wisdom and boldness as Christians seek to tell others about Jesus.

Day 7: Thank God for the courage of Christians like Tamer around the Arabian Peninsula.

50

MALAYSIA

TOTAL POPULATION
33,289,000

POPULATION CHRISTIANS
3,028,000

MAIN RELIGION
Islam

*Photo by: INIB



Why is Malaysia on the 2022 World Watch List?

Malaysia is a difficult place for Christians, particularly those who convert from Islam. As Malaysia swings more deeply toward radical Islamic belief and practice, the potential for Christian persecution increases.

Where is God at work in Malaysia?

Many believers in East Malaysia are illiterate or semi-literate. But that doesn't stop them from thirsting for God's Word. Open Doors was able to distribute 1,700 audio Bibles to Malaysian Christians. "I am very thankful because it helps me to understand the Word of God, especially in my native tongue," said one recipient. Praise God for the accessibility to His Word!



The Malaysian constitution stipulates that ethnic Malays are Muslim.

How can I pray with Christians in Malaysia?

Day 1: Pray with the people of Malaysia who would rather follow Jesus than stay within their country's religious laws.

Day 2: Pray for religious freedom and a more even-handed application of laws and principles.

Day 3: Ask the Lord to gift more partners with creative ideas, such as USB sticks and audio Bibles, for getting God's Word and other faith-building materials into the hands of believers.

Day 4: Ask God to give secret believers the spiritual nurturing they need in their isolation.

Day 5: Pray for Pastor Raymond Koh, who was kidnapped in February 2017. His family still doesn't know where he is.

Day 6: Ask God to reach people with His Word, even those in Malaysia who cannot read.

Day 7: Pray for the government of Malaysia, that it would have a change of heart and grant more openness to other faiths.



The all-new, redesigned Open Doors Prayer App

Be there when there are urgent prayer requests from persecuted Christians, around the world.

Text **PRAYER** to 32500 or scan the QR code to download now.



Message and data rates may apply





“We never know how God *will* answer our prayers, but we can expect that He will get us involved *in* His plan for the answer. If we are true intercessors, we must *be* ready to take part *in* God’s work on behalf of the people *for* whom we pray.”

— Corrie ten Boom



The 2022
**WORLD
WATCH LIST**

OpenDoorsUSA.org/WWL