

Remember the prisoners, as though in prison with them, *and* those who are ill-treated, since you yourselves also are in the body. Hebrews 13:3

And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or farms for My name's sake, will receive many times as much, and will inherit eternal life." - Matthew 19:29

**The Strategic Prayer Initiative – Summer 2020**  
**Praying for the Persecuted**

- ❑1. **North Korea** - Pray for ethnic Korean Zhang Wen Shi, a Christian who lived and ministered in border-town Changbai, China. He was abducted from China by North Korea and sentenced to 15 years in prison because he provided North Koreans who illegally visited Changbai (to seek medicine, purchase items to sell on the black market, or to seek other help) with warm clothing, food and supplies for their return to North Korea. He shared the gospel with those who would listen. Pray that Kim Jong Un will be convinced to release the more than 50,000 Christians unjustly held in detention centers and prison camps throughout the country. Pray that Christian parents will ultimately be able to freely share their faith with their children and raise them to know Jesus. Pray for wisdom for Christians in North Korea, the most dangerous country for Christians according to Open Doors. (Source: christianitytoday.com, opendoors.org, christianpersecutionnews.com)
- ❑2. **Nigeria** - Pray for strength for Alheri Magaji and others like her in Nigeria, who say that the number of attacks on Christians is being under-reported. Pray for the people of Kaduna state, Nigeria where there have been continued attacks on Christian communities, including Adara, which is majority Christian. Pray for wisdom and comfort for the thousands displaced by the murderous attacks launched by Fulani against farming communities in Kaduna. Pray that the truth is revealed and the government has the will and ability to stop these attacks. Ask God to protect Christians in the region. (Source: persecution.org)
- ❑3. **Afghanistan** - Pray for peace and stability for the small number of Christian converts in Afghanistan that must remain in hiding because of increasing violence and insecurity. Pray for courage and protection for converts from Islam who face strong pressure from family to recant their Christian faith. Pray for openness to religions outside of Islam in this country where conversion is not allowed. Pray for wisdom and discernment for students and professors at university where radical groups like ISIS spread their ideology and recruit new fighters. (Source: opendoorsusa.org)
- ❑4. **Somalia** - Pray for the safety of Christians in Somalia where Islamic leaders are calling for followers to defend Islam. Somali Christians and those who minister to Somalis report a corresponding rise in threats and attacks against them, including murder. Pray for a strong faith and for wisdom for believers here. (Source: persecution.com)
- ❑5. **Libya** - Pray for Christian migrants to Libya—mostly from sub-Saharan African countries—who are singled out for discriminatory and violent treatment in detention centers. Pray for stability and protection of the rights of religious minorities. Pray for Libyan Christians with a Muslim background to stand strong in their faith as they face violent and intense pressure from their family and the wider community to renounce their faith. Pray Christians living in Tripoli would be beacons of Christ's peace in the midst of turmoil and violence. Pray that people around them would be drawn to Christ through them. (Source: opendoorsusa.org)
- ❑6. **Pakistan** - Pray the Pakistani government passes laws that will protect the Christians and other religious minorities in the country. Pray for peace for Christians who converted from Islam—their family, friends and neighbors see these conversions as shaming the community. Pray Christians accused under blasphemy laws will not face violence or mob “justice” and that they would stand strong in the midst of this dangerous trial. Please pray for protection of Christian women and girls who are often raped and then forcefully married to Muslim men in the community. This usually results in forced conversions. (Source: persecution.com, christianpersecutionnews.com, opendoors.org)
- ❑7. **Eritrea** - Pray that God would change the hearts of government leaders who see Christians as spies who want to wreak havoc in the country. Pray that God would grow the faith of believers who practice their faith in secret. Pray that the Lord will continue to build His Church despite these circumstances. Pray that this church that continues to pray fervently, win hearts and grow in numbers. Pray that the many who have overcome the fear of arrest would be sustained along with those already in prison for their faith. Pray that Eritrean Christian would continue to have the grace to share the gospel amidst deep concern over the advancement of radical Islam in their country. (Source: christianitytoday.com)
- ❑8. **Iran** - Pray for Pastor Youcef Nardarkhani who is the imprisoned pastor of a 400-member house church in Iran serving a 10-year sentence in Evin Prison (where those imprisoned for their faith routinely face torture). Pray for Pastor Youcef and other believers who were not released from prison when Iran released 85,000 prisoners (with less than 5-year sentence) to assist with decreasing the spread of COVID-19. Pray for his protection from COVID-19 sweeping through Iran's prison system and pray that prisoners would be given access to medical care which has been unavailable to them. Pray that the Iranian government notices the international petitions and outcries to release Pastor Nardarkhani and releases him soon. Pray for these believers also in Evin prison: Mohamad Reza (Yohan) Omid, Zaman (Saheb) Fadaei, Nasser Navard Gol-Tapeh, Mohammad Ali Mossayezbaze, Abdolreza Haghnejad, Shahrooz Eslamdoust, Babak Hosseinzadeh, Mehdi Khatibi, and Behnam. (Source: persecution.org, barnabusfund.org, christianitytoday.com, christianpersecutionnews.com)
- ❑9. **India** - Pray for Sharon and Neelam and others like them whose families are attacked and killed by anti-Christian terrorist in India. Pray that the Hindu nationalist leaders in India would meet Jesus and stop their attacks on Christians. In addition, pray for Pastor James and others like him who were asked to deny their Christian faith in order to have access to food provided by the Indian government during the COVID-19 lockdown. Pray that the distribution of food would not discriminate against Christians. Pray that believers would see to the needs of their fellow-believers. Pray that the police, who are afraid of the nationalist, would come to Jesus. Pray that Christians would no longer have to fear arrest themselves if they report attacks. (Source: christianitytoday.com, persecution.org, and christianpersecutionnews.com)

- 10. **Mozambique** - Pray that Isalmist militants in Mozambique would come to Jesus and stop attacking villages and recruiting young people. Pray for the families of the 52 young people who were killed because they resisted recruitment by the criminals. Pray that the survivors stay strong in faith and that they become a powerful witness to Jesus. (Source: barnabusfund.org)
- 11. **Central Asia** - Pray for Vera, a single mother, who was dismissed from her job teaching Russian at a national university after school officials learned of her faith. After fewer than six months on the job, she was told that the university could not allow a church member to hold her position, especially since she was teaching many foreign students from surrounding countries. Vera was told to either give up her church membership or resign, so she chose to leave her job. Pray that she will find another job so she can continue supporting her family. (Source: persecution.com)
- 12. **Nigeria** - Pray for the full recovery of a pastor, his wife and children who were shot at their home in Northern Nigeria where Voice of the Martyrs workers have documented attacks on 15 cities in Plateau and Kaduna states since Jananuary 8, 2020. Pray that God comforts the families of the 86-plus who were killed and rescues the 13 who were kidnapped. Ask God for provisions, wisdom, protection and healing for the 24 injured and the 400-plus displaced families. Praise God that despite pandemic lockdown measures, Voice of the Martyrs' workers have been able to distribute food aid on the three days per week when travel is permitted, and safety measures are in place to protect those receiving the aid. (Source: persecution.com)
- 13. **Syria** - Pray for Abdallah, a Syrian refugee, who turned to Jesus despite having a dad who was a teacher of Islam and a disapproving family. When war forced Abdallah to become a refugee in Lebanon, he bought a bible. Pray for provision for Abdallah who cannot find work and remains homeless and persecuted by family because of his faith. Pray that Abdallah's faith will continue to grow. (Source: icommittoprayer.com)
- 14. **Guinea** - Pray for Christians like Mariam, who was abused and threatened and legally disowned by her family in Guinea for converting to Christianity from Islam. Pray that she and others would be able to find housing in this nation of 80% Muslims. Pray that new believers will remain strong in the faith despite pressure from their families. Pray for Zainab, a blind widow, kicked out of her in-laws' home after refusing to give up her Christian faith. Pray that Zainab and her family will find a stable place to live. (Source: persecution.com)
- 15. **Indonesia** - Pray for a Christian family who was interrupted by Muslim neighbors while worshiping at home. Pray for the salvation of the Muslim neighbor who burst in and told them they could not hold a Christian meeting in their house and waved a stick at the family and became increasingly agitated as one family member began recording on his cellphone. With a neighborhood leader watching from the doorway, the man warned them that if they did not stop holding Christian meetings he would return with a mob. The family later filed a police report. "We don't understand why these men were causing a problem with us, since we were following our government's advice to stay home [for social distancing]," they said. Pray for believers around the globe who are encountering persecution during this unique time. (Source: persecution.com)
- 16. **Saudi Arabia** - Pray for isolated believers all over Saudi Arabia, who lack fellowship and community. Pray for those who deal with pressure from society and family to recant their faith or who live in fear their faith will be discovered. Pray that Christian Saudis will find ways to share the truth with their own family members, and pray for the family members to search for the truth and not respond in anger. Pray for courage of believers here because it is forbidden to openly practice any religion besides Wahhabism—a purist and strict interpretation of Islam. Conversion is punishable by death. Please pray that Muslim Saudis will come to know Jesus. Pray that more and more Saudi Arabians would be exposed to Jesus on the internet and social media. (Source: opendoorsusa.org)
- 17. **Iraq** - Pray for safety for an Iraqi Christian whose brother was killed by family members angry because he had shared the gospel with an elderly parent about to die. Pray that the Christians in this family will remain faithful amid these tragic circumstances. (Source: persecution.com)
- 18. **Egypt** - Pray for Bishov and others who recount details about the demolition of their legal church—home to 3,000 Coptic Christians. Pray for comfort of the Christians who stood in front of the church and pleaded for it not to be torn down while showing their official papers to the police—200 police officers were on hand but did not help. The police and some Muslim extremist insulted the priest and hit him in the face. They fired tear gas, attacked the members and hurt even women and children. Fourteen church members were arrested. This was the only church in this village. The nearest church is 9 miles away, but most do not have means to travel. Pray that God would comfort these believers and that He provides a place where believers in this community can meet. Pray for strength and healing of the church community. (Source: opendoorsusa.org)
- 19. **Algeria** - Pray for Pastor Salah Chalah who was forcibly beaten when his church was forced to close. Pray for other Christians and pastors in Algeria where over the past 2 years, the Algerian government has closed 14 of the country's 50 churches, including the 700-member Church of the Full Gospel in Tizi-Ouzou, the largest Protestant church. Pray for the growth, faith and safety of new believers (most converting from a Muslim background). Pray for courage and safety as Christians share the love of Jesus in Algeria, (their blasphemy laws make it illegal for Christians to share their faith.) (Source: christianitytoday.com and christianpersecutionnews.com)
- 20. **Myanmar** - Pray for healing and strength for Pastor Tun Nu in Myanmar who was abducted from his home at gunpoint, thought to be killed, and released after 14 months by Buddhist militants. Also pray for safety and release of another pastor, Pastor T. Tun, still thought to be in captivity. They were targeted for their Christian missionary work in the community. Pray that their work continues and that God would raise others and that the militants would also come to Christ. Pray for strength and comfort. (Source: barnabusfund.org)

- 21. **Laos** - Pray for a young couple (Phiarune and Lai) who have had to pay a heavy price, just 6 months after becoming Christians. Pray that the couple would be able to get the means to get their own family registration booklet (combination passport and social security card) so they can be officially recognized by the government and can work. (Phiarune's family, not approving of their conversion to Christianity and not wanting Christians documented with their family's registration booklet, forced the couple out). Ask God to provide for this couple. (Source: persecution.com, christianpersecutionnews.com)
- 22. **Nigeria** - Pray for return of the 3 Christian students who were kidnapped by Boko Haram as they travelled home from the university. Pray for the grieving families of the 70 soldiers killed when Boko Haram ambushed a military convoy taking captives. Pray for provision and comfort for the villagers of Miago where Fulani Islamic militants attacked the village—burning the houses of Christians and killing 3. Pray for the families of 2 Christian men shot to death in Dangwa village by Fulani Islamic militants. Ask God to strengthen the faith and hope of believers who witnessed these attacks that took place over a few days. (Source: persecution.com)
- 23. **Vietnam** - Pray for Chao Vang, in Viet Nam, who, after choosing to follow Christ, was taken in by village leaders several times to get him to recant his faith. After refusing, villagers tied him up and burned his eyes with spicy smoke and then threatened to kick him out of the village. He was harassed by family, siblings, and cousins who took Vang's possessions. Vang eventually sold his last few sacks of rice to flee the village with his wife and young child but had no money for food in the new community. Praise the Lord that International Christian Concern heard of their plight and teamed up to purchase farmland so they would not go hungry. Pray that Vang would grow in his faith and that he would have a positive impact on friends and family. Pray for other believers in Viet Nam to grow and stand strong amidst strong opposition. (Source: persecution.org)
- 24. **Turkmenistan** - Pray for believers in Turkmenistan whose Christians meetings have been raided by police. Pray for the homeowner who was fined a week's wages when police raided his home. Pray for another homeowner who was fined after officials and secret police from the Ministry of State Security raided a home during a Christian meeting, recording personal information about participants and fining the homeowner. Pray for the participants of a house-warming celebration raided by police where they accused the Christians of violating an order against religious gatherings. Some of the believers were detained for more than four hours and said they expect to receive fines. Pray for the wisdom of Christians in Turkmenistan as they are confronted by authorities. (Source: persecution.com)
- 25. **China** - Pray for the church in China as the Chinese government's persecution of unregistered churches ("house churches") is becoming more severe because "more and more people believe in Christianity," said a member of a congregation whose "house church" in Jiangxi province was demolished by the authorities in April. Pray for wisdom during the continuing crackdown on the Church by the Chinese government where hundreds of house churches and official state-sanctioned "three-self" churches shut down across China. Pray for faith increase as the believers endure repressive measures including: the arrest and imprisonment of pastors, the installation of surveillance cameras inside churches and the removal of religious symbols and texts from display. Pray that government officials come to Christ. The Chinese Government is offering cash rewards to people who inform on underground churches. Ask God to encourage them and grow His church in China and that their efforts would produce much fruit. Pray Christians across China continue to reach out to their neighbors and communities with the love of Jesus. Pray that the church continues to be the beacon of hope during the pandemic and that the government makes wise decisions about the ongoing challenges of the virus. Pray that rather seeing the church as a threat during this time, they would see it as a positive force of love and support. Pray that this new hunger to connect with other believers and grow closer to God on a daily basis would gather momentum. Please continue to pray for the believers in China to stand firm. (Source: operdoorsusa.org, barnabusfund.org and christian.org.uk)
- 26. **Burkina Faso** - Pray for the widow and 9 children of Lankoande Babribile in Burkina Faso, where, Islamic extremists murdered two church leaders. Pray that God would heal the trauma of those affected by the extremist who came to the community announcing that they will not tolerate Christianity in the area. Militants came to the home of church leader Lankoande Babribile and shot him to death in front of his wife. Lankoande, who served in the village of Sebba near the border with Niger, was well-known for his Christian witness in the community, especially among the nomadic Fulani people.) In addition, pray for the comfort of surviving family members of Pastor Tindano Omar who was the next target—killed in front of his family. Also pray for Christians in the Gaoua district when 11 church buildings were destroyed. (Source: barnabusfund.org and icommitpray.org)
- 27. **Sri Lanka** - Pray for the continued strength and faith of Pastor Shiyanth and his church who, despite previous beatings and persecution, were able to provide food for 100 families (including those who attacked their church) during the COVID lockdown. Pray that the villagers who opened up to hearing the gospel would develop a strong relationship with God. Pray that new believers will continue to grow. (Source: opendoorsusa.org)
- 28. **Kenya** - Pray for Christians in Kenya near the Somalia border where there are threats and attacks by the Somali militant group al-Shabab. Pray for protection as these militants threaten "infidels" coming into the region, calling the settlement of Christians in Muslim areas "Kenyan colonization." Pray for the Christian teachers and professionals Kenya sends to serve these communities. Many of these teachers were withdrawn from 2 counties and local churches have had to stop meeting. Pray for the safety of Christian workers who agreed to stay and continue their work, despite the risk. (Source: persecution.com)
- 30. **Mexico** - Pray for a group of families in Mexico who were expelled from their village because of their faith. Pray for protection and effectiveness as they share Jesus with their new neighbors. Ask God to strengthen their faith. Also continue to pray for the safety of clergy who are being targeted by criminal gangs. (Source: icommitpray.com, christianpersecutionnews.com)