

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 2021
Praying for the Persecuted

- ❑ **1. Mozambique** - Pray for believers in Mozambique where Islamist insurgents led a three-day siege that left several people dead, hundreds trapped and many missing. Hundreds of al-Shabab attackers entered Palma completely unannounced, entering houses and killing whomever they found. While many were affected by the violence, the situation for Christians was especially severe, as the Islamists brutally murder those who cannot quote from the Quran and/or give explanation to the tenets of Islam. This attack is the latest in a years-long conflict as the Islamic insurgents seek to establish a caliphate governed by Sharia law, and it may signal a shift in the intensity of the violence. Pray for our brothers and sisters in Mozambique who are suffering at the hands of radical Muslims. Pray for strength, comfort and protection as they bear witness to Christ amid the violence. (Source: www.icommitpray.com)
- ❑ **2. Iran** - Pray for Christian covert Reza Zaeema, who is one of many Christians currently serving prison time or facing persecution for their faith in Iran. Also pray for Muslim religious leader and professor, Hamed, who began chatting with Christians on a Christian broadcasting website. He was angry that someone would proclaim Jesus as the way and the truth. That conversation turned into Hamed writing in every day with questions. Later, Hamed wrote to say that he had given his life to Christ secretly, but that he was afraid of the reaction of his family and workplace. "I felt so much peace after reading the Bible," he said. "I studied the Bible thoroughly and searched online for more commentaries on it." Hamed also said the content of what he was teaching his Islam students had changed, and they had noticed. When he revealed he was following Jesus, his wife threatened to divorce him. "I am now a secret Christian and have to speak to you in private," he wrote. "The most they can do is kill me, but they can't take away my love for Jesus!" Pray that Hamed, Reza and other secret or persecuted believers stand firm in their faith and have a positive influence on others. (Source: www.icommitpray.com)
- ❑ **3. Nigeria** - Pray for Christians in Nigeria where Islamic militant Fulanis have targeted and killed several Christians in a series of attacks across predominantly Christian communities in Benue state. Pray the families of those whose loved ones were killed will be comforted. Pray that Christians in Nigeria can show love and forgiveness to their Fulani attackers and that these radical Islamic Fulani will come to salvation in Christ. (Source: www.icommitpray.com)
- ❑ **4. Uzbekistan** - Pray for Christian believers in Uzbekistan who are from Muslim backgrounds to be protected from pressure from family, friends and communities who see them as traitors. Pray for God's protection of churches who are raided and people arrested or fined. Ask God to increase the faith of church leaders who are targeted by authorities. Pray that the leadership of President Shavkat Mirziyoyev will bring welcome changes for the country's Christian population. Pray the Holy Spirit will encourage, equip and empower believers facing pressure and persecution. Pray for the ongoing protection and nourishment of church leaders in Uzbekistan, who can come under immense pressure in their roles. (Source: www.opendoorsusa.org)
- ❑ **5. India** - Pray for Christian families of the Bodaguda village, Koraput, India who were warned to leave or be killed by Hindu nationalists as they broke into their homes and destroyed their property. Pray for these Christians who then sold everything they had to build a church in the village, but found their new incomplete church structure surrounded by 100 Hindu villagers from other communities who had come to demolish the church. Pray that a solution can be found for the Christians to build their church and live in peace. The police have not filed criminal charges or arrested the attackers and the villagers say they refuse to have a church in their village. (Source: www.persecution.org)
- ❑ **6. Afghanistan** - Pray for Christians in Afghanistan who continue to face difficulty, discrimination and persecution from family members, radical Islamist groups and the government for their faith in Christ. Pray for our brothers and sisters to experience God's presence and peace as they endure suffering. Pray for them to persevere in their faith, and to be salt and light to members of their families, communities and government. Pray for mature Christians to be fruitful disciple-makers. Pray also for God's kingdom to advance throughout each of the country's provinces and unreached people groups, especially Pashtuns. (Source: www.icommitpray.com)
- ❑ **7. Columbia** - Pray for Christians in dangerous "red zone" areas of Colombia, where Rocia Pino was shot on her door step after sharing the gospel with guerilla fighters. Pray for her husband James and children, who watched Rocio die because emergency help would not come to this heavily mined and dangerous area that James and Rocia chose to live in to share the gospel. Pray for the guerilla's to come to know Jesus. (Source: www.persecution.com)
- ❑ **8. Bangladesh** - Pray for several Christians in Bangladesh who were worshipping God and having fellowship when some Muslim men blamed them for disturbing their fast on the first day of Ramadan. An angry mob of Muslims soon formed and started beating four Christian men with sticks and stoning them. The four brothers in Christ suffered head wounds, and their lives are still in danger. Pray for these men to have courage as they heal from the attack, and pray for them to grow bold as they continue to follow Jesus. Pray for the attackers to find salvation through Christ as they seek God during Ramadan and through out the year. (Source: www.icommitpray.com)
- ❑ **9. Ethiopia** - Pray for Liya in Ethiopia who was eight months pregnant when her husband was killed by rioting Muslims. When riots broke out against Christians in central Ethiopia, Liya's husband rushed home from his job in another city. While he traveled, the attackers found him and killed him. During the attack, radicalized Muslims looted and burned Christian homes, sparing properties owned by Muslims. After the attack, Liya moved in with her mother, who is also a poor widow, and her son was born shortly after. Pray for comfort and provision for Liya, her mother and the other believers affected in the widespread riots. (Source: www.icommitpray.com)
- ❑ **10. Kenya** - Pray for Peninah in Kenya, the widow of Paul who told his abductors, "If you want to kill me, I will remain in Jesus." While working near the Somali border, radical Islamic group al-Shabaab attacked and killed Paul (who would not deny Jesus) but let others who recited the Muslim profession of faith free. Pray for healing and provision for Peninah and their 2-year-old son, Steve. (Source: www.opendoorsusa.org)

- ❑ **11. North Korea** - Pray for Christians like Kim Sang-Hwa in North Korea, where following Christ can cost one's life. Pray for children, who, like Kim, must decide whether to tell teachers and authorities when they discover a bible in the home or discover their parents' secret faith in Christ. Pray for provision and protection. (Source: www.opendoorsusa.org)
- ❑ **12. Myanmar** - Pray for eleven families of believers from the Palaung tribe in Shan State in Myanmar who have experienced pressure from villagers to leave their new Christian faith. Villagers grew angry because the believers had gathered to worship and pray. After pushing the families to leave their faith or leave the village, three of the families grew fearful and have since left the church. Missionaries who work in the area convinced village leaders to allow the families to remain in the village; however, villagers retaliated by stoning the homes of the Christians. Pray that the Christians remain firm in their faith and love their neighbors despite the intimidation and attacks. Pray that the three families who left the faith will return to Jesus. Pray for the persecutors to experience the love of Christ, and to hear and see the gospel displayed in the lives of the Christian families. (Source: www.icommitpray.com)
- ❑ **13. Benin** - Pray for Devine, a young woman in Benin who experienced persecution from her family for her newfound faith in Christ. Shortly after she became a Christian, her family began to beat her and refused to give her any food to eat. They tried to force her to recant and return to worshipping their traditional gods. When she would not give up Christ, they told her she was no longer part of their family and kicked her out of their house. A Christian worker, provided Divine with a place to live and helped her with educational expenses and supplies to become a tailor. "I could not give up Jesus because Jesus [is] my Lord and gave me a new life," Divine said. "My most important prayer request would be that I want my family to know Christ and that I could lead them to Christ." (Source: www.icommitpray.com)
- ❑ **14. India** - Pray for Christians in India, where persecution is on the rise as a result of new and more restrictive "anti-conversion" laws that prohibit "coerced or fraudulent conversions" and mandate anyone wanting to change religions must notify authorities or face fines and imprisonment. Pray that this legislation (which has empowered radical Hindus to carry out violent attacks on Christians to "purify" India) will be changed. (Source: www.persecution.com)
- ❑ **15. Laos** - Pray for families in 2 villages in Laos, who were pressured by authorities to reject the "foreign religion." In one village, authorities threatened to imprison four families if they didn't reject Christ. In a nearby village, 15 families were told their children would not be allowed to attend school if they followed Jesus. A local pastor visited families in both villages, encouraging them to remain firm in their faith and not leave Christ. Pray for the families to grow in their faith through reading God's Word, through prayer, and through fellowship with one another. Pray that the families will be able to remain in their villages and their children in the schools. Pray that those who are against them will experience Christ's love and grace and will hear the gospel. Pray for all Christians in Laos, where life is extremely difficult for converts to the Christian faith. (Source: www.icommitpray.com)
- ❑ **16. Uganda** - Pray for Geoffrey in Uganda, a former Muslim who confessed Christ as his Savior. When Geoffrey's father learned of his newfound faith, he tortured him so badly that local police authorities intervened to stop the torture. His father also involved local clan members who cursed Geoffrey and tried to bribe him to recant his Christian faith. When he would not recant, his father chased him from his house and land on his father's property. Despite this persecution, Geoffrey is determined to follow Christ. "I cannot be convinced otherwise. I have seen the power of God in my life," he said. "They took away the house and land and threw us out, but they cannot take away our Jesus." Geoffrey is married and has two young daughters. Pray that they continue to stand firm in Christ. Pray also that Geoffrey would be able to provide for his family and that their physical needs would be met. (Source: www.icommitpray.com)
- ❑ **17. Ethiopia** - Pray for Christians to continue thriving in Eastern Ethiopia, where Muslims forced a small congregation out of the home used for meetings, expecting the Christian presence in their area to cease. However, the number of believers has increased in the last year. Biblical Christians in the region, which is 98 percent Muslim, used to meet for worship on Sundays in the living room of one of the believers. Local Muslims pressured the man's landlord to evict him, and then the believer was unable to rent another house because the same Muslims had threatened other landlords. The church had no place to meet, and the believers were in great despair. However, with assistance from believers outside Ethiopia, the small church purchased a piece of land and built a worship space. Today, the church has grown from 58 people to more than 70. Many of those who persecuted the church told the believers that they were shocked that the believers managed to hold onto their faith. The church leaders said, "We observed God's presence in our midst through this experience and we are spiritually renewed." Praise God for his faithfulness in all circumstances, and pray that the believers will continue to grow in faith and in number. (Source: www.icommitpray.com)
- ❑ **18. Pakistan** - Pray for Samina Masih who is working in a factory to support her family and to cover her husband's medical expenses from his kidney disease that requires dialysis three times a week. Samina prayed at work and her Muslim co-workers pressured her to convert to Islam. Amjed and Samina are remaining strong in their faith, praying regularly at home and at church. Pray for the couple to continue to be encouraged as they navigate Amjed's health challenges, their financial troubles and persecution at Samina's job. Pray for Amjed to be healed from his disease, and for God's provision for their family and for Samina to continue to display God's grace. (Source: www.icommitpray.com)
- ❑ **19. Eritrea** - Pray for the 2 Christian men arrested in Eritrea where an estimated 600-1200 people are currently imprisoned for their faith. No records are kept and no charges ever made when Christians are arrested for their faith. Although the government began releasing Christians in 2020, there are recent reports of further arrests. Pray that God will continue to build His church in Eritrea. Pray church leaders will have wisdom as they interact with the government and find ways to advocate for greater freedom. Pray for comfort and provision for those imprisoned and for their families. (Source: www.opendoorsusa.org)
- ❑ **20. Indonesia** - Pray for the Indonesian families of Maren, Simson, Paulus and Lukas who were attacked and killed by a terrorist group as they were working in their fields. Ask God to provide for the families, who for safety reasons have now been forbidden by the government from going to their fields—even though it is harvest. Ask God to strengthen believers in Napu and make the area secure. Ask God to fill the hearts and minds of the 4 grieving families. Pray the government will have determination to catch and bring the terrorist to justice and this situation will be resolved soon. Pray for the terrorist group to have their hearts changed by God. (Source: www.opendoorsusa.org)

- ❑ **21. Bangladesh** - Pray for the 23 Christian families in Bangladesh who were forcibly confined in a Mosque to force conversion to Islam. Pray for the many other Christian families who are forced to be in hiding for fear of persecution. Pray that the food and supplies Christians are sending to the persecuted here reaches them and is not confiscated and destroyed as has happened in the past. Pray that God would protect the Christians from abuse and God would stir the police to protect Christians. Pray that God would heal the families who were trapped in the Mosque. Pray that those who renounced their faith under extreme pressures would be reminded that they belong to God. Pray for comfort and faith of those who risk everything to follow Jesus. Pray for God to open the hearts of the Muslim extremists in Bangladesh and allow them to experience the love and grace of Christ. (Source: www.opendoorsusa.org)
- ❑ **22. Democratic Republic of Congo** - Pray for the families of the 70 people killed in Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo by an affiliate of ISIS. Pray for these “predominantly Christian communities, which are under attack by Islamic extremists groups with a clear Islamic expansionist agenda.” Pray for the healing of those traumatized by the violence and for the Lord to comfort those who are grieving the loss of loved ones. Pray for the Lord to strengthen government protection over its people and bring peace to the nation and for the love of Jesus to redeem the souls of those who persecute the church. (Source: www.persecution.org)
- ❑ **23. Algeria** - Pray for Pastor Rachid Seighir and his assistant Nouh Hamami in Algeria, who were sentenced to 2 years in prison after their bookstore was raided and authorities decided the Christian books and bibles they found "agitated the faith of Muslims" which is against the Law in Algeria. Praise God that as they appealed, the prison sentences were reduced to 1-year suspended sentences and a \$1,500 fines each. Ask God for justice and that on further appeal they will be acquitted on all charges as well as avoid having to pay the fines. Continue to pray that persecutors in Algeria will come to know Jesus. (Source: www.opendoorsusa.org)
- ❑ **24. Somaliland** - Pray for the several Christians in Somaliland arrested and charged with denouncing Islam, which carries a death sentence for Muslims who decide to follow Christ. Pray that God works in the judge's heart to release these brothers and sisters (the judge already decided that the case will be decided according to international law instead of Sharia). Pray that they will be set free and that their faith can remain strong while they are in prison and pray that they can share the love of Christ with other prisoners, guards and court officials. (Source: www.icommitpray.com)
- ❑ **25. Pakistan** - Pray for Venus Bibi who was abducted by Muslim men in Pakistan on her way home from shopping. She was found 20 days later on the side of a road, unable to walk. Pray for believers in Pakistan, the 5th most dangerous country in world to be a believer according to Open Doors. Pray for the safety of Christian girls and women who are often kidnapped, tortured and killed without consequences to the perpetrators. Pray for the Lord to strengthen the church amidst persecution. Pray for Venus Bibi and others like her who have survived such attacks and that the Lord will heal her of her trauma and provide comfort and love to her and her family. (Source: www.persecution.org)
- ❑ **26. Viet Nam** - Pray that a Vietnamese couple (A Dhon and Y Mae) be provided for and that their children will be able to attend school. After coming to faith in Jesus, local authorities and villagers have pressured them to renounce their faith, but they have refused. In retaliation, their farm was destroyed, Y Mae was fired from her job, the children were expelled from school, A Dhon was beaten, their livestock was confiscated by the community, and they were expelled from the village and forced to move 250 miles away with nothing but the clothes they were wearing. Pray for continued faith and God's protection and provision. Pray that A Dhon and Y Mae can find stable jobs. Pray for blessing and encouragement to those who reach out to the family with help and faith. (Source: www.opendoorsusa.org)
- ❑ **27. Indonesia** - Pray the believers in Makassar, Indonesia whose church was attacked by an Islamic extremist couple on a motorcycle. A security guard attempted to stop the suicide bombers from entering the front gate of the church parking lot just before the bomb exploded. Fortunately, because of coronavirus protocols, relatively few worshipers had gathered that morning. Nineteen church members were injured in the blast, and no deaths were reported. The security guard miraculously survived with burns to the front of his body. Pray for those injured in the blast to experience complete healing, and pray for the church to remain strong in the coming weeks and to display love over fear. Pray for those who sympathize with the bombers to be confronted with the truth and love of Jesus Christ. (Source: www.icommitpray.com)
- ❑ **28. Laos** - Pray for Keo in Laos, a 61-year-old in poor health and new convert to Christianity. When his wife, relatives and village authorities learned of Keo's Christian faith, his wife threatened to leave him if he didn't leave Jesus, his relatives said they would cut him off from the family and village leaders formed a plan to evict him. Keo refused to abandon Christ, so villagers destroyed his hut. Currently, Keo is living with a local pastor, but he is in poor health and has no job. Pray for Keo to remain strong in his faith, experience healing and find work. Pray for him to find his own place to live and be reunited with his wife. Pray that she will hear the gospel and accept Christ as her Lord and Savior. (Source: www.icommitpray.com)
- ❑ **29. Malawi** - Pray for the protection of new Christian converts in Malawi. A Christian worker said, “We have seen an unusual move of the Holy Spirit as Muslims are putting their trust in Christ in large numbers.” In response, Muslim groups throughout Malawi are mobilizing to convince those who have converted to Christianity to return to Islam, and they are threatening new believers to choose between following Christ or being killed. Amid this opposition, believers in Malawi are standing firm in Christ. “I am not afraid at all. The fire of the gospel has been lit in the Yao Land, and no gates of hell will stop it,” the Christian worker said. Pray for wisdom and boldness for these believers as they face increased hostility from those who wish to silence their witness for Christ. Pray that this movement of God will continue and many more Muslims will place their trust in Christ. (Source: www.icommitpray.com)
- ❑ **30. China** - Pray for Chinese Christian Missionaries to the Uyghur Muslims in northeastern China, where a couple was arrested and imprisoned for 2 years and pressured to renounce their Christian faith. Pray for strength and protection of these Christian workers. (Source: www.persecution.com)