

## Praying for the Persecuted – Winter 2022

- ❑ **1. Burkina Faso** – Pray for Pastor Pierre who led a church in northern Burkina Faso until jihadists attacked his village and began shooting. Pastor Pierre was warned that "the terrorists are coming to kill you; you have to leave." The pastor and all of his church members fled to a nearby city, where he found a home and currently provides shelter for 16 others. Voice of the Martyrs has provided Pastor Pierre with living assistance as well as an audio Bible, which he uses to preach and teach among other refugees in his city. Many refugees are giving their lives to Christ. Pray for more audio Bibles to reach these new believers. Praise God for Pastor Pierre's obedience to share the gospel, and pray that many more will receive Christ through his faithful witness. Pray for safety of believers in Burkina Faso. (Source: [www.icommittoprayer.org](http://www.icommittoprayer.org))
- ❑ **2. Myanmar** – Pray for Maung, a church leader in Myanmar. Following the military coup early in 2021 in Myanmar, authorities have been searching for Maung, seeking to detain him for his faithful Christian witness and leadership. Fearing for his life, Maung is moving from house to house and is unable to support his wife and their two young children. Pray for Maung to be strong in his faith. Pray for his family's needs to be met, and pray for his church to be strengthened. Pray also for peace and stability in Myanmar. (Source: [www.icommittoprayer.org](http://www.icommittoprayer.org))
- ❑ **3. Cameroon** – Pray for a Christian brother in Cameroon who is facing hardship after leaving Islam to follow Christ. After his girlfriend found out about his newfound faith, she reported him to his Muslim family, who locked him in a room for more than 24 hours to try to force him to recant his faith. He fled after his release because his family threatened his life. He is staying with another believer while he looks for a new home. Despite the opposition, he remains committed to Christ. He wants to devote more time to Bible study. Please pray for peace, comfort and joy in Christ. Pray also that his family will come to know Christ and cease in their persecution of him. (Source: [www.icommittoprayer.org](http://www.icommittoprayer.org))
- ❑ **4. China** – Pray for Dai Zhichao, his wife and 2 sons who have been detained by government authorities in China. Dai, a practicing preacher of Early Rain Covenant Church, is the leader of a small group. Continuously persecuted over the past year, Dai has been summoned, detained and beaten multiple times by authorities in an effort to prevent him from participating in any activities related to Early Rain. Authorities have also monitored him, locked his home and shut off his electricity. Pray for Dai, his wife and their two boys to have peace as they continue to endure persecution. Pray for them to remain joyful in the Lord and for them to find the peace that only Jesus Christ can provide. Pray for the gospel's continual advance in China. (Source: [www.icommittoprayer.org](http://www.icommittoprayer.org))
- ❑ **5. India** – Pray for a Christian father and his adult son who were attacked by villagers in Rajasthan, India. When they went to the village water pump one evening, a group of villagers near the pump (who were partying and drinking) began yelling at the Christian men, saying, "You are Christians and have no right to have water!" One of the villagers then punched the adult son. He and his father managed to run home, but Hindu radicals and other villagers joined the drunks and attacked the believers' house with sticks, stones and axes. The family was able to escape the house with minor injuries, but the water lines, water tank, pump and bicycles were damaged or stolen. Pray for this family as they continue to face threats in their village. (Source: [www.icommittoprayer.org](http://www.icommittoprayer.org))
- ❑ **6. Nigeria** – Pray for Christians in Plateau State and Southern Kaduna in Nigeria who are battling fear, anger, bitterness and unrest after Muslim Fulani herdsman attacked and killed many people in predominantly Christian areas over the last few months. Houses were burned, farmlands destroyed, churches set ablaze and many people have been injured and killed. In Miango alone, about 6,000 families were affected. Pray that church leaders will be a comfort to those suffering from these attacks. Pray that our Nigerian brothers and sisters can show the love of God to the militants, and that the persecutors will come to Christ. Ask God to end the spread of radical Islam in Nigeria. (Source: [www.icommittoprayer.org](http://www.icommittoprayer.org))
- ❑ **7. Afghanistan** - Pray for students Esin and Kashm, sisters who became Christians through the influence of an uncle. When the recent crisis in Afghanistan ensued, they also became targets, forced to hide in their uncle's house. When the Taliban swept through their building to record who lived there, their uncle called a local church leader who brought burqas and claimed the women as his wives to authorities. With nothing the sisters fled Afghanistan with the help of Help the Persecuted (HTP). They are overwhelmed in the journey to a new country where they do not speak the language or know the culture. HTP has been given a deadline of January 20th by the temporary host country for resettlement for the sisters, along with hundreds of other persecuted Afghans. Pray for God's peace and that the paperwork be completed for resettlement, flights arranged to a new home country, and temporary housing and living expenses once they resettle. (Source: [www.htp.org](http://www.htp.org))
- ❑ **8. Uzbekistan** - Pray for a house church pastor and students at a high school in Uzbekistan. The pastor and his family were asleep when authorities tore his home apart looking for materials of a religious nature contrary to Islam before moving on to homes of other believers. A few days later, the search moved to the high school where police and people in plain clothes went into the classrooms and confiscated students' phones, searching for religious content. This increasingly aggressive pursuit of Christians—and the Bibles, books, and Internet content that sustain them—makes it more unsafe for believers by the day. Pray with believers in Uzbekistan as they endure intensifying surveillance of their homes, phones and gatherings. Pray for protection for house churches and ask God to hide their gatherings from the eyes of officials. Ask for special healing for students who were traumatized by the police raid. Pray for wisdom for church leaders as they guide believers in their response to aggressive actions like these. (Source: [www.opendoorsusa.org](http://www.opendoorsusa.org))
- ❑ **9. Ethiopia** – Pray for Chaltu Abdalla, raised a Muslim, but found faith in Christ when she was young. Her husband was killed by gunmen, and their home, crops and possession were burned to the ground in violent ethnic-based conflicts that targeted evangelical Christians. Chaltu went to her family for support after her husband's death, but they refused to help her and her children unless she returned to Islam. "I will not forsake the Lord Jesus," she told her family. "He is my relative." She has returned to her home village and is struggling to get by, yet she continues to hope in God. Pray for Chaltu and her children as they rebuild their lives after losing everything. Pray that her unwavering witness will lead her Muslim family to faith in Christ. (Source: [www.icommittoprayer.org](http://www.icommittoprayer.org))
- ❑ **10. Central Asia** - Pray for a pastor in Central Asia who was warned by authorities that if the Taliban take over, he would be killed. Though church meetings are restricted, this pastor has hosted an enduring house fellowship in his home. He has also been bold in his approach to the government, attempting to register his congregation for a long time. He said one reason the government does not want to register the church is because it may cause problems with the local Muslims and some government members are devout Muslims who oppose Christianity. When authorities told him he would be killed, the pastor replied that he expected persecution because Jesus warned His followers about it 2,000 years ago. Pray that this pastor and his congregation stand firm in their faith, and pray for favor from the authorities. (Source: [www.icommittoprayer.org](http://www.icommittoprayer.org))

- ❑ **11. Philippines** - Pray for 53 believers in the Philippines who participated in *Standing Strong Through the Storm* (SSTS) persecution training given by Open Doors. It is designed to encourage and to prepare them for persecution. Pray for SSTS training to reach more Christians. Pray that the truth is instilled in the hearts of participants and they will persevere in the face of adversity. Ask God to protect the training facilitators and attendees as their faith is deepened when they study and understand God's purpose in their lives. (Source: [www.opendoorsusa.org](http://www.opendoorsusa.org))
- ❑ **12. Nigeria** - Pray with Open Doors' West Africa team leader Suleiman M\* who asks for prayer for churches in Zamfara, Nigeria (one of 12 states governed by Islamic law in northern Nigeria.) It has been reported that local officials were sent a letter (also sent to the police, Department of State Services, Nigeria Security and Civil Defense Corps and other security agencies) giving a 3-year ultimatum to close all churches in the state and giving further threats upon specific churches. The threats come 1 week after the U.S. State Departments' removal of Nigeria as a "Country of Particular Concern." Open Doors USA cites that in Nigeria alone, an average of 10 Christians a day are killed for their faith. At number 9 on Open Doors' 2021 World Watch List, Nigeria hosts the highest level of religious violence in the world. Zamfara state is one of 12 governed by Islamic law in northern Nigeria. Ask God for protection, comfort, courage and wisdom for our brothers and sisters in these regions. (Source: [opendoorsusa.org](http://opendoorsusa.org))
- ❑ **13. India** – Pray for believers in Chattisgarh, India who have taken to the streets themselves—not to protest but to worship. More than 300 people gathered on the street and began to sing gospel songs and shout praises to God. "If our churches are attacked, we will take to the street to worship" protest leaders said, "...if no action is taken by the government authorities against the attacks and torture towards the Christian community." Pray that those who feel violence is justified against Christians would come to faith in Jesus themselves. Pray for Indian Christian leaders as they help their congregations find non-violent, Jesus-honoring ways to voice their opinions and demand their equal religious rights. Lift up India's government, that it may enforce the Constitution and bring attacks on Christians to a swift end. (Source: [opendoorsusa.org](http://opendoorsusa.org))
- ❑ **14. Laos** - Pray for Mikon in Laos. Mikon acquired HIV at age 7 after being raped by relatives. She was rejected by her family and went to live at a Christian shelter for treatment for the next 10 years. When she returned to her family at age 17, they demanded that she renounce her Christian faith and quit school in order to live with them. Mikon refused. Praise God that he has answered Mikon's prayers (a partner of Open Doors committed to helping Mikon financially and she is now able to live with her mother). Pray with Mikon that she will be safe living with her family. Ask God to shield her heart and guide her mind and that she holds fast to Jesus. Pray that God will draw her mother and siblings to receive Him. Ask God to heal Mikon from emotional trauma and the pain of living with HIV. (Source: [opendoorsusa.org](http://opendoorsusa.org))
- ❑ **15. Afghanistan** - Pray for Rafik, who after becoming a Christian, started an underground church in Afghanistan and began to take online seminary courses. Because Rafik is a Christian, a church leader, and had worked with police forces to stop violence against women and girls before the Taliban took governmental control of Afghanistan, he and his wife and 2 children have been in extreme danger and have received death threats. Help The Persecuted (HTP) safely evacuated Rafik and his family to a temporary refugee camp where they await resettlement. They must rebuild their lives from nothing—no savings, no family support, no living arrangements. Pray for timely completion of paperwork to leave the temporary country they fled to. Pray they are welcomed into the new place. Ask God to provide healing from their trauma. Pray for provision and a smooth transition as they settle in a new place. Pray for the many like Rafik to find safety as well. (Source: [www.htp.org](http://www.htp.org))
- ❑ **16. Nigeria** - Pray for the head boy of Bethel Baptist High School, freed by kidnappers on health grounds after more than 150 days in captivity in the Nigerian bush. Thank God for his leadership and bravery—he had refused to come home saying until each of the estimated 120 abducted pupils was released. But, because of ill health, he had to be released (three others remain in captivity.) Pastor John Joseph Hayab, chairman of the Christian Association of Nigeria in Kaduna State says, "That boy is worth celebrating. If at his age he can display that kind of leadership, we are so impressed." Pray that he and the others kidnapped be healed of any trauma and illness. Pray that the kidnappers come to Christ and stop targeting Christians in attacks. (Source: [www.barnabasfund.org](http://www.barnabasfund.org))
- ❑ **17. China** - Pray for Chang Yuchun and his wife Li Chenhui who were sentenced to 7 years in prison after authorities shut down the couple's 5-year-old company for "inciting subversion of state power." Pray for the couple's four children who will be separated from their parents and live with their elderly grandparents. Ask God to shower them with encouragement and provision beyond what they could ever hope or ask. Also pray for another bookseller who also received a 7-year prison sentence for running an online bookstore that sold Christian literature. Pray for peace of mind and hope in the Lord for these persecuted. Pray they will not doubt and give up Jesus. Lift up all those who risk similar arrest and imprisonment for equipping believers in China. Ask God to protect them and make their ministries fruitful. (Source: [www.opendoorsusa.org](http://www.opendoorsusa.org))
- ❑ **18. Ethiopia** – Pray for Ethiopian Sheikh Ashim Hussein, 41 and father to nine children, who grew up as a devout Muslim. Zealous for Islamic teachings, he sought to destroy Christianity and once mobilized his students to set fire to a church. But when the church members gathered at the sight of their burned church and prayed aloud for the forgiveness of those responsible, their witness shook his spiritual foundations. He thought, "How can they pray that God forgives someone who burned their church? In my religion, we curse people who do evil things." Eventually, Sheikh Ashim trusted Christ for salvation. But when Sheikh Ashim's Muslim community learned of his newfound faith, they rejected him, driving him from his home and threatening to kill him. Over the past decade, he has had to relocate multiple times due to ongoing harassment and threats. In spite of this, Sheikh Ashim boldly witnesses for Christ, and has led 29 other sheikhs to salvation in Him. "I don't get peace if I do not witness for Jesus," he said. Pray for Sheikh Ashim as he shares the gospel with Muslims. Pray that he and his family will have all their needs met as they seek to rebuild their lives after a decade of persistent persecution. (Source: [www.icommittoprayer.org](http://www.icommittoprayer.org))
- ❑ **19. Myanmar** – Pray for Aung Hte and his wife, who after coming to faith in Christ, were expelled from their land and home in Myanmar by his in-laws. His family became destitute and was forced to live in a tent on rented land while Aung Hte worked in a remote fishing village to provide for their needs. In Myanmar, it is common for families that practice animist beliefs to forcibly remove family members from their land to appease the spirits. Pray for Aung Hte and his family as they seek safe, permanent shelter. Pray for their faith to grow despite the persecution, and pray that their relatives hear the gospel and see Christ in the lives of Aung and his family. (Source: [www.icommittoprayer.org](http://www.icommittoprayer.org))
- ❑ **20. India** – Pray for 60 believers in India who were detained, beaten and stoned by 500 Hindu nationalists who accused the Christians of forcefully converting Hindus to Christianity. When police arrived, they watched the attacks occur, but then detained the Christians instead of those in the mob, who even vandalized vehicles belonging to the believers. Some of the Christians were taken to jail but have since been released on bail. Pray that those who were detained remain firm in their faith despite the persecution they've endured, and pray for those injured in the attack to experience healing. Pray that the Holy Spirit will help all the believers forgive their attackers. Pray also for the Hindu nationalists to be drawn to Jesus, to hear the gospel and experience God's forgiveness and love. (Source: [www.icommittoprayer.org](http://www.icommittoprayer.org))

- ❑ **21. Algeria** – Pray for Foudhil Bahloul in Algeria who is appealing a prison sentence for “suspicious evangelistic activities.” Upon becoming a Christian, his wife divorced him and took sole custody of their children. His father’s family destroyed his business and ostracized him. He was charged and fined \$750 with a suspended jail sentence for distributing Bibles and printing brochures to distribute to Muslims. Pray with Foudhil as he appeals. Pray that he will know the God’s peace, he will have adequate legal representation, and all charges would be dropped. Ask God to end the ongoing campaign to close churches denying Christians’ rights to gather peacefully to worship. (Source: [www.opendoorsusa.org](http://www.opendoorsusa.org))
- ❑ **22. Viet Nam** – Pray for Dinh Hoc and family who have been harassed for their Christian faith in Viet Nam. Recently, when they returned from a trip, they found their home burned to the ground. The family made a simple hut for shelter with a canvas tarp and sticks, but a group of young people in their village knocked it down. Pray for God’s grace and His protection and provision for the family, and that they are able to find safe, adequate shelter. Pray that their faith grows stronger as they likely will continue to endure persecution for following Jesus. Pray also that those who persecute them will hear the gospel and place their trust in Christ. (Source: [www.icommittopray.org](http://www.icommittopray.org))
- ❑ **23. Kazakhstan** – Pray for the members of an unregistered church in Oral, Kazakhstan that was raided last January at the church’s Christmas service. Several church members were taken to the police station and two members were fined the equivalent of one month’s salary. Since then, an official has been present to monitor church meetings. For the last six months, the official sits in the back and records the meetings. She also counts how many people are there and tracks attendees. “Let her come and hear the word of God,” one church member said. “We don’t allow her to record, but she still does it.” Another pastor from elsewhere in Kazakhstan said it used to be common for officials to monitor church services. Pray for safety of the congregation and that the official recording church services will be touched by the gospel. (Source: [www.icommittopray.org](http://www.icommittopray.org))
- ❑ **24. Uzbekistan** - Pray for a missionary family kicked out of Uzbekistan. Believers who share their faith are at risk of arrest. More than 2,000 people are imprisoned in the country because of their religious beliefs—one of the largest such groups in the world. Some have been imprisoned for more than 20 years. Pray with this missionary family and for those still in the country who are risking everything by sharing their faith. Pray for the family as they struggle to deal with sudden upheaval. Ask God to calm their hearts and give them peace in this time of uncertainty. Pray for other missionaries and believers who daily put their freedom on the line in Uzbekistan. Ask the Lord to keep His strong hand of protection on them. Pray for the people that missionaries encounter—that God would speak to their hearts. And pray for evangelists’ protection—anyone they witness to could easily report them to authorities. (Source: [opendoorsusa.org](http://opendoorsusa.org))
- ❑ **25. Nigeria** – Pray for believers in southern Kaduna state, Nigeria whose churches are being attacked. Militant Fulani Muslims attacked a church service killing two and kidnapping dozens. Eight others, including a pastor, were killed in earlier attacks on predominantly Christian villages. Armed herdsman ambushed the villages, shooting randomly. “The pastor stood his ground by refusing to renounce his Christian faith, even when he knew it would cost him his life,” a survivor said. “There’s no doubt that it is worth dying for Jesus Christ.” Pray for those who have lost loved ones in recent attacks. Pray for the peace of Christ to rule their hearts as they experience ongoing persecution from those who wish to silence their faithful witness. Pray also that these militant Muslims would find salvation in Christ. (Source: [www.icommittopray.org](http://www.icommittopray.org))
- ❑ **26. Afghanistan** – Pray for believers in Afghanistan where it is dangerous for Christians. Pray that believers see God working in spite of the Taliban advance. Pray for believers who have fled the country, those who are in hiding within Afghanistan, and those who are choosing to stay in order to be a light. Believers are receiving threats, and several have been targeted. Pray that God will give them the grace to weather the suffering and the persecution. Pray for the Pashtun, the majority people group in Afghanistan, who are unreached and desperately need to hear the Gospel. Pray for God to use this crisis to advance His kingdom and further the gospel. (Source: [www.icommittopray.org](http://www.icommittopray.org))
- ❑ **27. India** - Pray for Pastor Suresh Paul and his congregation who were attacked during a prayer meeting in Karnataka state, India by 15 members of the Hindutva group Bajrang Dal. A regional coordinator of Bajrang Dal, alleged that one of their activists had been “invited” to the prayer meeting and the church was “luring people to convert to Christianity...”, claiming forced religious conversions were taking place. Pastor Suresh Paul denied the allegations. “We were praying inside, nothing else,” he said, pointing out that freedom of religion is a right guaranteed under the constitution. Pray for wisdom and safety for these believers. The state government in Karnataka is proposing to become the 10th Indian state to enact anti-conversion legislation criminalizing religious conversions carried out through force, fraud or allurement. Pray that Karnataka state does not enact anti-conversion legislation. Pray for the safety of believers. (Source: [www.barnabasfund.org](http://www.barnabasfund.org))
- ❑ **28. Nigeria** - Pray for the family, church and community of Reverend Dauda Bature, the Pastor of the Evangelical Church Winning All (ECWA) in Kaduna state, killed a month after his kidnapping. The abductors demanded a ransom payment, which Rev. Dauda’s wife raised and delivered herself. The abductors collected the money and kidnapped her and kept her until December 6, 2021 then released her to “go and look for more money.” The gunmen killed Reverend Dauda just days later. Pray for safety, wisdom and provision of believers in Nigeria, the largest killing ground of Christians today. According to one report, Islamic radicals in Nigeria have abducted over 18,500 people in the last 12 years. Christian leaders are often targeted in these attacks. Pray for the family of Reverend Dauda, and all of the clergy in Nigeria who are on spreading the Gospel. Pray for the world to listen and learn the truth of persecution in Nigeria. (Source: [www.persecution.org](http://www.persecution.org))
- ❑ **29. Afghanistan** - Pray for the more than 10,000 Christians in Afghanistan. Almost all are converts from Islam. According to the Taliban, Christians are apostates and under a death sentence. The Taliban are going door to door to identify Christians. Christians are getting phone calls from the Taliban saying, “We’re coming for you.” Many Christians are in hiding. Several judges and government officials have been murdered. Pray for safety of Christians who have been open about their faith. Pray for the underground Church workers. Pray for those who will face the ultimate threat: turn back to Islam or die. Pray for wisdom for those serving the believers and how to best help. (Source: [www.barnabasfund.org](http://www.barnabasfund.org))
- ❑ **30. India** - Pray for staff and students at a missionary school in Madhya Pradesh. Radical Hindutva nationalist vandalized the school alleging that the school was involved in unlawful conversions to Christianity. Although 4 were detained, authorities have reiterated their intention to crack down on unlawful conversions. The school’s manager, Mr Antony, said that he had been notified of a likely attack through local media and informed the police and denied that any conversions had taken place. Despite this, Nilesh Agrawal, a local Bajrang Dal leader, called for a thorough investigation into the alleged religious conversion. “If the school’s involvement is found, it should be bulldozed,” he said. Pray for wisdom of the staff and that people in the community would be drawn to Jesus--not afraid of others coming to Him. (Source: [www.barnabasfund.org](http://www.barnabasfund.org))