

# Open Doors

PRAYER DIARY | January/February 2026



**“With God  
all things  
are possible.”**

MATTHEW 19:26

# JANUARY

## North Korea

### Thursday 1 January

Following Jesus in North Korea requires total commitment, even in the face of imprisonment, torture or death. Pray that God will give His people spiritual and physical strength to remain faithful, and the courage to live boldly for Christ, despite the risks.

### Friday 2 January

Pray for Kim Jong-un and his family, especially his daughter and probable successor, Kim Ju-ae. Ask God to change their hearts - knowing that He transformed the apostle Paul from a persecutor to an evangelist.

### Saturday 3 January

Give thanks for the life of Evangelist Cho\*, who hiked through forests on North Korea's border to find fleeing North Koreans and share the gospel. "My purpose in life is to save souls," he shared. Ask the Lord to raise up more workers to continue his ministry.

### Sunday 4 January

Pray for Open Doors workers taking great risks to provide vital aid and biblical training to North Koreans who cross the border. Many become

Christians. Pray that some will have courage to return and build Christ's church inside North Korea.

### Monday 5 January

Hunger and malnutrition continue to plague the population, leading to many deaths. Ask God to help believers to find and share food - and pray that this will lead to opportunities to share the gospel too.

### Tuesday 6 January

Praise God that the underground church in North Korea is alive, despite the dangers. Ask God to guide believers as they quietly share His love, and pray that His Word will spread in miraculous ways, even behind closed borders.

## Somalia

### Wednesday 7 January

Somalia is one of the most dangerous places to follow Jesus. Islamist extremist group al-Shabaab targets anyone they suspect to be Christian. Pray that the small number of believers will find refuge and strength in God.

### Thursday 8 January

Somali Christian Aweis had to leave Somalia after 12 of his church members were killed (see Magazine p18). Despite threats, he continues to work on Bible translation

and discipleship materials. Ask the Lord to grow and protect his ministry.



### Friday 9 January

Pray with Aweis (ABOVE) for the Somali church: "Pray that we thrive in the midst of persecution, that we become more Christ-like, so when our persecutors see us, they think, 'Wow they are different, we want to be like them.' Pray they see the light and become disciples of Christ."

## World Watch List

### Saturday 10 January

#### – Yemen

Khaled\* found Jesus through an online ministry. "Pray for believers in Yemen to grow in their faith, and for the people of my country to know Jesus," he asks.

### Sunday 11 January – Sudan

Pray for an end to conflict in Sudan. Ask the Lord to protect, comfort and provide for Christians who have no safe place to go, and pray for courage to carry Christ's peace and hope to their communities.

### Monday 12 January

#### – Eritrea

Many Christians are detained in Eritrea's

notorious prison system, often simply for practising their faith. Pray that their hope in Christ remains strong and that they will be set free.

### Tuesday 13 January

#### – Syria

Many Christians live with constant uncertainty since the overthrow of the Assad regime by the Islamist group HST. Pray that Interim President al-Sharaa will respect and protect the rights of all Syrians, regardless of religious or ethnic background.

### Wednesday 14 January

#### – UK&I

Ask God to bless the launch of the World Watch List in Parliament today. Pray that many MPs will attend and be moved to action, and pray for good media coverage that raises greater awareness of the scale and severity of the persecution of Christians.

### Thursday 15 January

#### – Nigeria

According to Open Doors research, more Christians are killed for their faith in Nigeria than in any other country. Pray that Nigeria's government will do all they can to protect people from violence, and ask God to convict and change those who inflict violence on His people.

## Justice prevails in Malaysia

**SUSANNA KOH WINS COURT CASE OVER THE DISAPPEARANCE OF PASTOR RAYMOND**

After eight years of battle, Susanna and her family have received an extraordinary answer to prayer, winning their lawsuit against the state over the abduction of Pastor Raymond Koh.

“We are overjoyed and thankful to God that we have an honest and fair judgement, after all the evidence that could possibly be brought to the attention of the judge,” said Susanna, after the verdict was given.

CCTV footage from February 2017 captures the moment when Raymond was stopped by a convoy of three black SUVs and forced out of his vehicle. Since then, Susanna and her family have been working tirelessly for the authorities to act and pursue the investigation. After extensive trials and pleas for the full report on Koh’s disappearance, the High Court announced the verdict on 5 November 2025.

One or more police officials were found to have been involved in the abduction in an undeniable abuse of power. Following this declaration, the court has ordered the Malaysian government to pay the family RM10,000 (£1,800) for each day since the pastor was taken until he is found.

This is an astounding answer to prayer! The amount currently totals RM31 million (£5.7 million) – just under RM4.3 million will be given to the family for other costs.

In the long wait that the Kohs have endured, your prayers for justice have fuelled their faith. They are grateful to God for His mercy in the court’s verdict and for the support of their global church family.

“We filed an action in the High Court and prayed to God that justice and the truth will prevail somehow, despite the overwhelming odds and circumstances,” Susanna explains. “We were accurately aware of the risks to our family and our lawyers who are conducting this case, but believe in God’s protection and the prayers

from all the people who believe in our cause.”

The family’s perseverance is a bold witness to their opponents and to onlookers. While they wait for news on Raymond’s whereabouts, they know deeply that God has been fighting for them on a ‘long but worthwhile journey’, as Susanna puts it.

**“We are overjoyed and thankful to God that we have an honest and fair judgement.”**

Thank you for your faithful prayers for this family of believers. Please continue to pray that the Lord will go before them and behind them (Isaiah 52:12), and that the truth about Pastor Raymond would come to light.

### PLEASE PRAY

- Praise God for the release of a positive verdict
- That the investigation would continue and bear the fruit of righteousness and justice for the family
- For God’s sustaining grace and provision to Susanna and her family.

# World Watch List

## Friday 16 January –

### Pakistan

Pakistan's blasphemy laws continue to disproportionately impact Christians. Pray for justice for those unjustly accused of blasphemy and for God's strength and protection for lawyers working to defend them.

## Saturday 17 January –

### Libya

Libya's very few Christians face incredible dangers if their faith is discovered – be it from the authorities, Islamist groups, even families and communities. Pray that believers will 'be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power' (Ephesians 6:10).

## Sunday 18 January –

### Iran

"I won't write down something I don't believe," said Shima\* to the authorities when pressured to deny her faith. Praise God for the boldness of believers and pray that it will lead to people encountering Jesus.

## Monday 19 January –

### Afghanistan

It's more than four years since the Taliban takeover. "Pray that God makes our hearts strong in times of fear and silence," asks Samira\*. "Pray that we

feel the Holy Spirit in our loneliness, and for more to become disciples."

## Tuesday 20 January –

### India

Thousands of Christians in Manipur State remain displaced following 2023's outbreak of ethnoreligious violence. Pray for Open Doors partners supporting these believers and ask God to help them find permanent homes.

## Wednesday 21 January –

### UK&I

Tonight, supporters will gather online to listen to an international speaker and pray into the latest World Watch List and parliamentary launch. Pray for a good attendance and ask the Holy Spirit to guide our prayers as we watch and pray with our persecuted family.

## Thursday 22 January –

### Saudi Arabia

Although there are over two million Christians in Saudi Arabia, there are no official, public churches. Pray for greater religious freedom and ask God to make a way for believers to worship together.

## Friday 23 January –

### Myanmar

"Because of war and persecution, many believers are displaced, and we've lost connection with them," says May\*, a

church leader. "Pray that God will be with them and that they'll remain faithful to Jesus."

## Saturday 24 January –

### Mali

Last year, multiple believers were killed, and at least 100 churches and Christian properties destroyed, amid an escalating jihadist insurgency. Pray for positive steps towards peace.

## Sunday 25 January –

### Burkina Faso

Christians face increasing threats, instability, violence and displacement at the hands of militant Islamists. "Pray for peace and security," asks Pastor Soré.

## Monday 26 January –

### China

Many believers in China worship in unregistered churches, knowing that at any point their church could be shut down. Pray for protection and courage in the face of uncertainty.

## Tuesday 27 January –

### Iraq

The church in Iraq is still working to reestablish itself, a decade after so-called Islamic State inflicted such generational trauma. Pray that believers will have courage to remain and be salt and light to their nation.

## Wednesday 28 January –

### Maldives

The country declares itself '100% Muslim', meaning converts must practise their faith in absolute secrecy. Even neighbours can report suspicions, and attempts to gather are fraught with risk. Pray for protection.

## Thursday 29 January –

### Algeria

Alongside church closures, there's been an increasing crackdown on online church activities, including the removal of a Facebook group with 50,000 members. Pray that believers will not lose heart (2 Corinthians 4:16).

## Friday 30 January –

### Mauritania

It's illegal for Muslims in Mauritania to convert to Christianity. Pray that this law will be overturned.

## Saturday 31 January –

### Central African Republic (CAR)

Christian women and girls are vulnerable to various forms of religious persecution, including rape, abduction and forced marriage. Ask God to bind up the wounds of our sisters and pray for Open Doors partners providing trauma care.

# Patient prayer & perfect provision

"John 14:6, my favourite Bible verse, tells us the truth – that there's no other way except Jesus," says Pastor Somchai

**Pastor Somchai in Laos has seen God's faithfulness through your prayers and generosity.**

In Laos, the saying goes, "You're scratching the spot where it's itchy." With a smile, Pastor Somchai\* elaborates: "It means you addressed a need exactly where it was needed, at the right time. This is what Open Doors is doing for believers in this region."

"Whether far or close, I must go," says the pastor, who helps oversee 50 house churches in his region. "This is my

calling." It's a calling that he's bravely pursued amidst persecution for more than 20 years, ever since turning his back on his life as a gangster to follow Jesus.

Hostility began in 2003, when Pastor Somchai and his wife, Chantavy\*, were amongst a group of believers interrogated for seven days. Despite immense pressure, the couple refused to deny

Jesus – but it came at a long-term, debilitating cost. The pastor's family book – which proves citizenship and enables access to public services – was confiscated. "It's more important than a passport or national ID. But I was assured that my citizenship is in heaven, not on earth. My hope is in Jesus." Pastor Somchai was later erased from village records and flagged at checkpoints to stop him from fleeing.

## "Prayer needs patience. God answers in His time."

Many years later, he was returning from visiting a believer when he felt the nudge of the Holy Spirit. "I was convicted to pray for the return of my family book. For years, I'd been praying that the authorities would return it, but they didn't. But that afternoon was different."

Pastor Somchai contacted the authorities and, without obstacle, the book was returned. "The head even said, 'We always watch you, but you've never done wrong. You never looked down on others or other religions. You're good and honest.' After over 20 years of prayer, my family book was returned.

"Prayer needs patience. God answers in His time," he says. "If I'd given up on praying for the book to be returned, I wouldn't know the reward that awaits me – the joy of seeking Jesus as I pray."

Pastor Somchai is equally overjoyed at the impact of your support, which equips him and others to come alongside believers in Laos. "Persecution in this area is still heavy, but you scratched the right spot. The lessons and practical aid that you provide are making Christians grow and feel more supported. The participants are excited to come – sometimes I only request 15 participants, but 30 come. This is how you're impacting the Christian community. Thank God and thank you."

## PLEASE PRAY

- For continued strength, provision and breakthrough as the family pursue their calling
- That all believers under Somchai's care will grow in faith, godliness and courage
- That the work of Open Doors local partners will continue to 'scratch the right spot'.

# FEBRUARY

## World Watch List

### Sunday 1 February – Morocco

After speaking to a seeker at a coffee shop, Omar\* was invited to his home to share the gospel with his family. “I did and three converted that day!” Praise God that people are encountering Jesus – pray for more.

### Monday 2 February – Cuba

Bibles in Cuba can be difficult to come by, and quite expensive. Pray for Bibles to be easily accessible to anyone who wants one.

### Tuesday 3 February – Uzbekistan

Non-registered churches and church leaders are often monitored and raided by the authorities. Pray for wisdom and protection for those who risk so much simply to meet to worship Jesus.

### Wednesday 4 February – Niger

In some parts of Niger, Christians are at risk of attacks from militant Islamists. Pray for protection and for provision for those who have been displaced by the insecurity.

### Thursday 5 February – Tajikistan

The government of Tajikistan monitors any community of believers. Ask God to give church leaders wisdom and courage as they shepherd their congregations in an increasingly hostile climate.

### Friday 6 February – Laos

Many Christians are driven from their villages. “We could do nothing to defend our right to follow Christ,” said a believer whose home was destroyed. Pray for comfort and provision for the displaced.

### Saturday 7 February –

### Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)

Believers in eastern Congo face brutal violence and displacement for their faith in Jesus. Pray for God’s healing and hope, and that the hearts of militants would be turned to Christ.

### Sunday 8 February –

### Mexico

There are believed to be around 150 active criminal groups throughout Mexico, with at least one operating in each state. Persecution is a real risk for any Christian deemed a threat to cartel activity. Pray for courage and protection.

### Monday 9 February – Tunisia

While foreign Christians are often allowed to worship freely, Tunisian Christians don’t share that same freedom. As protests continue against a largely one-party rule, pray that God would bring about freedom for His people to practise their faith.

### Tuesday 10 February –

### Nicaragua

Pastors in Nicaragua can face arbitrary arrest and detention. Pray for God’s provision and protection for these leaders and their families.

### Wednesday 11 February –

### Bangladesh

Believers who have left Islam to follow Jesus often face pressure from both family and community. Thank God for the brave faith of many Christians, who continue to walk with Jesus despite the risks. Pray for hope and resilience.

### Thursday 12 February –

### Bhutan

There are no registered churches in Bhutan as no churches are officially recognised by the state. So Christians who gather to worship are acting illegally, leaving them vulnerable to criminal penalties. Ask God to provide places for them to meet together in safety.

### Friday 13 February – Turkmenistan

Many church leaders are heavily monitored by the totalitarian regime. Ask God to be their strength, refuge and ever-present help (Psalm 46:1).

### Saturday 14 February –

### Ethiopia

Believers from Muslim backgrounds can be rejected by their communities. Pray for Open Doors partners providing community development projects and bridging schools. Pray that these will improve relations between Christians and Muslims and create opportunities to share the gospel.

### Sunday 15 February –

### Cameroon

Islamist extremist groups target Christian communities and cripple their means of survival through forcibly recruiting men and boys. Pray for the safety of communities and the economic empowerment projects led by Open Doors partners, that God would bless these efforts.

### Monday 16 February –

### Oman

Thank God for the Omani monarchy’s tolerance for foreign Christians. Pray these believers would be salt and light in their communities within Oman.

# FIVE THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT CHINA'S CRACKDOWN ON CHURCHES



Representative image

There's a renewed crackdown on churches in China, with the high-profile Zion Church among those targeted. What exactly is happening and how can you pray?

## 1 WHAT HAPPENED AT ZION CHURCH?

Zion Church is one of the most influential underground house church networks in China. Founded in 2007 in Beijing by Pastor Jin Mingri, it's grown to over 40 cities with an estimated membership of 10,000.

In 2018, the Chinese government officially banned the church and confiscated its property after they refused to install CCTV cameras. The church turned to a 'hybrid model', with large online services alongside smaller, in-person house churches.

In October, 38 people were arrested in a series of coordinated raids.

At the time of writing, 22 are believed to remain in detention.

## 2 WHAT'S TRIGGERED THE CRACKDOWN?

It appears to be linked to the 'Online Code of Conduct for Religious Professionals', implemented in September 2025, which restricts religious content online unless it's disseminated through state-approved channels.

The charge of 'illegally using internet information' – which has been formally levelled at Pastor Jin Mingri and four others – suggests that the church's online ministry may have triggered the arrests.

## 3 HOW ARE OTHER CHRISTIANS IN CHINA RESPONDING?

They're experiencing a mixture of fear, sorrow and solidarity. Prominent house churches have publicly expressed support for Zion Church. Others are encouraging Chinese believers to hold onto hope, and calling for unity and prayer.

**"We're crying out not only for peace, but for revival."**

## 4 ARE FURTHER ARRESTS EXPECTED?

Probably. "Since 2018, under Xi Jinping's agenda of the Sinicisation of Religion – an effort to make religion more 'Chinese' – the space for religious freedom in China, particularly for Christians, has continued to shrink," explains Juliana\*, a local partner.

"What we're witnessing is not an isolated incident – it's a calculated move. This tactic has been used by the authorities to control the growth of the church, specifically those unable to 'obey their management' ('illegal' or 'unregistered' churches).

"Zion Church was deliberately targeted to send a chilling

message to others, to intimidate the broader Christian community."

## 5 HOW ELSE HAVE BELIEVERS BEEN AFFECTED?

Several pastors' homes have been sealed, personal assets confiscated and bank accounts frozen. Legal assistance has been obstructed. Their families, lawyers and fellow believers remain under immense emotional and spiritual strain.

"We're facing a very real spiritual battle," shares the pastoral team from Zion Church. "What's being suppressed is not just one congregation or one group of people – it's the church in China as a whole, standing at a historic crossroads. We're crying out not only for peace, but for revival. Not only for release, but for the coming of God's Kingdom."

## PLEASE PRAY

- For the release of those held, and for the crackdown to end
- For wisdom, strength and provision for those affected
- That faith and hope will reign in believers' hearts, and for revival in China.

## World Watch List

### Tuesday 17 February – Mozambique

The violence in Mozambique has only increased in the past year, with waves of attacks by extremist militants overwhelming majority-Christian villages. Pray for believers in the aftermath, that God would be their refuge.

### Wednesday 18 February – Kyrgyzstan

In early 2025, Kyrgyzstan enacted a new series of religious laws that many observers say will target religious minorities, including Christians. Pray for believers to have courage and wisdom as they navigate these restrictions.

### Thursday 19 February – Türkiye

Some politicians and leaders in Türkiye believe that all Turks ought to be Muslim. Pray for a softening of hearts and that people throughout the country will see the love and hope of Jesus in Christians' lives.

### Friday 20 February – Egypt

Christian women in northern cities face daily pressures in their Islamic culture, often harassed in the street or forced to wear a hijab. Pray that

God would guard these faithful believers and free them from anxiety as they carry out their ministry.

### Saturday 21 February – Comoros

Religious minorities face all kinds of restrictions on their lives and Christians can only legally worship in three designated churches. Pray for church leaders and for wisdom in how they lead the congregations who have been entrusted to them.

### Sunday 22 February – Qatar

Conversion to Christianity must be kept secret because of the shame associated with leaving Islam. Believers from Muslim backgrounds are most at risk of discrimination, harassment or worse. Pray that the authorities would allow Qatari Christians to practise their faith in freedom.

### Monday 23 February – Kazakhstan

The retaliation believers from a Muslim background face is relentless and they experience pressure and isolation from their communities. Pray for the protection of the church and its growth, that it would be refined and made more beautiful through its suffering.

### Tuesday 24 February – Nepal

Huge protests in Nepal in 2025 led to the collapse of the government and the resignation of the prime minister. Some Hindu groups have used the resulting instability to attack minorities, including Christians. Pray for the protection and courage of believers.

### Wednesday 25 February – Colombia

The church is under intense pressure following an increase in attacks last summer. Despite being deeply shaken in the affected regions, believers continue to gather together. Pray that God would strengthen and protect these brothers and sisters.

### Thursday 26 February – Chad

Believers who follow Jesus in regions where Islamist extremists are active can be targets for violence. Pray that God will change the hearts of the militants and that His people will be protected.

### Friday 27 February – Jordan

Under the leadership of King Abdallah, many believers in Jordan can worship openly. Thank God for this and ask Him to continue to allow the monarchy to see how

the Jordanian church is a force for good in society.

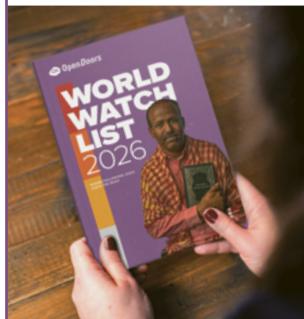
### Saturday 28 February – Brunei

Churches here are few and Christian activities are severely restricted. Nevertheless, God is raising up young leaders who are receiving discipleship training. Pray for young people and their mentors, for discernment and God's protection.

## WORLD WATCH LIST 2026 TOP 50

Step into a world of inspiring stories, incredible courage and, above all, impossible faith. The *World Watch List 2026 Top 50* features prayer points, in-depth info and a prayer map of the countries where following Jesus costs the most.

You can order your free copy from launch day, 14 January, at [opendoorsuk.org/wwl](http://opendoorsuk.org/wwl)





# JOIN WORLD WATCH LIST 2026 ONLINE

WEDNESDAY 21 JANUARY | 7.30-8.30PM

Register today to join us for a special online prayer event a week after the launch of the World Watch List 2026. Hear testimonies, news from our persecuted family and ways you can get involved.

We are excited to invite you to this event as we look ahead to the coming year and how we can continue to stand with our persecuted family.

You will hear highlights from the parliamentary

launch, listen to an international speaker and pray for ongoing awareness in our government about the experience of Christians, as well as gain insights into key trends.

This event is a precious moment of fellowship with our global church family. Why not invite your friends, small group or church to join too?

Book your place today at [opendoorsuk.org](https://opendoorsuk.org)

**“And do this, understanding the present time: the hour has already come for you to wake up from your slumber, because our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed.” ROMANS 13:11**

\*Names changed for security reasons



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