

21. UKRAINE – pray for **Vasyl Ostryy**, executive pastor of **Irpın Bible Church** in Irpin, a suburb of Ukraine's capital Kyiv. He is 43 and a father of 5. He says what his community needs most is to have hope that life can go on in spite of the war.

22. UKRAINE cont – pray for members of **Irpın Baptist Church** (IBC) who minister to the specific needs of the war's victims, helping disabled civilians and soldiers, war widows, fatherless families and countless sufferers of post-traumatic stress.

23. UKRAINE cont – pray for **Roman Ilnitsky**, an IBC deacon, and his wife, **Zoya**. They volunteer at the church, coordinating evacuations when needed and cooking thousands of meals. Roman sees Ukraine's endurance and existence as God's work made visible. He tempers his wartime anxiety by staying involved. Church volunteering is the best stress reliever he knows. Bearing the burdens of others lightens his own.

24. INDIA – pray for **Jawahar and Amulya**, Christians in a state where less than 1% of the 72 million people are Christian. 80% are Hindu. Pastor Jawahar led a church for 9 years when Hindu nationalists had him arrested under India's harsh anti-conversion laws. He and 2 elders were sentenced to 2 years in prison. They are currently out on bail as they appeal their conviction. Pray for their release. Pastor Jawahar continues to lead a house church during the appeal.

25. BURKINA FASO – pray for **Pastor Natan** and his wife, **Miriam**. They had to flee their home and church after Islamists threatened them and sealed the church. They are now planting a church in Burkina Faso's capital, Ouagadougou. They have grown to about 30 people. Miriam requests prayer for their ministry and that God will preserve the health of their 6 children.

26. CUBA – pray for **Joel**, and his wife, **Maruchi**, who use baseball to minister to young people. "You introduce the Gospel," Joel said, "and that is how many people are saved, people who wouldn't have gone to church." Joel's ministry has grown to reach adults across the country, including members of national teams. His ministry has distributed Bibles to every member on Cuba's 16 national teams as well as to the referees. "We are waiting for a revival in our nation. It is a privilege to be part of what God is doing in our nation."

27. INDIA – pray for Christians persecuted under India's stricter anti-conversion laws. The laws are intended to stop Hindus from being converted to Christianity. Sentences for those convicted range from heavy fines to life imprisonment.

28. INDIA cont – pray for **Pastor Ravinder Kumar** whose home church in Rajasthan was attacked by a mob of over 25 Hindu extremists, injuring many of those gathered.

29. INDIA cont – pray for **Pastor Shivbharan** in Uttar Pradesh who was brutally assaulted by men who threatened to kill him.

30. INDIA cont – pray for 45 members of **New Bethesda Church** who were attacked by villagers who practice tribal religion in Chhattisgarh. Several were injured.

The grace of the Lord Jesus be with you all.
Amen

SOURCES:

CHURCH IN CHAINS; CHRISTIAN SOLIDARITY WORLDWIDE; Mission Network News; OPEN DOORS; PRISONER ALERT; RELEASE INTERNATIONAL; VOICE of the MARTYRS; WORLD MAGAZINE; WORLD WATCH MONITOR

It is time for the Lord to act, for they have broken Thy law. Psalm 119:126

STANDING IN THE GAP

for the Persecuted Church

September 2025

1. Iran (MNN) — Last month, more than 500 Iranian opposition activists and groups gathered in Germany, hosted by Iran's exiled crown prince, Reza Pahlavi. The goal? To outline what a democratic transition and national rebuilding should look like in Iran. Denise Godwin with International Media Ministries says seven actors from their upcoming film, *Esther: Queen of Hope*, participated in the summit. Political change is a fragile process. But freedom gives opportunity to spread the gospel. Pray for freedom of religion and speech for Iranians.

Call to action

- Pray for God's mercy and hand on any political changes that come in Iran.
- Pray with Iranians that their country gets freedom of choice, freedom of religion and freedom of speech.

2. India (MNN) — Twelve of India's 28 states have anti-conversion laws on the books. Now Maharashtra State has promised to follow suit. But the gospel stakes are high. India has the most unreached people groups in the world. Christians trying to spread the gospel face accusations, attacks and imprisonment from anti-conversion laws. Todd Nettleton with The Voice of the Martyrs, USA says it's dangerously easy to fall afoul. Pray earnestly for favor and gospel advance in India.

Call to action

- Pray for pastors and ordinary Christians imprisoned under false charges, that they will be bold witnesses for Christ there. Pray for endurance for their families during the separation.
- Pray for a just federal government that will truly honor religious freedom for India's 1.46 billion people.
- Pray specifically that government officials in Maharashtra State will reverse their plans to implement anti-conversion laws.
- Ask God to strengthen India's Church to press forward with the gospel to unreached people.

3. NORTH AFRICA – pray for **Salim**, 5 years old, who was beaten in his preschool after the staff learned that he came from a Christian family. **Maarouf**, Salim's father, said, "We found him with bruises and red marks on his body; often his clothes were torn." After the same thing happened at a new preschool, an *Open Doors* partner advised the parents not to mention their Christian faith when enrolling Salim into yet another preschool. They feel conflicted, but for now, it is the only way to keep their boy from being harmed. North African children need our prayers and support to survive this trauma, so they can grow to understand their Christian faith and overcome the challenges of being a Christian in a hostile environment.

4. CHINA – *China Partnership* asks for prayer for the city of **Wenzhou** on China's southeast coast. There are more Christians per capita here than in any other Chinese city. However, in recent years many of the churches have been demolished by the Chinese government. The local house churches are trying to not just survive but to thrive. Pray that God will continue to grow and refine His church. Pray that believers will continue to be a witness to Christ.

5. **SRI LANKA** – pray for **Chaminda** and his wife. He leads a church in southern Sri Lanka, an island off the southeast coast of India where the majority of the population is Buddhist. While church members were renovating a house on their new church property, a mob of 1,000 local Buddhists broke through the gates. The mob beat 10 church members with iron bars and their fists. Three of the Christians, including Chaminda, required hospitalization. The attackers also damaged walls, doors, windows, and the Christians' vehicles. Despite these attacks, the church has grown to 300 people, and they have planted 3 new churches in the area. Anti-Christian sentiment still exists in the community. The city has refused to pave their road, and local Buddhists throw stones at their house. But Chaminda and his family remain committed to proclaiming Christ in Sri Lanka.
6. **UNITED STATES** – pray for Christian photographer **Emilee Carpenter** of upstate New York. As a Christian, Carpenter has a religious conviction against photographing a gay wedding. New York's non-discrimination laws bar vendors from withholding services from patrons on the basis of sexual orientation. Under this law, Carpenter could have lost her business license, received a \$100,000 fine and spent up to a year in jail for refusing business from a homosexual couple. Carpenter challenged the state's law in April 2021, alleging that it violated her right to free speech and religious practice. She has recently won an injunction that bars officials from enforcing the anti-discrimination laws while her lawsuit continues in court.

In a similar case, attorneys for Christian cake designer **Cathy Miller** said on May 29 that they would ask the US Supreme Court to prevent California officials from forcing her to create cakes for homosexual weddings.
7. **INDONESIA** – On the last Sunday in July, a group of Muslim men on Indonesia's island of Sumatra attacked a prayer house. 30 Christian children were there with their parents to take a religious class. 2 children were injured by the attackers' throwing objects. They ask for prayer that these 2 children will be healed, for God to strengthen young believers traumatized by the attack and for Christians to respond with forgiveness and resilience.
8. **INDIA** – Leaders in the state of Maharashtra say they will demolish 'unauthorized' church buildings among tribal districts in the next 6 months. **Todd Nettleton** of *VOM/USA* asks for prayer for God to sustain local Christians through these challenges.
9. **GAZA** – pray for **Palestinian Christians** who chose to stay in Gaza to share the gospel despite wide-spread famine. Pray for the safety and well-being of these believers. Pray for the spread of the gospel in Gaza.
10. **INDIA** – pray for **Sukra Madi**, 52, who is recovering from injuries sustained in a brutal attack on the east coast of Odisha in June. He was among 30 Christians injured by an armed mob of around 35 villagers who practice tribal religion and were angered by a gathering of pastors from other villages for a seed-blessing ceremony. Pray that Sukra and the 29 others injured will receive the medical care that they need and make a full recovery from the injuries sustained in the attack. Pray for peace and reconciliation in the village of Odisha state between those who practice tribal religion and Christianity.
11. **PAKISTAN** – Nabeel Masih, 25, recently died of acute liver failure after years of suffering under Pakistan's blasphemy laws. He spent 4 and a half years in prison during which his mental and physical health declined, followed by over 4 years on bail waiting for his appeal to be heard. He was the youngest person ever convicted of blasphemy in Pakistan at age 16. Years of solitary confinement, poor nutrition, contaminated water and stress destroyed Nabeel's health. He was diagnosed with Hepatitis E and died shortly afterwards. Pray for comfort for his family as they mourn his untimely death.
12. **CHINA** – *China Partnership* asks for continued prayer for the city of Wenzhou. **Pastor Hu Mujing** says, "In the past 5 years, there has been a lot of persecution and many threats. Because of this most churches – including our own- usually pray about having peaceful gatherings, finding new places to meet that won't be discovered by officials, being safe and secure. We need security. Now the government has asked us to get preacher's licenses, to install cameras in our meeting place and so on. We cannot do these things. Over the past 3 days as we prayed, we had a revelation: we need to pray for strength and courage, not just pray for safety. Praying for safety without bravery is counterproductive."
13. **IRAN** – pray for **Somayeh**, a native of Iran who became a believer. Eventually her work with house churches attracted the attention of the Iranian authorities. Somayeh made the excruciating decision to flee her home. Now she lives in another country, but her commitment to Jesus hasn't changed. Through an online ministry she reaches other Iranian women with the Gospel, helping them see God's love for them.
14. **IRAN** – Iran's Ministry of Intelligence has admitted to arresting over 50 Christians since the end of the conflict with Israel, accusing them of involvement in anti-security activities and even possession of arms. Pray that these Christians will be released on bail.
15. **ERITREA** – *Voices of Justice* is asking for united prayer for 7 Eritrean prisoners of faith who have been detained arbitrarily for over 20 years. None have been charged or brought before a court. Their families have not been allowed to visit them. Continue praying for **Dr Kiflu, Dr Futsum, Rev Gebremedhin, Rev Haile, Pastor Kidane, Dr Tekleab, and Rev Million**. Pray for their families who are enduring the unrelenting agony of an enforced and unexplained separation and for God's loving comfort to engulf them.
16. **SUDAN** – pray for Christians in Sudan where heavy rains have overwhelmed at least 21 locations in Sudan, crippling a healthcare system already overrun by war, famine and disease. A believer called **John** says that in spite of these tragedies, hope remains and teams of church planters report Gospel growth in Darfur as people try to make sense of the suffering. Pray for God's provision and encouragement for these Christians.
17. **HAITI** – pray for an Irish missionary and 8 others, including a 3-year-old child, who were kidnapped from the **Kenscoff Orphanage** on Aug 3. Pray for the safe release of those kidnapped. Ask God to encourage Haitian believers facing daily fear and uncertainty. Pray for Christian workers to have wisdom and protection as they serve, including those with *Christian World Outreach* whose office is not far from where the kidnapping took place.
18. **NIGERIA** – On Aug 11 Fulani militants attacked the Yelewata community in Benue state, killing 3 people and injuring several more. Pray for the militants to turn from violence to the forgiveness and joy of Christ. Ask God to give persecuted believers in Northern Nigeria wisdom and protection as they care for their villages and families.
19. **IRAN** – On Aug 16 Iranian state media broadcast a documentary film accusing the recently arrested Christians of engaging in espionage. Iran's Ministry of Intelligence arrested over 50 Christians announcing that they had been detained on account of their 'anti- security activities.' Pray that those who view this film will be drawn to find out more about Jesus and the Bible. Pray for peace for these Christian prisoners.
20. **MEXICO** – continue to pray for 151 members of the **Great Commission Baptist Church** who have been able to settle in a new location after they were forced out of their villages. They have been able to finish the walls and roofs of 42 houses and are now working on the construction of the temple and school.

