



**PARTNERING
FOR THE
PERSECUTED
CHURCH**



OpenDoors

SERVING PERSECUTED CHRISTIANS WORLDWIDE

Thank you so much for exploring how you can strengthen the body of Christ around the world. By supporting our persecuted sisters and brothers, you enable the light of the gospel to keep shining in some of the most broken and dangerous places on earth.

I am reminded of that wonderful verse from Ephesians about the church standing together: "From [Christ] the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work." (Ephesians 4:16) As we support them, their faith, courage and perseverance in turn supports and strengthens us. I am constantly challenged and inspired by their stories, as I know you will be.

Every gift makes a precious difference to the lives of the persecuted church, and I'm so grateful to all who give and pray. Those in the position to make more significant contributions have the opportunity to further multiply the work of Open Doors. Whether you already stand with your global family through supporting this work, or are looking into how you can serve the persecuted church, thank you for responding to the stories of our church family and how God is moving in the world.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Henrietta".

Henrietta Blyth,
CEO Open Doors UK & Ireland

Please contact the team at partnerships@opendoorsuk.org
or **01993 777 303** if you want to discuss anything.

Partnering for the persecuted church

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Why support the persecuted church?

Around the world, millions of Christians face persecution and discrimination because of their faith – from their government, their community, and even their family. Courageous believers keep following Jesus, even where this decision could mean losing their job, their family, their freedom or their life. You can stand with them.

“I would never leave Jesus,” says Sumitra*, a woman in India who suffered a decade of violent persecution from her husband and community because of her faith. “Even if we suffer for Him, it is never in vain.”

Open Doors exists to support those, like Sumitra (ABOVE LEFT), who follow Jesus no matter the cost. The gifts and prayers of Christians in the UK and Ireland, like you, can mean vital relief and long-term support gets to persecuted believers in more than 60 countries around the world. It’s the body of Christ in action.

This international ministry had small beginnings. In 1955, a young man known

as Brother Andrew (ABOVE MIDDLE) started smuggling Bibles behind the Iron Curtain. As he says, “Our mission is called ‘Open Doors’ because we believe that any door is open, anytime and anywhere to proclaim Christ.”

“IF ONE PART SUFFERS, EVERY PART SUFFERS WITH IT; IF ONE PART IS HONORED, EVERY PART REJOICES WITH IT.”

1 CORINTHIANS 12:26

Today, Open Doors still distributes millions of much-needed Bibles – alongside business microloans, trauma care, emergency relief, training and more.

Sumitra’s life turned around when Open Doors partners helped her, and

others in her church, with equipment for a small business. It meant financial independence. “I want to thank all Open Doors partners for helping us in so many ways,” says Sumitra. “The way they stood with us during our hard times is amazing. I thank you for bringing happiness in my life.”

With your help, believers like Sumitra will get the support they need – to keep going today, and to stay strong for years and generations to come. You can be part of ensuring the future of the church in some of the most dark and dangerous places in the world. You can help courageous believers shine the light of Jesus into their communities.

ABOVE RIGHT A Christian in Iraq receives a Bible from Open Doors partners. Bible distribution still continues today, in print, digital and audio

Why does prayer matter to the persecuted church?

When persecuted Christians learn that their brothers and sisters around the world are praying for them, they are often overwhelmed. Many have been told by their families, communities or even their national leaders that they don't matter.

Your prayers show them that isn't true. Your prayers show persecuted believers that they are loved.

That includes courageous people like Praba in Sri Lanka (RIGHT), whose eight-year-old son was killed in the Easter Sunday church bombings in 2019. For two years, Praba couldn't face praying with her family. "Whenever I sat down to pray, 'Jesus' was all I could manage to say. I could only cry," she remembers. But Open Doors supporters stepped in.

"People who had never even seen us were praying for us when we could

not," says Praba. "It is because of their prayers that we have been able to stay strong in our faith. Thank you for upholding our family in prayer during this time."

Prayers are a powerful way of showing your love. And, as trusted partners, you are able to receive prayer requests and attend online events that we aren't able to share more widely – because of security. We'll also make sure to pass on the good news when God answers the prayers you've been praying, and the persecuted church see change in their lives.



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PRABA

How can the Partnerships team work with you?

Your generosity is crucial in making a difference in the lives of men, women and children who follow Jesus no matter the cost. The Partnerships team serves individuals, companies and trusts who contribute over £5,000 annually to the ministry.

All forms of support are essential to this ministry, and major gifts can accelerate and multiply the effect of Open Doors' work. Our role is to ensure you're fully equipped to support your church family by keeping you up to date and let you know where we need your help, with the following:



Privileged information: As trusted partners, we're able to share information and stories with you that we can't put online



Prayer requests: For the work you're supporting and for the persecuted church



Opportunities for connection: You can connect with courageous believers through trips and key events



Stories from the church: Answered prayers and those still in need



Impact updates: How your support is changing lives



Specific requests: We'll let you know urgent areas for funding

You can contact the team via partnerships@opendoorsuk.org or **01993 777 303**.

How does Open Doors work?

Open Doors is a global ministry, strengthening the body of Christ around the world.



Your gifts and prayers mean that persecuted Christians get support through **Open Doors local partners and fieldworkers** in more than 60 countries. These partners are often local churches, working within a country they know and love well. Activities depend on the context of the country, community and persecution these believers are facing.

Open Doors International (ODI) connects these local partners and field teams with development offices like Open Doors UK and Ireland. ODI's research helps determine which projects to establish, and their robust governance, monitoring and evaluation ensures supporters' donations are best used to support the persecuted church. In turn, they share inspiring stories and testimonies of our global church family, helping connect people like you with those who follow Jesus no matter the cost.

You'll be directly in touch with **Open Doors UK and Ireland**. That means you'll connect with a team raising prayer, funds and support for the persecuted church, and raising awareness of global persecution in the corridors of power through advocacy and campaigning. This is the office where you'll find the Partnerships team, and your first point of contact for any questions.

How does Open Doors decide where money is spent?

Your gifts go to projects designed in response to what persecuted Christians say they need. When a context-specific project is created in the field, funding is raised by development offices in various ways.

WHERE MOST NEEDED

Most often, people give to 'where most needed'. That means that the generosity of Open Doors supporters can be best used to meet the needs of persecuted Christians – sometimes where we cannot share openly about the work. It prevents projects being neglected, or given more funds than they can use.

PICTURED RIGHT Emergency food aid in India;
BELOW Literacy classes in Bangladesh



APPEALS

Every two months, there is a specific appeal focus, often across dozens of fundraising countries around the world. That might mean raising gifts and prayers for a particular region (West Africa, Middle East) or demographic (children, women, believers from a Muslim background). For instance, Hajaratu (pictured) from Nigeria shared her story during a period focusing on World Watch List top 10 countries – the places where Christians face the most persecution.



ALLOCATED GIVING

You may want to give to a particular region, demographic or types of ministry – or you may be able to help fund projects that we can't advertise openly. If you want to give in this way, you can talk with the Partnerships team about possible options.

PICTURED Safe houses in China
for North Korean believers

OPEN DOORS UK AND IRELAND SPENDING

All donations to appeals and allocated funds go to ODI to distribute to Open Doors local partners. For a detailed breakdown, you can find Open Doors' Annual Review at opendoorsuk.org.

Whichever funding route you choose, Open Doors partners are deeply appreciative – thank you!

How does your support change lives?

The full impact of your gifts and prayers is much more than simply sending a food parcel or repairing a building. Your gift is a link in a longer chain, making a greater impact than you may ever know.

Here are just some of the ways that lives are transformed, helping the global church to thrive and grow.

EMERGENCY FOOD AND MEDICINE SO THE CHURCH SURVIVES CRISES

"You can see people are just laughing and happy because we have never received this kind of support. This has not only solved our physical needs but also our spiritual needs!" – Pastor Sule's church community in Nigeria has suffered from appalling attacks by Fulani Islamic extremists. Open Doors partners were able to bring relief aid and encouragement.



BIBLE DISTRIBUTION SO BELIEVERS CAN TREASURE THE WORD OF GOD

"Through the Bible, I listen to His voice. I know the hand of my Saviour is with me." – Jalila had to flee her home in Iraq when so-called Islamic State invaded. Open Doors partners have given precious Bibles to her study group.

TRAUMA CARE AND TRAINING SO PERSECUTED CHRISTIANS CAN HEAL AND GROW

"You came just at the time we needed – the teaching on trauma has helped us a lot." – Charity in Nigeria is one of many who've had Open Doors trauma care, after suffering from Islamic militant attacks.



MICROLOANS AND INCOME- GENERATING PROJECTS SO BELIEVERS CAN SUPPORT THEIR FAMILIES

"The store was a huge step for us. We stopped being dependent on the aid and became able to provide for the family. Thank God for the church and the way they stood by us." – Rasha and Elias had to flee IS in Syria. Now they run a grocery shop, thanks to an Open Doors income-generating project.



PROTECTION, PROVISION AND EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN TO SUPPORT THE NEXT GENERATION

"I thank God and each one of you for everything you have done for me, my brother Sebastián, and my mother Alba." – Daniela in Colombia is getting education and a safe place to live, after her father was killed for his faith.



PICTURED A cave church in Egypt, used during winter for up to 2000 people

Connecting with the persecuted church

Interview with Caroline, who travelled to Egypt with Open Doors

Caroline and John have supported the work of Open Doors for many years. Donors connecting with the Partnerships team have access to special events, as well as opportunities to travel and meet persecuted believers. In this interview, Caroline shares how a trip to Egypt deepened her connection with the persecuted church.

Where did you travel with Open Doors?

My husband John and I went to Egypt, and it had a huge impact on us. It was a concentrated time of thinking about the persecuted church, and about our own faith. Many of us have stayed in touch, and it was very important.

Do any encounters stand out?

I was talking with one lady, eminent in her church, and asked what she wanted prayer for. I thought they'd want prayer about persecution and their mission, which of course we were praying for anyway, but she asked for prayer for her family, and for various aches and pains. It made it much more real. We realised persecution is on top of everything else.

I also learned that a lot of persecution isn't always dramatic – it's drip, drip, drip – wearing you down, like water on a stone. The difficulty of getting a job, or not being able to guarantee your children's safety. Making a sacrifice yourself is one thing, but it's another when it's family.

How has connecting to persecuted believers blessed you?

Hugely! They're our brothers and sisters. We've learned about priorities. It doesn't mean we've become saints – but we see their awesome example, on that trip and at Open Doors events. Particularly so from those countries where Christianity formerly was quite a strong force – Syria, Iraq, Iran and even North Korea. We heard a lady from North Korea at *Standing Strong*, and her story is full of joy, which is not what you'd expect. Her story was extraordinary.

Has connecting with the persecuted church changed how you pray?

You are different, therefore you pray differently. It changes you; it really does. I do find that if I meet somebody, I go on praying for them – they become people, not an abstract issue. Prayer is amazing, isn't it?

What makes partnering with Open Doors rewarding?

It's really important that we know people at Open Doors – that relationship with people makes it very different. Open Doors has been very open for us. There's a binding between everybody. We're doing an incredibly small part of it, but we're part of the jigsaw.

You can contact the team via partnerships@opendoorsuk.org or 01993 777 303.

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JOHN AND LIZ,
OPEN DOORS SUPPORTERS

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