

Open *Doors*

PRAYER DIARY | January/February 2025



**“Join me in
my struggle
by praying to
God for me”**

ROMANS 15:30

JANUARY

North Korea

Wednesday 1 January

Ever since North Korea was established, Christians in the country have faced severe persecution. Pray that Christians will not lose hope and that God's Kingdom will break through in this land of darkness.

Thursday 2 January

Christianity is completely forbidden in North Korea. Those whose faith is discovered face life imprisonment in labour or political camps. Ask the Lord to protect those who meet secretly and deliver them from evil.

Friday 3 January

This winter is expected to be particularly cold. Ask God to give His people strength and provision to endure the harsh winter and pray that relief aid will reach them when they need it most.

Saturday 4 January

Pray for Open Doors workers risking their lives to support North Korean Christians with food, medicine and biblical materials. Pray for discernment as they decide whom to work with and ask the Lord to hide their work from the eyes of spies and informants.

Sunday 5 January

"Severe food shortages make survival a daily challenge," says Open Doors' coordinator for ministry among North Koreans. "Christians try to support one another, but there's simply too little to share." Ask God to multiply believers' food as they share it with others.

Monday 6 January

Give thanks for Open Doors safe houses that support North Koreans who escape the country. Pray that, through this ministry, many refugees will meet Jesus and be strengthened to take the gospel back to North Korea.

Tuesday 7 January

Give thanks that, in the midst of darkness, God is at work! "Because of your prayers, the underground church in North Korea is expanding," says a North Korean believer. "Thanks to your prayers, the doors of North Korea will open so that more people will get to know God."

Yemen

Wednesday 8 January

2024 was a tough year for the Yemeni church. Christians faced imprisonment, torture and even death. "We don't get to heal from the first shock by the time

we are hit by another," says church leader Zain*, "but we feel encouraged when we hear the global church is praying with us." Pray for God's healing, strength and protection.

Thursday 9 January

All ministry inside Yemen is done in secret. Pray for boldness and wisdom for those who serve. Ask God to lead them to those who are open to the gospel, and pray for hearts and minds to be renewed.

Friday 10 January

Pray that believers who meet together and serve newcomers will be hidden from those who want to hurt or report them. "God is at work," says church leader Salman*. "We've seen His protection, and we witness it meeting after meeting."



ABOVE A gathering of secret Christians in Yemen

Saturday 11 January

"We see new people coming to Christ, continued discipleship and growth," says church leader, Odai*. Pray for the 'unlearning and relearning' process that new believers must go through as they follow Jesus out of Islam.

Sunday 12 January

The economic crisis caused by the civil war is impeding the church's ministry. Pray for Open Doors partners supporting church leaders with transport fees, medical and training costs.

Monday 13 January

"God has used social media as a revival tool in Yemen," says Salman. Praise God for this ministry and pray that it will continue despite attempts to shut down websites.

Tuesday 14 January

Open Doors partners with ministry leaders inside Yemen to strengthen Yemeni Christians with relief aid, safe houses, leadership training, social media ministry and trauma care. Pray that these programmes will help the church grow in faith and maturity.

Wednesday 15 January – UK

As the 2025 World Watch List launches in parliament today, pray that many new MPs will attend and be stirred into action on behalf of our persecuted family. Pray also for good media coverage that will raise greater awareness of the persecution of Christians.

*Names changed for security reasons



“Your prayers have done many miracles”

Secret believers in Yemen are encouraged and empowered by your prayers

Representative image

Secret meetings, coded messages and pseudonyms – these are all part of what it means to follow Jesus in Yemen, such are the dangers. “It’s like we have our own language,” says Saad*, a church leader. Amidst it all, the Holy Spirit is moving – and it has much to do with your faithful prayers.

For years, Yemen has been embroiled in civil war, leading to fractures in governance, a rise in extremism and a catastrophic humanitarian

crisis. Against this backdrop, religious freedom is non-existent, with Christians and other religious minorities increasingly forced into the shadows. With Islam the state religion, it’s illegal for Muslims to convert to another faith, and being discovered as Christian can bring house arrest, imprisonment, torture and even death.

“We don’t get to heal from the first shock by the time we’re hit by another,” says Zain*, reflecting on the challenges faced in

2024, including the death of a beloved brother. “But we feel encouraged when we hear that the global church is praying for us.”

“Your prayers have done many miracles – your prayers for safety and protection have been answered,” says another leader. “It’s a miracle that we’re able to come back home and safely sleep at night and then do it again and again.”

“Your prayers are what keep us going as leaders – we move protected because of your prayers,” says Salman*. “We’re living in blessing because of your support in prayer.”

“We see people coming to Christ.”

This blessing includes people coming to know Jesus, particularly through social media, reaching rising numbers of Yemenis who are questioning Islam. “Throughout 2024, we received the needed support to create specific

online ads for a better reach, and it succeeded!” continues Salman. “We’re able to reach more people and many baptisms took place!”

“God is with us,” says Odai*. “He provides for His children, and is working in us and through us, despite the challenges. We see people coming to Christ and believers growing in discipleship. This is proof that God is working in the Yemeni church.

“All of these struggles have built fear in the hearts of the believers, but they’ve also brought us together in prayer and drawn us closer to God,” he continues. “We have denied our own lives, and we are living for Him. We thank God that we met Him, and we thank you for your prayers.”

PLEASE PRAY

- Praise God for new believers! Pray that they will grow in faith
- For protection, boldness and wisdom for believers
- That more Yemenis will encounter Jesus.

*Names changed for security reasons

World Watch List

Thursday 16 January – North Korea

Kim Jung-wook (61), Kim Kug-gi (71), Choi Chun-kill (64) and several other missionaries were arrested by the government several years ago and sentenced to forced labour. No one knows if they are still alive. Pray for comfort and strength for them and their families.

Friday 17 January – Somalia

Somali secret Christians often feel alone and fearful; they're constantly at risk of attack from Islamic extremist groups like al-Shabaab and keep their faith hidden. Ask God to show them that millions of Christians around the world are praying for them.

Saturday 18 January – Yemen

The humanitarian crisis caused by Yemen's civil war, which began in 2014, seems never-ending. Pray that God will bring peace and justice to Yemen, and that the cries of His people will not be forgotten.

Sunday 19 January – Libya

There are few churches in Libya and converts from Islam are forced to follow Jesus in secret. Ask God to open doors for believers to find life-giving

community and grow in their walk with Christ.

Monday 20 January – Sudan

Thank God for Sudanese believers who continue to serve the vulnerable, even as they have lost their own homes and livelihoods in the civil war. Ask Him to protect their brave witness.

Tuesday 21 January – Eritrea

Eritrea has one of the most notorious prison networks in the world. Pray for those in prison, and their families, that God will provide for their daily needs, and that one day they will be reunited.

Wednesday 22 January – UK&I

Pray for this evening's World Watch List online event, that many will join to pray for our persecuted church family facing the most extreme persecution. Pray that supporters will be encouraged by how God is at work, and that He will direct our prayers.

Thursday 23 January – Nigeria

Once again, Nigerian Christians face the most extreme violence. Please pray for God's protection to surround His church, and that Nigerian leaders would work to protect Christian communities.

Friday 24 January – Pakistan

The country's notorious blasphemy laws continue to be used to falsely accuse and target Christians. Pray that God will change the hearts and minds of decision-makers in Pakistan to overturn these laws.

Saturday 25 January – Iran

Fatehmeh* lives in constant fear due to government persecution and frequent police raids on house churches. Her husband is imprisoned and her daughter Shirin* suffers from anxiety. Ask God to give them courage and peace.

Sunday 26 January – Afghanistan

It's impossible to live openly as a follower of Christ here. Believers are targeted, imprisoned and even killed. Pray that, even as the Taliban continue their brutal regime, God will touch their hearts and change them.

World Watch List highest risers

Monday 27 January – Mexico

Parts of Mexico are under the control of gangs and cartels. These groups often target Christians — especially church leaders who speak out against

criminal activity. Ask God to protect His people living in these regions.

Tuesday 28 January – DR Congo

Christians in eastern DRC are particularly at risk from armed militants. Many have been forced to flee their homes. Pray that displaced believers will find stability and hope in Jesus.

Wednesday 29 January – Kazakhstan

Warnings against sharing faith are being advertised. They instruct those who see people discussing religion or offering religious literature in public places to call the police. Pray for courage and wisdom for Christians.

Thursday 30 January – Kyrgyzstan

The government continues to impose many restrictions on church activities. Ask God to change attitudes towards Christians so more people will accept the gospel.

Friday 31 January – Chad

In eastern and northern regions, Christians from Muslim backgrounds are forced to hide their faith for fear of persecution and being disowned by their family. Pray for God's protection as they live out their faith.

*Name changed for security reasons



Smuggling God's love to North Korean women

Your love, care and support are helping isolated refugees to flourish

It must be incredibly disorienting to find yourself alone in a foreign country, separated from loved ones, and then suddenly sold into marriage to someone you don't know and whose language you don't understand. How do you re-orient yourself?

This is the reality for many women who fall victim to people smugglers as they escape across the North Korean border. It's a desperate situation to be in – but thanks to your prayers and gifts, some of these women find

themselves at an Open Doors safe house, where they are welcomed, and given practical aid and pastoral care. They are also introduced to Jesus, who re-orient them. He becomes their refuge. Thanks to you, these women know that they are no longer alone.

Ha-Joon* is an Open Doors fieldworker who meets with these women for food, prayer and fellowship. The journey to the safe house is fraught with danger, as she doesn't know if she's being watched.

THE RISKS OF MEETING TOGETHER

At first, some of the North Korean women are distrustful. But as they come together, they start to share their stories. "We came here for the food," one woman jokes. "We have to eat!" Another woman shares that she has lost her sister, who had also escaped North Korea. But she hasn't heard from her and has no idea what's happened to her.

"We thank you for your love, care and support."

Amidst the sadness, there's room for joy too – and a palpable sense of God's presence. "We worshipped together, which was really special," Ha-Joon says. There was singing and dancing, and one woman had even memorised 50 Bible verses which she recited for the group.



Open Doors safe houses are a lifeline for North Korean refugees like these women

Then suddenly, a woman's face appeared at the window, and everyone went quiet. Who was she? Would she report them to the secret police? "We all stopped breathing for a moment," Ha-Joon says. "The owner of the place immediately went outside to talk to the woman. I don't know what she said to her, but after she came back, she said everything was alright and we could continue with our programme.

"This [ministry is] only possible thanks to the prayers and generous support of our donors," adds Ha-Joon. "On behalf of the North Korean women and our local fieldworkers, we thank you for your love, care and support."

PLEASE PRAY

- For field workers like Ha-Joon, who risk their lives to care for North Korean refugee women
- That the Lord will continue to protect, heal and bless these women as they grow in the love of Christ
- For protection for Open Doors safe houses outside of North Korea, and all who find shelter there.

*Names changed for security reasons

FEBRUARY

North Korea

Saturday 1 February

North Korea has released a new song called 'Our Father,' which praises Kim Jong-un as a benevolent father who cares for his children. Pray that believers will keep their focus on Jesus and not be worn down by increasing propaganda and indoctrination.

Sunday 2 February

Open Doors estimates there are between 300,000- 500,000 believers in North Korea. Many are in labour camps. Pray that Christ's power will give them great endurance (Colossians 1:11), and pray for the release of all political prisoners.

Monday 3 February

China has warned North Korean refugees within its borders not to cause 'social unrest'. This includes not participating in Bible studies or church services. Ask God to protect His children from discovery and repatriation.

Tuesday 4 February

Christians are rarely able to meet with other believers. Despite the risks, they secretly listen to Christian radio programmes at night. Open Doors plans

to increase its radio broadcasts into the country this year. Pray that these programmes will build up the church.

Wednesday 5 February

Open Doors has trained many North Korean Christians who have returned to their homeland to disciple the underground church. Ask God to protect these courageous believers and equip them to build up His body.

Thursday 6 February

"We can endure because we have inherited the faith from our ancestors, who lived by Queen Esther's creed: 'If I perish, I perish,'" says one believer. Praise God for the faith of our North Korean family and pray that their spiritual strength remains unbroken.

Friday 7 February

"There still is a large underground church," says one North Korean believer. "Because you pray, many people are miraculously healed and experience God's power." Pray for more people to come to faith in Jesus.

Eyewitness

Saturday 8 February – Laos

Amphon* lived with his uncle when he became a

Christian. "After learning more about Jesus from the Bible, I was filled with courage, and I read the Bible in front of him." Amphon was thrown out. He's now married with children, but opposition from family persists. Pray for their salvation.

Sunday 9 February – Indonesia

Danar (12) became a Christian after seeing his mother's life changed by Jesus. He's the only Christian at school and classmates ignore him - but he's determined to follow Christ. Pray for resilience and encouragement.

Monday 10 February – India

When extremists forced Mansi* and Dhiru* to cancel their wedding, claiming that they were trying to convert people, Mansi told them: "Our lives have changed when we came to know the love of God." The couple have since married elsewhere. Pray for others to encounter God's love through them.

Tuesday 11 February – Mexico

"Only God makes man happy. I will raise my eyes to the mountains, from where my help will come." That's what a group of believers sang after being displaced from

their homes following relentless pressure to join criminal gangs. They've seen so much violence – pray for healing.

Wednesday 12 February – Central Asia

Samila* was suicidal after being stigmatised because of a skin disease. When she left a comment beneath a video posted by Open Doors on YouTube, partners connected with her and, having experienced Jesus' love, she's become a Christian! Praise God for this beautiful testimony.

Thursday 13 February – Uganda

"When I became a Christian, my husband made my life difficult," says Joan*, whose husband abandoned her and their three children when she chose to follow Jesus. "But I kept holding on to Jesus because I saw that He's the right way. Pray that God will help me be strong in this journey."

Friday 14 February – Bangladesh

"I cannot deny my Lord or His calling," says Shamsul*, whose wife left him and his son because of their faith. "Persecution cannot keep me from following Jesus." Pray for his wife to meet Jesus.

*Names changed for security reasons



SERVING SECRETLY AS A SOMALI BELIEVER

Rooble lost everything – but nothing will stop him sharing the gospel

In Somali society, to be Somali is to be Muslim. ‘Somali Christian’ is a paradox, and yet Rooble* – a Somali Christian living in the Horn of Africa – exists. “Once I realised that Jesus is the Way and the Truth and eternal Life, I believed in Him, and He changed my life,” Rooble says.

But remaining faithful to the God who changed his life came at an enormous cost. “I was living with my family who chased

me away; I also lost my inheritance. Where I was working, they chased me, my life became hard and full of pure suffering.”

After fleeing to another town, Rooble and his brother were arrested and imprisoned in two separate pits for sharing the gospel. “There were bodies of murdered people in those pits,” he says. “They had put us there to die.”

Sadly, Rooble’s brother was killed. Rooble’s wife

convinced the authorities that Rooble was insane, even bringing witnesses to testify that he was possessed. She saved his life.

Rooble has been in prison several times since then – but has kept going because he knows God is with him. “There was a time in prison when life became so hard, I asked myself if I could bear it,” Rooble says. “But I focused on the Word which says, ‘Do not be troubled because I am with you’ and that calmed me.”

“I only endure because of my faith.”

Rooble still lives among Somali people in the Horn of Africa – and he is still telling people about Jesus. “I live in the midst of Muslims, so I serve secretly,” he says. “It’s a dangerous place, very difficult for me and my children. I only endure because of my faith. But it’s a place that needs prayer.”

Thanks to your prayers and support, Rooble was invited to workshops supported by Open Doors partners for discipleship and encouragement. “It was a privilege to meet fellow believers I had never met before,” he says. “That encouraged me to be strong in Jesus. I also received knowledge that I didn’t have before.

“I want to say this to Somali believers: you need to know you’re people of light, and many times people in the darkness do not like light,” he continues. “Even though they suffer or even die, that hope is eternal life – that they are children of God.”

*Names changed for security reasons

KEEP PRAYING WITH THE WORLD WATCH LIST TOP 50

You can find prayer points and stories from believers from Somalia and many other countries in the *2025 World Watch List Top 50 Guide*. Order your copy from 15 January at opendoorsuk.org or call **01993 460015**.

Arise Africa

Saturday 15 February – Nigeria

Mob violence is increasingly being used as a weapon against religious minorities in Nigeria, with Christians particularly vulnerable to attacks sparked by accusations of blasphemy. Ask God to protect His people from false accusations.

Sunday 16 February – Cameroon

Ramata's* husband was killed in an attack by Boko Haram. Open Doors local partners gave her emergency aid and trauma care, and provided her with support to set up a small business. Please pray for her continued healing and peace.

Monday 17 February – DRC

Despite the increase in violent attacks against Christians in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), people continue to come to faith in Christ. Pray that their faith will grow strong and that they will be well disciplined.

Tuesday 18 February – Mali

Christians in the Mopti region are being ordered to pay a tax (jizya) – more than half the monthly income for many

families – by Islamist extremist groups. Local leaders are told refusal to pay will result in the seizure and closure of churches. Pray for God's wisdom and provision.

Wednesday 19 February – Somalia

Pray for wisdom for Somali secret believers who are parents as they teach their children about Jesus. Pray that their children will grow up strong in the Lord.

Thursday 20 February – Sudan

More than nine million people have been displaced by the civil war, among them many Christians. Ask God to provide food and shelter for those in need, and pray for an end to the conflict.

Friday 21 February – Eritrea

Pray for Eritrean believers who are forced into military service against their will. Ask God to protect them as they live out their faith, and pray that they will cling to Him as their refuge.

Church leaders

Saturday 22 February – Venezuela

When Pastor Manuel shared Psalm 119:114 with the leader of a prison gang who opposed his work, the leader cried

and said his mother used to read the verse to him. He now supports the pastor, with prisoners coming to know Jesus. Pray for more salvation.

Sunday 23 February – Uzbekistan

Pray for several house church leaders whose activities are being watched by the authorities. Ask God to strengthen and protect them and give them courage to keep meeting.

Monday 24 February – Malaysia

Pastor Tiang*, who works among an undocumented people group, is being watched by the authorities. They know his vehicle, where he parks, even where he goes for breakfast. Pray for protection and wellbeing for him and his family, and ask God to make seeing eyes blind.

Tuesday 25 February – Mexico

Father Marcelo Pérez, a well-known priest and activist, was shot dead in October, a month after saying there was 'a price on my head' for speaking out against organised crime. Pray for the protection of church leaders who are bravely seeking to counter crime.

*Name changed for security reasons

Wednesday 26 February – Vietnam

"I've learned how to lead a small group in prayer ministry," says Mai*, who attends a leadership programme run by Open Doors partners. Pray that students will 'set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity' (1 Timothy 4:12).

Thursday 27 February – Bhutan

Power and water have been cut off from Pastor Rajen's home after he used it to host church meetings. He had sought permission but it was denied, and there's nowhere else for his church to gather. Pray for breakthrough and favour.

Friday 28 February – DRC

"Christians come to church with fear in their eyes," says Pastor Jacob (BELOW), survivor of eight attacks by Allied Democratic Forces militants. "You can see it when you preach." Pray that he will have 'a well-instructed tongue, to know the word that sustains the weary' (Isaiah 50:4).





WORLD WATCH LIST 2025 ONLINE



WEDNESDAY 22 JANUARY 2025 | 7.30-8.30PM

Register today to come to a special online event for World Watch List 2025 – hear testimonies, latest information and ways you can pray.

At the event on 22 January, you'll be able to join other Open Doors supporters to hear experts discuss global persecution trends and stories, as well as getting an update on the World Watch List 2025 parliamentary launch and praying for the impact of the World Watch List report with those in power.

The evening is perfect for prayer groups, families or

individuals, as a crucial time to pray together for our persecuted church family in the places where they face the most extreme persecution.

Start 2025 as you mean to go on – praying as a worldwide body of Christ!

Register today at opendoorsuk.org/webinars

“The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.” JOHN 1:4



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