

CHURCH ON THE RUN

Get your church moving to help
Christians fleeing violence and
conflict in sub-Saharan Africa



HOW-TO GUIDE





WHAT IS **ARISE AFRICA?**

More than 16.2 million Christians have been displaced by violence and conflict in sub-Saharan Africa – that’s the populations of London, Manchester, Birmingham and Liverpool combined.

Most are living in internally displaced people (IDP) camps, which are dangerously ill-equipped to care for people, from poor sanitation to an acute shortage of food and medical supplies. Many are dying.

Pastor Barnabas and his family have been at one such camp for six years, living in a tent no bigger than a double-bed mattress. They’ve been there ever since their village was attacked by Fulani militants – an attack that tragically killed Pastor Barnabas’ brother and sister-in-law.

“Millions of Christians are displaced, here in Nigeria,” says the pastor. “Millions of Christians are displaced in Africa. The news doesn’t care about it, politicians don’t talk about it, governments don’t talk about it, global politics don’t talk about it. Nobody talks about it.”

This is why the African church is calling on their brothers and sisters worldwide to stand alongside them – and it’s why Open Doors has initiated *Arise Africa*, a global campaign aimed at raising crucial awareness, financial support, advocacy and prayer for Christians, like Pastor Barnabas, facing violent persecution in the region.



[Meet Pastor Barnabas](#)

WHO IS **OPEN DOORS?**

Around the world, 380 million Christians face high levels of persecution and discrimination for their faith. For 70 years, ever since Brother Andrew began smuggling Bibles behind the Iron Curtain to Christians suffering under Communist rule, Open Doors has stood alongside our faithful brothers and sisters, strengthening those who risk everything to follow Jesus with practical, spiritual and emotional support. This includes emergency food and medical aid, trauma care, livelihood support, discipleship and literature distribution.



opendoorsuk.org/church-on-the-run

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The church in sub-Saharan Africa is on the run, with 16.2 million Christians driven from their homes by violence and conflict.

Church on the Run is a fundraising activity that invites your church to get on the move for believers, like Pastor Barnabas, in sub-Saharan Africa. Whether that’s walking or running, cycling or swimming, skating or skipping – whatever the activity and distance – the aim is to raise vital funds, awareness and prayer for our displaced family in Africa.

“We have been starving, but any time it becomes critical, you assist us,” says Barnabas, who pastors thousands of people at the camp. “If not for the help of your ministry, I don’t think it would be easy for us to live. But with the aid of this ministry, they cared for us.”



HOW YOUR CHALLENGE COULD WORK

There are loads of ways that your *Church on the Run* challenge could work. It's all about what will best suit and inspire your church or group. Here are some questions to get you started...



WHAT WILL IT LOOK LIKE?

You could all do the same activity, or people can do their own thing. For example, one of you might run, whilst others might walk, swim or skate. You can be as creative as you like!



HOW WILL IT WORK?

You might like to tackle the same challenge together at the same time, perhaps by signing up for a local race. Alternatively, people could take on their own challenges, with all efforts cumulated together.



WHAT IS YOUR DISTANCE GOAL?

Perhaps consider a distance that reinforces the *Arise Africa* campaign and the 16.2 million displaced Christians, such as everyone running or walking 16.2 km together, or the group doing 1,620 km collectively over a week.



HOW MUCH WOULD YOU LIKE TO RAISE?

Set a fundraising target to help focus your efforts to raise sponsorship. Again, to press home your cause, you could have a fundraising target of £1,620.



IDEAS TO GET YOU MOVING

Check out the following ideas to see if any would suit your group or church, or if they spark some ideas of your own. You could raise money through sponsorship or by asking for a donation as an entry fee.

RACES OR DISTANCE CHALLENGES

- 5 km or 10 km run
- 15 km walk
- 25 km cycle
- 1 mile swim
- 1 mile long hop or pogo stick
- 5 km skate.

COLLECTIVE CHALLENGES

- See how far your group can collectively run, swim, walk, cycle, skate or hop over a week or month
- Ask people to set individual distance goals and add them together at the end of the specified time
- Think about setting a collective target around the numbers 16.2 (e.g. 16.2 miles, 16.2 km, 1,620 km).

INDIVIDUAL CHALLENGES

- 5 or 10 km walk or run each day for a week or month
- 16.2 km cycle every day for a week
- 1,620 metre swim every day for a week (about a 35-minute swim)
- 500 skips every day for a month.

MEET PASTOR SORÉ

It was the third Islamic militant attack on his village in Burkina Faso that made Pastor Soré take his family and flee as refugees, putting them among the two million people displaced in the country. Like Pastor Soré, many of them are Christians driven from their homes by extremism.

"When the terrorists come to churches and find Christians, they tell them that Christianity's time is over, and they should turn to the Islamic religion," says the pastor. "They warn Christians to stop conducting services. After warning, when they come back later and find you in the church, they kill you."

Thanks to the help of Open Doors supporters like you, Pastor Soré and his family have been given much-needed food and support. *"I do believe that we are displaced, but Jesus is not and will never be displaced from our lives," he says. "He is always with us."*

PRAY for protection, provision and peace for Pastor Soré and his family, and all believers in Burkina Faso.



[Meet Pastor Soré](#)





WHY NOT JOIN A LOCAL EVENT?

If you are a big group wanting to do the same route together, it can be daunting and impractical to set up your own race, which will include risk assessments and health and safety practices, and could have an impact on the wider public.

Instead, why not join an existing event, like your local Parkrun, where everything from the route (5 km) to first aid are all covered? Check out the [Parkrun website](#) to find your nearest weekly Parkrun and get in touch with the organisers to chat about how your *Church on the Run* could happen alongside their existing event!

Alternatively, you might all want to sign up for a longer race, such as a nearby 10 km or half marathon. These events are regularly happening and are a wonderful way to set you a challenge and raise even greater awareness for our family in sub-Saharan Africa, all whilst enjoying the fun (and adrenaline!) of a larger event with crowds.

YOU'VE CREATED YOUR CHALLENGE – WHAT NEXT?

Let us know! Head to opendoorsuk.org/church-on-the-run and fill out the simple form telling us what you're doing and when! We'd love to hear how your church is moving to support your displaced family in sub-Saharan Africa and to cheer you on.

Tell us about your challenge



Fedalia

MEET FEDALIA

Fedalia, her husband and their four children used to live a peaceful and exciting life in Kantoma, a village in Nigeria's Plateau State – that was until Fulani militants attacked, forcing the family from their home.

"You took us as your children," says Fedalia, after being among 2,000 displaced believers given aid by Open Doors local partners. *"Since staying here, we never received such gifts. We are really happy and our mind is now at rest."*

Aid included rice, blankets, pots and soap, as well as Bibles. *"This Bible, if we are troubled and we read it, especially me, it calms me down. And this Bible will be with me from now till the day I die. It is one of the biggest gifts that has really encouraged us."*

PRAISE GOD for the impact aid distribution can have on Fedalia and so many like her.



[Watch video](#)

THE DIFFERENCE YOU'LL MAKE

The money you raise will help Christians, like Pastor Barnabas, who have been displaced by violence and conflict in sub-Saharan Africa, providing basic needs that could include food, shelter, clothing and medical care.

£30

Every £30 raised could meet the **basic needs of three believers** in Africa **for a month**.

£500

Every £500 raised could meet the **basic needs of a group of 50 believers** in Africa **for a month**.

£1,200

Every £1,200 could meet the **basic needs of ten believers** in Africa **for a year**.





GET FUNDRAISING!

The simplest way to raise sponsorship is through [JustGiving](#), and we've set up a campaign page that you can link to your own fundraising pages. That way everyone can all see what different churches and groups are doing and see what's being raised! Here's how to create your own page...

- #1 Head to www.justgiving.com/campaign/church-on-the-run
- #2 Hit the 'Start fundraising' button
- #3 Either sign in or create a JustGiving account
- #4 Set up your fundraising page
- When asked 'Are you taking part in an activity?', Choose the 'Just fundraising' option. Skip the question about fundraising for an occasion. Now your page will be automatically populated with information about the *Church on the Run* challenge (but you can edit it to reflect what you are planning to do).
- #5 Share the page with your friends, family and church to start raising money!

DON'T WANT TO USE JUSTGIVING?

No problem! Instead, print out copies of the sponsorship form at the back of this guide and give them to everyone doing the challenge.

GET PLANNING

So, you want to get moving? Great! Let's get a plan together. Fill out these boxes to help you finalise your *Church on the Run* challenge...

When will the challenge take place?

How long will it last?

What will it look like? (e.g. Will you organise a race, walk or cycle, or ask your group to individually run, walk or move to reach a collective distance over the course of a week or month?)

How are you going to get others on board?

What's your fundraising target?

How will you collect funds? (e.g. JustGiving, sponsorship forms, entrance fees)

Who are you going to ask to sponsor you?

What help will you need? (e.g. volunteers, specialist advice, resources, funding)

Write out a prayer, giving the idea to God and asking Him to use it to help your church family in sub-Saharan Africa.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

With your plan in place, it's important to give thought to any health and safety considerations. Read through our '[Staying safe](#)' guide, and consult those in your church responsible for health and safety and/or safeguarding to ensure any races or church-organised activities follow the correct protocols. They will be able to help you with things like first aid and risk assessment so that everyone is kept safe.

GET PROMOTING

Now you have a clear idea of how you'll be a *Church on the Run*, it's time to start encouraging people to participate! We've created the following resources for you to share at your church/group and on social media to get people involved:

- An editable **PowerPoint slide** for use in a church service
- Social media graphics** promoting your challenge to your church (you can also use these in church emails or WhatsApp groups)
- Graphics for participants** to share on their personal social media profiles to encourage sponsorship
- A **short promo video** to share in church and online
- An **editable A4 poster** to fill in, print and display around church

See if you can get some time during your church services to explain the *Church on the Run* challenge and to ask people to take part! You could share the powerful stories featured in this guide, including Pastor Barnabas', to further highlight why you're passionate about your church taking on the challenge.

And don't forget to share with people how they can raise money or sponsor those taking part. Highlight your JustGiving page (if you've made one), or direct them to sponsorship forms or other ways that you are collecting money.

For more tips on promoting your challenge, taking photos, plus much more, check out our [dedicated fundraising page](#) for all you need.



MEET ALIA

Alia* is one of millions of Sudanese people who have been displaced since civil war broke out in 2023.

"Since the establishment of this camp, there has never been adequate food," explains Alia. "There are many diseases, we fall sick, we need medicine to cure us and our children. We also need schools for our children. We have so many challenges and pray that God will hear and see my tears due to this situation and war. We need water. We all need help to have toilets."

"We haven't stopped asking and praying to God," she continues. "We are hopeful that God will bring blessings." Last year, blessings arrived when Open Doors local partners provided aid to more than 20,000 believers, including Alia and her family.

"Without patience, one would not endure, but we thank God we are still alive," says Alia. "We are enduring, and we have put God first to help us. We have not forgotten about God because He is with us always, day and night."

PRAY that IDP camps across sub-Saharan Africa will be better equipped to look after people, like Alia and her family.

*Name changed for security reasons





AFTER YOUR CHALLENGE

FUNDS, PICTURES AND VIDEOS, AND SOCIAL MEDIA

Firstly, thank you so much for doing the challenge! The funds you’ve raised are not only helping meet the practical needs of believers, like Pastor Barnabas, they’re also a powerful reminder to them that they are not alone – that their global family is standing with them and, above all, God is with them.

If you used JustGiving to raise money, we’ll get the funds directly, but email us at contact@opendoorsuk.org to let us know how everything went and share any pictures and videos – we’d love to say thank you and hear what you got up to!

If you used sponsorship forms, collect the money. Don’t leave it too long, and make sure to thank everyone who raised money. These funds can be sent in via cheque (payable to Open Doors UK + I) or over the phone. If you send in a cheque via the post, please include a letter telling us the funds were raised as part of your *Church on the Run* challenge - do let us know details of what you did and the name of your church too. If you need more information, give our friendly team a call on **01993 460015** or email contact@opendoorsuk.org.

We’d love to know what you did and get your feedback, too, so please do get in touch – it’d be brilliant to hear from you!

And please remember to share about your challenge on social media, tagging **@opendoorsuk** on Facebook, X, LinkedIn and Instagram.



STAY ENGAGED

There are so many other ways you can stay engaged with the *Arise Africa* campaign and keep supporting our persecuted family in sub-Saharan Africa.

You might like to look at [Scattered Church](#), which invites you to pray and worship with your persecuted family. The devotional session outline is ideal for church services and house groups, and features videos, song suggestions, creative prayer ideas, plus much more.



If you haven’t already, please sign the *Arise Africa* petition (scan the code on the left), and add your voice to calls for protection, justice and restoration for Christians in sub-Saharan Africa. The goal

is to present the signatures to the UK government, United Nations and African Union in 2026.

And that’s not all, either. Head to opendoorsuk.org/ariseafrica for news, stories, videos and much more, to inspire and inform your support for your family in Africa.

STAY IN TOUCH

We’d love to remain in touch with you! If you haven’t already, you can sign up for regular emails and print mailings to stay informed and inspired as you journey with your persecuted family.

Subscribe today



I’M RAISING MONEY FOR OPEN DOORS

FUNDRAISER DETAILS

First name

Surname

Event name

Event date

Email address*

Home address

Town

Postcode

Contact number*

Church

*Only give us your details if you are happy to be contacted by Open Doors in this way

PLEASE SEND THIS FORM IN WITH YOUR DONATION, EVEN IF YOU HAVEN’T COLLECTED SPONSORSHIP

Total raised

£

Please send any completed forms, along with a cheque for the amount raised, to: ‘FREEPOST, OPEN DOORS with Brother Andrew’ or use the envelope provided. Cheques should be payable to ‘Open Doors UK with Brother Andrew’. Thank you!

SPONSOR DETAILS

Title	First name/initials	Surname	Date of birth if under 21	Home address	Postcode	Amount pledged	Tick if you would like us to claim Gift Aid	Tick if you would like to know more about Open Doors**	Amount received	Date received

Turn over for more space to collect sponsors!



Open Doors is an international ministry serving persecuted Christians and churches worldwide. Open Doors supplies Bibles, leadership training, literacy programmes, livelihood support and advocacy services.

Any questions? Get in touch with our team at contact@opendoorsuk.org / 01993 460015

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Gift Aid Declaration
If I have ticked the box headed Gift Aid, I confirm that I am a UK Income or Capital Gains taxpayer. I have read this statement and want the charity named above to reclaim tax on the donation detailed below, given on the date shown. I understand that if I pay less Income Tax / or Capital Gains Tax in the current tax year than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all of my donations, it is my responsibility to pay any difference. I understand the charity will reclaim 25p of tax on every £1 that I have given. If you would like further advice, email contact@opendoorsuk.org

Open Doors will not pass on your details or call you to ask for money.

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