

ARISE AFRICA

Unite in prayer with the church in Africa

WEDNESDAY 22 OCTOBER
7.30-8.30PM

You're invited to join in praying with our persecuted church family in sub-Saharan Africa at Arise Africa Online on Wednesday 22 October, 7.30-8.30pm.

The response of Open Doors supporters to the Arise Africa campaign so far has been amazing – but we can't stop now. With more than 16.2 million believers displaced by violence and conflict across the region, they need our prayers and support more than ever.

As well as praying with your church family across

the UK and Ireland, you will also hear from persecuted believers from sub-Saharan Africa. And it will be an opportunity to see how your prayers and gifts are already helping to stop the violence and start the healing.

"We want you to pray. Do not stop praying for us please, beloved."

– ROBERT*, A DISPLACED CHRISTIAN IN CAMEROON

Book your free place at opendoorsuk.org/ariseafrica

*Names changed for security reasons



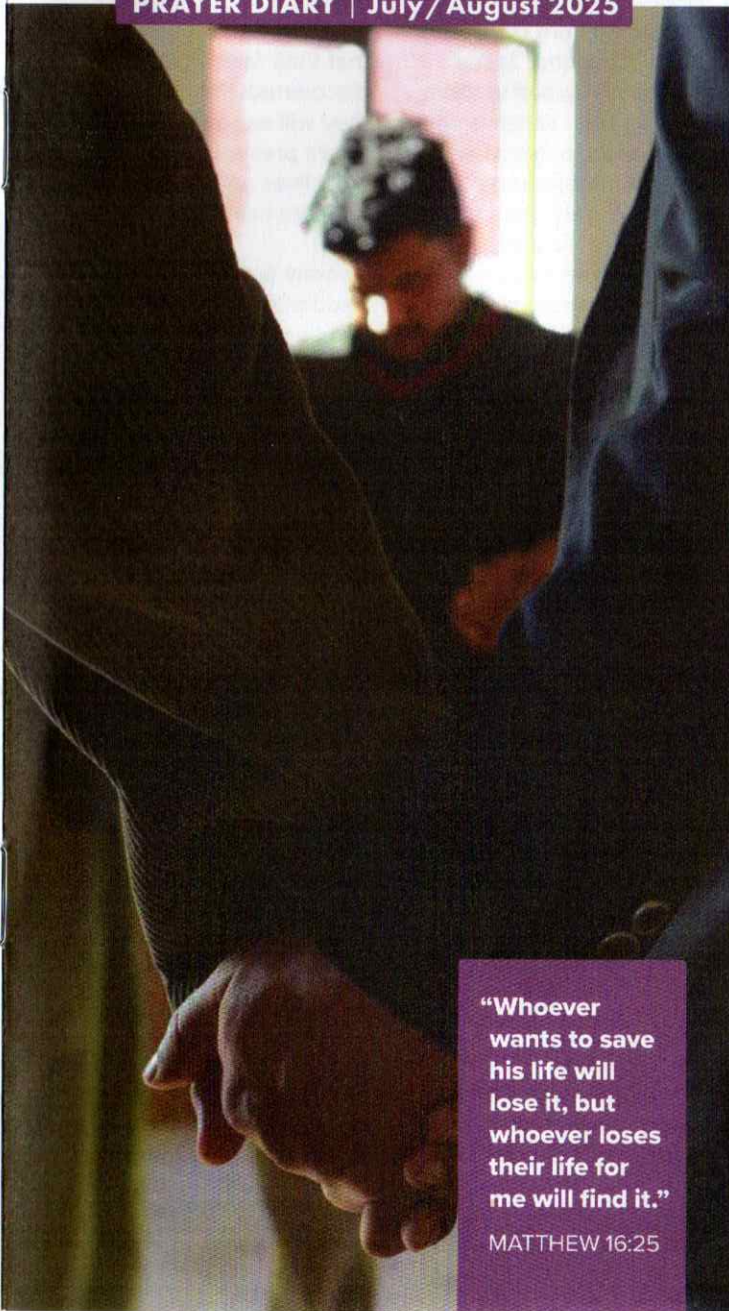
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Open Doors

PRAYER DIARY | July/August 2025



"Whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will find it."
MATTHEW 16:25

JULY

Underground believers

Tuesday 1 July – Middle East

Middle Eastern Christians often share that Jesus revealed Himself to them in a dream – which is what happened to Yasin* in Iraq (see Magazine p8). “I admired His beauty so much,” he remembers. Ask the Lord to reveal Himself to more Muslims in dreams and visions.

Wednesday 2 July – Iraq

Like many Christians who were raised in Muslim families, Yasin* suffered rejection and death threats for leaving Islam. Ask God to empower Yasin and other believers to persevere in their faith and not lose hope.

Thursday 3 July – Iraq

Despite the dangers he faces, Yasin is determined to make Jesus known in his community. “I ask you to pray that God gives me the strength to evangelise to as many people as possible,” he says.

Friday 4 July – Middle East

For many pastors, working with believers from a Muslim background is a risk. Pray for courage for those who dare to meet with new believers and

searching Muslims to care for and disciple them.

Saturday 5 July – Middle East

Many undercover believers struggle with loneliness and fear that their faith will be discovered. Pray that they will experience God’s presence in their daily lives and know they are never alone.

Sunday 6 July – Middle East

House churches are often the only place where undercover believers can meet to worship with other Christians. Pray that these churches will be places where believers are encouraged and nurtured in their walk with God.

Monday 7 July – Middle East

New Christian converts often struggle with Christian concepts such as the Trinity and Jesus as the Son of God. Pray that they will receive biblical teaching and meet others who will disciple them in the Christian faith.

Tuesday 8 July – Iran

When Somayah* first heard about Jesus, she wanted to prove that Christianity wasn’t true. But that changed after a friend invited her to church. Ask God to embolden more Christians

to invite Muslims to church to hear the gospel.

Wednesday 9 July – Iran

Through training sessions organised by Open Doors partners, Somayah has been equipped to lead online ministry for Iranian believers. “The trainings have deepened my understanding of God’s Word,” she says. Ask God to expand her ministry.

Thursday 10 July – Iran

Bibles and Christian resources are scarce and distributing them can lead to severe punishment. Ask God to bless and protect those who distribute Bibles, and to multiply the resources to reach more people.

Friday 11 July – Iran

The underground church in Iran continues to grow, despite intense persecution. Pray for God’s blessing over secret house church gatherings and ask that He would raise up strong, faithful leaders to shepherd His church.

Saturday 12 July – Palestinian Territories

Among Palestinians, there’s a small number of converts from Islam who follow Jesus. Due to fear of discovery, it’s a huge challenge to meet with fellow believers. Pray that they

will connect with other Christians who can help them grow in their faith.

Sunday 13 July – Syria

Since the fall of the Assad regime, Christians – especially converts from a Muslim or Druze background – are uncertain what the future could hold for them under the country’s new leadership. Ask God to protect them, and pray that Syria will continue to be an inclusive nation where all religious groups have equal rights and freedom of worship.

Monday 14 July – Syria

Thank God that many Kurdish Muslims in north east Syria have become followers of Jesus in recent years. Ask the Lord to give them what they need to grow strong in their faith.

Tuesday 15 July – 70th anniversary

It’s been 70 years since God first called Brother Andrew to ‘strengthen what remains’ (Revelation 3:2). Pray for a fresh anointing of God’s Spirit for Open Doors partners serving persecuted believers, and ask the Holy Spirit to wake up more Christians in the West to stand with their persecuted family.



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Many of you have been praying for Pastor Joseph and his wife Lida (LEFT AND MIDDLE), and Amir-Ali (RIGHT) – thank you

Released and reassured

Your prayers bring hope to imprisoned Christians in Iran – thank you and please continue to pray

Thank you for faithfully praying for Christian prisoners in Iran, including Pastor Joseph Shahbazian and Amir-Ali Minaei. Both have seen positive developments in their cases.

In April, the wife of Pastor Joseph, Lida Alexani, was arrested in what appears to be part of a broader strategy to pressurise her husband. He was sentenced to 10 years in prison in 2022 for involvement in a house church. Despite being released over a year later, he was rearrested in February and remains in prison.

In May, after just over a month in prison, Lida was released. Throughout her detention, she was not officially informed of any charges – a clear violation of Iranian law, which requires detainees to be charged within 48 hours. Despite her release, it's believed she may face accusations linked to her involvement in house church activities.

ENDING HUNGER STRIKE

You might also recall Amir-Ali Minaei, an imprisoned convert whose story we shared earlier this year. He suffers with a heart condition and his requests to see



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a specialist have been refused. On one occasion, he was reportedly beaten by a prison officer who struck him on his chest, worsening his condition. He also has a fractured bone in his right leg.

When Amir-Ali subsequently went on hunger strike and refused his medication after being denied access to a telephone, we asked for prayer on our social media channels and weekly email.

Thankfully, after being given reassurances by the authorities, Amir-Ali has ended his strike. He now has limited use of a phone and he's received treatment for his injured leg. However, it's unclear whether his request to see a specialist for his heart condition has been granted.

Amir-Ali has been imprisoned since April 2024, serving a sentence of three years and seven months for involvement in a house church. The extreme stress caused by his imprisonment could be behind his heart condition.

Pastor Joseph and Amir-Ali continue to need our prayers. But these developments bring hope to our persecuted family in Iran and are a reminder that things can quickly change as we pray.

Please keep an eye out on Open Door's website and social media channels for further news about believers in Iran. If you'd like to get regular updates and stories to your inbox about our persecuted family in Iran and elsewhere, head to [opendoorsuk.org/subscribe](https://opendoorsuk.org/). Thank you!

PLEASE PRAY

- Give thanks for these positive developments
- That Pastor Joseph and Amir-Ali will be released, and that Amir-Ali will get all required medical care
- For strength and peace for imprisoned Christians in Iran.

South Asia

Wednesday 16 July

– Pakistan

Praise God that 2,000 healthcare workers were recently reached with the gospel. Pray that the seeds planted will take root and bear fruit in their lives.

Thursday 17 July

– Pakistan

Selina* (10) is a survivor of severe persecution. She struggles with concentration in her therapy. Pray for strength, focus and renewed purpose, and for wisdom for her caregivers as they guide her through recovery.

Friday 18 July – Pakistan

Pray for our partner who operates vocational schools that equip vulnerable children and young adults with skills for a better future. Ask God to provide committed teachers and safe learning environments.

Saturday 19 July – Nepal

Tara's* husband Ramesh* threatened to divorce her and throw her out of home if she did not renounce her faith and stop attending church. He also hid her Bible. Ask God to comfort her and help her to find encouraging fellowship.

Sunday 20 July – Nepal

The rainy season brings challenges for travel,

especially in remote and hilly regions. Pray for safety for Open Doors partners travelling to provide training and practical aid to persecuted believers.

Monday 21 July – India

Communal tensions have risen following the killing of 26 tourists in Indian-administered Kashmir and Jammu in April. Pray for peace and harmony among communities and that the incident will not lead to further unrest.

Tuesday 22 July – Bhutan

Churches in the Paro district have received warning letters restricting Sunday service gatherings in house churches. Pray for church leaders and members to remain steadfast in their faith.

Wednesday 23 July

– Sri Lanka

Sasha has endured death threats for her faith, including from her father, a devout Hindu. Pray for strength and protection, and that her father will encounter Jesus through her witness.

Thursday 24 July

– Bangladesh

When Raju's employer made him choose between his faith and his job, he chose Jesus. Ask God to help Raju find other ways to earn an income to support his family.

Arise Africa

Friday 25 July

Praise God that Open Doors' work with Christian lawyers across sub-Saharan Africa has resulted in the creation of a Christian Lawyers Fellowship. Pray that more lawyers will join and be willing to stand up for the persecuted church.

Saturday 26 July

Last year, Open Doors partners helped 3,000 children in high-risk environments return to school in countries like Burkina Faso, by paying for their school fees, uniforms and materials. Pray that they will grow in wisdom, and that our partners can reach more children this year.

Sunday 27 July – Nigeria

Give thanks for an online training course and media fellowship aimed at harnessing the power of the media to educate people about the importance of religious freedom. "It has strongly impacted and challenged me to be an advocate of freedom of religion," says one participant. Pray for plans to take the course to other countries.

Monday 28 July – Nigeria

Grace received trauma care through Open Doors

after witnessing the murder of her husband, Pastor Joshua. "Here, I was finally able to let go," she says. Pray for continued healing.

Tuesday 29 July – Nigeria

Pastor Elam is participating in leadership training led by Open Doors partners. "Pray for God's wisdom on how to speak to our sheep," he asks, "and on how to become credible leaders before those we lead and serve."

Wednesday 30 July

– Cameroon

After attending a women's self-help group run by Open Doors partners, Auristine started a small group that teaches the Bible and livelihood skills. "We teach the Word of God to women so they can stand firm in times of adversity," she says. Pray that the group will bear fruit practically and spiritually.

Thursday 31 July – Mali

In May, military authorities dissolved all political parties and repealed laws protecting political participation. Pray for wisdom and courage for the church as she seeks to be a prophetic voice in the country.

UPROOTED BY HATRED BUT GROUNDED IN LOVE

Your prayers and support are
a lifeline for Adam and Dina



Re-enactment image

Adam* and his wife, Dina*, lived with his parents. Adam's father was an imam, and Adam drove a taxi for a living. The couple lived as faithful Muslims – until Dina's brother, Ihab*, became a Christian.

"Ihab's conversion was the light that we were missing in our lives," Adam says. "His testimony enlightened our minds and changed our lives forever."

Eventually, the couple also decided to become

Christians. "We joined the church Ihab brought us to," says Adam. "We began a journey of growth and spiritual transformation."

NO CHOICE BUT TO LEAVE

But they had to be careful. "I had to keep my faith in Christ hidden," Adam remembers. "I wasn't sure how they would react."

It's common for converts from Islam in Egypt to hide their faith. Exposure could lead to problems in the workplace, expulsion

from their homes and community, physical violence – or even death.

"He called us infidels, traitors."

Unfortunately for Adam and Dina, his father started to suspect that Adam wasn't as committed to Islam as he used to be; he wasn't attending the mosque or participating in Islamic prayers anymore.

Adam's father's fears were confirmed when he found a Bible in the couple's room. Overwhelmed with anger, he confronted them. "He called us infidels, traitors," Adam recalls. "I had never seen him so filled with anger and hatred. He even said we deserved to be killed and threatened us with harm if we stayed in the village.

"We had no choice but to leave our home and the community immediately. We left everything behind, including our only source of income, the family taxi, and stepped into an uncertain future."

ROOTED IN COMMUNITY

Thanks to your prayers and support, Open Doors partners helped them to find somewhere to live, and

Adam received a motorised freight trike he could use to transport goods.

"We encountered numerous challenges spiritually, psychologically and financially," Adam says. "However, the ministry extended support to us in every aspect. Not only that, but the ministry also offered psychological support through counselling sessions and nurtured our spiritual growth through a discipleship group."

"The ministry extended support to us in every aspect."

Adam and Dina continue to hide their faith, living under dual identities, but with your support, they can remain grounded in a supportive Christian community and stand firm in their faith.

PLEASE PRAY

- That God will help Adam and Dina to grow in their faith
- For Adam's family, that they will come to know Christ
- That God will continue to strengthen and equip local Open Doors partners in Egypt.

AUGUST

Underground believers

Friday 1 August

– North Africa

If an underground believer's new faith is exposed, they may face pressure, discrimination and even job loss. Ask God to give His people wisdom, courage and discretion as they live out their faith in the workplace.

Saturday 2 August

– North Africa

It's often difficult for underground believers to safely access Bibles and Christian resources, or gather for discipleship and prayer. Ask God to expand underground networks and provide greater access to digital resources.

Sunday 3 August

– North Africa

Believers from Muslim backgrounds often struggle to find a Christian partner. Women, in particular, may be forced into marriages with Muslims. Please ask God to guide them to a partner with whom they can build a Christian family.

Monday 4 August

– North Africa

When five-year-old Salim's* parents revealed their Christian faith, he came home from school

with bruises and torn clothes – bullied by his Muslim classmates. Pray for children whose faith puts them at risk.

Tuesday 5 August

– Arabian Peninsula

Saeid*, a believer from a Muslim background, describes what it's like to hide his faith: "Every day is a balancing act, silently professing love for Christ while feigning allegiance to Islam. The pressure becomes suffocating." Pray that Saeid will know the joy and peace of Christ daily.

Wednesday 6 August

– Arabian Peninsula

"My family remains unaware of my faith until this day, a painful secret I carry to protect them and myself," Saeid says. "My story is a declaration of hope." Pray that Saeid's family will encounter Jesus.

Thursday 7 August

– Arabian Peninsula

Give thanks that believers are being strengthened with persecution survival training. One believer shares: "We have been overjoyed to gather around the Scriptures, learn its lessons, and apply the Word." Ask God to protect these gatherings.

Friday 8 August – Yemen

Despite the dangers, some Christians in Yemen

are bold enough to open up their homes for others to gather for worship. Pray for protection and wisdom for these believers.

Saturday 9 August

– Yemen

Due to the ongoing civil war, families are barely making ends meet, whether it's house rent, schooling or even daily meals. The financial stress is an added pressure on Christian families. Pray for God's provision and peace.

Sunday 10 August

– Yemen

A Yemeni Christian asks: "Amid bombings, hunger and the severe lack of proper medical care, people here grow weary. Yet, the light of hope continues to shine through. Intercede for us as we work together for God's Kingdom to prevail in Yemen."

Monday 11 August – Egypt

Open Doors research shows that the most common psychological impact of persecution on converts is isolation. Ask God to connect isolated Christians with believers who will support them.

Tuesday 12 August

– Egypt

"Because of my faith, I was alone," shares a believer. "The people closest to me

left me. Now I am among a group of believers with whom I serve and another group that cares for me." Pray that these believers will continue to encourage each other.

Wednesday 13

August – Egypt

Existing churches can find it difficult to take in believers from Muslim backgrounds due to fear of persecution. Ask God to give church leaders courage and discernment to welcome these Christians.

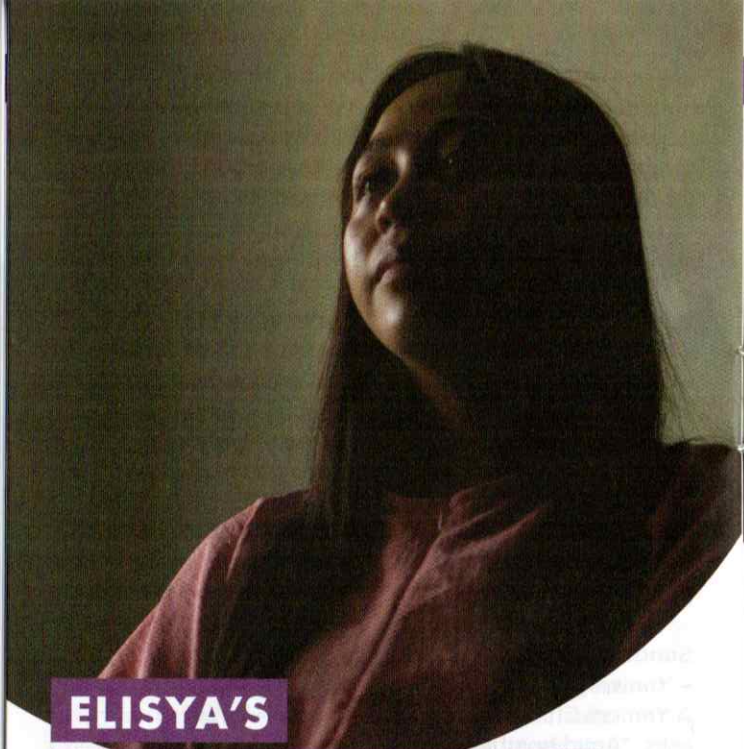
Thursday 14

August – Egypt

Sometimes even family members of a convert are persecuted. One man's daughter was forced to marry a member of the Muslim Brotherhood as punishment for his conversion. Ask God to comfort and protect her, and to watch over the families of those who convert.

Friday 15 August – Egypt

Eman* was just 12 when her father became a Christian. His conversion meant the family had to flee for their lives, causing Eman deep trauma. Praise God that, through Open Doors partners, Eman is recovering with trauma care.



ELISYA'S

UNSHAKEABLE FAITH

Despite relentless pressure from her family, Elisya refuses to deny Jesus.

Elisya* (PICTURED) in Asia had been a Christian for six months when she decided to tell her family. She knew they'd react badly, but nothing could prepare her for the pain she'd feel – or the lengths her family would go to get her to change her mind.

Despite growing up in a Muslim home, over the years Elisya drifted away from pursuing Islam for herself. "I longed to draw closer to God," she says. "I even woke up at 3am and prayed to

Allah by performing the 'sunnah' prayer. But still I felt empty." Eventually, Elisya gave up.

When she met Isaac* – a local partner who actively reaches out to believers and seekers from a Muslim background – Elisya knew it was not chance, but God orchestrating something in her life. She began attending church regularly and soon became a Christian. "I felt the peace that I was longing for in my heart all those years ago. It was surreal and so

much more beautiful than I anticipated."

When Elisya took the brave step of telling her family, her mother cried and her father wanted to hurt himself, feeling he'd failed as father. Her brother slapped her and threw hair straighteners at her, burning her. "It hurt so much to see my family come against me," she says.

Elisya was even sent to the local Islamic authorities. She was interrogated for three hours and told that she'd be killed if she converted to Christianity. "I kept praying, unsure of how to answer their questions, but I trusted the Holy Spirit to guide me. Thankfully, I was able to get through it. I couldn't have done it without God."

"I believe in Jesus, and I will always be in Christ."

Relations with her family began to improve, but when Elisya introduced her Christian partner and declared her intention to make her conversion official with the courts, her father was furious. She's

been threatened with disinheritance, forbidden from eating with the family, and blamed for the family's financial struggles.

The family have even intensified their practice of Muslim rituals, including making the pilgrimage to Mecca, believing it will help get Elisya to return to Islam. They've also enrolled her sister in Islamic studies to stop her from following in her sister's footsteps, and they monitor text messages between them.

But with astonishing bravery, Elisya refuses to deny Jesus. "I respect and honour you," she told her father. "But I believe in Jesus, and I will always be in Christ."

"I am happy knowing that so many of you are lifting me up in prayer," says Elisya. "It's a reminder that I'm not alone on this journey."

PLEASE PRAY

- For continued resilience for Elisya
- For wisdom and discernment for her sister as she navigates the situation
- That Elisya's family will encounter Jesus.

Communist Asia

Saturday 16 August

– China

“We’re very cautious,” says Rose* from a house church that’s experienced repeated raids. “Members gather in different ways, doing our best to confuse the authorities.” Pray for protection and enduring faith.

Sunday 17 August – China

Christian university teachers in east China face increasing restrictions on expressing their faith. One believer was questioned by her manager about her involvement in church activities. Pray for courage.

Monday 18 August

– North Korea

Inspired by the prayer of Jabez (1 Chronicles 4:9-10), a secret believer says, “We believe that God will pour out His blessings upon us, expand our boundaries, deepen and broaden our prayer life, and allow us to experience His presence and help even more.” Pray this over the North Korean church.

Tuesday 19 August

– North Korea

It’s dangerous for parents to tell their children about Jesus: a school textbook shows a girl being praised for informing on her mother for criticising the regime. Pray for creativity and discernment.

Wednesday 20

August – Vietnam

Open Doors partners run a two-year Bible course for believers in rural areas. “It’s dedicated to creating well-equipped leaders with strong knowledge of the Word of God to lead their churches in persevering for their crown of life,” says Daniel*. “Kindly pray for us.”

Thursday 21 August

– Vietnam

This summer, Open Doors partners are running activities and training sessions for students and families. Pray for profound encounters with God.

Friday 22 August – Laos

Converts in rural areas often face persecution, forcing many to relocate. Pray for them to have confidence in God’s purpose and presence even in their suffering.

Saturday 23 August – Laos

The rainy season has begun, making it a busy time for farmers. However, farms owned by Christians are vulnerable to attack. Pray for abundant and protected harvests.

EYEWITNESS

Sunday 24 August

– Mexico

Joaquín* and his friends are standing strong despite opposition.

“People mock us, saying, ‘There are only four of you Christians – what can you do?’ But they don’t understand. We’re not just four. We’re thousands worldwide.” Pray that hearts will soften to their witness.

Monday 25 August

– Central Asia

Surrounded by a group ready to kill him, a pastor prayed aloud for his persecutors. Incredibly, he was released. Later, the group told him that his prayers protected them when ambushed by a gang. “Your prayer made a big impression on us,” they said. Pray for their salvation.

Tuesday 26 August – Laos

“I will not sign, because Jesus healed me,” Lany* told officials who demanded she sign a document renouncing her faith. She’s been cut off from welfare support and her farm. Pray for provision and strength.

Wednesday 27

August – Brunei

Ten years ago, Kayla* had a vision of Jesus. “He looked so divine dressed in a white robe and so majestic.” The vision helps her withstand opposition from her husband. Pray that he too will encounter Jesus.

Thursday 28

August – Nigeria

After his father was killed by militants, Godwin* (15) received trauma care from Open Doors partners. “I’ve forgiven those who killed my dad. I’ve received healing.” Pray that his testimony will help others heal.

Friday 29 August

– Bangladesh

Hannan* was beaten and arrested after being accused of offending Muslims in a sermon about Jesus. “They forced me to renounce my faith. But I chose to remain with Jesus.” Pray for his acquittal.

Saturday 30 August

– Vietnam

When Trinh* faced pressure to participate in ancestral traditions, her daughter said, “We do not need to go to the market to buy food for our ancestors. We can share bread and pray together.” Praise God for the strength Trinh draws from her daughter.

Sunday 31 August – Nepal

Pastor Amrit* and his wife plan to expand their pharmacy to care for leprosy patients and others. “Due to laws against evangelism, openly sharing the gospel is risky. But we want to serve people in ways that share God’s love.” Pray for impact.