

### Tunisia’s goal of moderation

In Tunisia, where most people are Muslim and few are Christian, the government wants to see community tolerance. In a recent referendum aimed at curbing Islamic extremism, Tunisians voted for constitutional change so that Islam is no longer named as the state religion. New laws will prevent the use of religion to achieve political goals. It will also improve conditions for Christians, especially those who have converted from Islam.

*Barnabas Fund*

### India: Governments and Christians

In a country where the national government promotes Hindi nationalism and state governments try to curb Christian growth through anti-conversion laws, the judiciary often has a more even-handed approach. The Supreme Court of India has rejected a petition by an extremist group for a committee to monitor Indian Christian evangelists. The petition argued that “all the Christian missionaries should be checked and their income should be monitored.” The Supreme Court rejected the petition, ruling that such a petition was “disturbing the harmony” of the nation.

The request from the extremists was based on the allegation that Indian missionaries and evangelists sought converts through force, fraud or allurements – allegations that in general are unfounded. The decision comes as the government plans further meetings with representatives of the Christian community, the aim being to discuss concerns about anti-Christian violence and misuse of anti-conversion laws. In January 2022, the Madras High Court dismissed a petition to block the construction of a church building, citing the need for tolerance and religious freedom.

Indian Christians ask for prayer that their meetings with the government will be fruitful and that the efforts of Hindu extremists to harass and persecute Christians will be thwarted.

*New Life*

### The Christians of Papua

Indonesia’s government is accelerating its policy of Javanese-Muslim colonisation of the Melanesian-Christian provinces of Papua that it gained when Dutch colonisation ended around 1960. Militarisation and exploitation hasten the ‘end game,’ which is to neutralise the Papuan people and enrich the Indonesian government through the resource-rich Papuan territories.

In the modern era, when human rights are promoted and colonisation condemned, the people of Papua cry out for mercy and justice, but their cries fall on deaf ears in the international community. The churches of Papua are alive and active, and echo the feelings of the populace in general as they call for prayer.

*Religious Liberty*

### Mauritania’s few churches

The church in Mauritania, West Africa, is very small. The government is strongly Muslim and almost the entire population is unreached by the gospel. People who leave Islam to follow Jesus face severe opposition, especially from their families. However, it is believed that 30 small house churches have been established in the past year or so, many believers being equipped with solar-powered audio Bibles in Arabic and French. But the leaders of these groups are vulnerable to Islamists, who are systematically hunting them down.

*World Mission*

### From a pastor in Sierra Leone

“These Bridgeway books are like treasures to us, but I have not enough to give out. I have even made enemies of those who could not get copies, so please send me some more. I want to thank you especially for Making Sense, which provides in-depth studies for insight into the challenges of life in the confusing world that faces today’s generation.”

*Bridgeway*

### Sunday church service in Turkey

A Christian family in Mardin province of Turkey were subjected to an unprovoked attack on a Sunday when worship was conducted in a newly refurbished church building in their village. Around 500 Muslim extremists, led by a local Muslim family, used sticks, stones and other weapons to attack the family home of the one Assyrian Christian in the church, then set fire to their crops. But there were no injuries and the Christians are going ahead with their Sunday services.

*Barnabas Fund*



## Christianity in Guatemala

Guatemala's official separation of church and state, extending now for more than a hundred years, has given evangelical Christians much freedom and increased their influence, usually at the expense of the previously dominant Catholic Church. But churches have often to deal with the problem of syncretism with traditional Mayan religions, a problem not just with former Catholics but also with Protestants, especially those of Amerindian background. Statistically, church growth since the 1960s has been spectacular, accounting for one quarter of the population. However, some of the growth is superficial and discipleship is the church's greatest need.

*Operation World*

## Taiwan – prosperous but indifferent

In the one country where the Chinese church has struggled to expand, local media ministries are constantly putting out new programs via the web and social media, with the prayer that they will create interest among an indifferent public. In one new podcast, called *Faith and Law*, a lawyer shares his Christian beliefs and experiences through litigation stories and dramatised versions of Bible passages.

*FEBC*

## From a pastor in Malawi

*"I have started teaching some local pastors your book *Let the Bible Speak for Itself*. As of now I am on page 14, the paragraph about Honesty and Patience. Wherever possible I want to teach pastors the aim of this book. Next month I will be in Mozambique for two weeks, teaching also this book".*

*[Later: "Now we are on page 111 of *Let the Bible Speak for Itself*, where we are learning how to plan the teaching program. This is important, so we do not preach the favourite parts over and over."]*

*Bridgeway*

## New churches amid Myanmar's war with its own people

Fighting continues in Myanmar between the military junta and local resistance groups. The military has lost about 90 bases since its February 2021 coup. Amid horrendous stories of the junta bombing villages where there is a strong pro-democracy movement, Christian discipleship teams report that as they move around the country cautiously they are able to continue their work. "We are working with 146 different small clusters of churches across Myanmar and all of them are continuing their training activities and sending people out."

The military aggression has eased off in some areas because of a shortage of provisions. The extent of the fighting varies widely between regions. As the discipleship teams continue to share God's love across the country, they report entrance into regions where Covid never reached. People were so isolated there was little outside influence. The churches in those places continue to grow, many of them in the very mountainous regions of Myanmar's far north. One report says, "We're seeing churches being planted there regularly." Ask God to bring peace to Myanmar and strengthen the thousands of Christian groups throughout the country.

*Mission Network News*

## Sudan going backwards

Since the military coup of 2021, the junta has been busy rehabilitating loyalists to the former Islamist dictator and re-building the former regime. Numerous loyalists, including senior officials of the ousted president, have been released from prison, given back their confiscated assets and reinstated to prominent government positions. The country is being returned to Islamist, military rule, thereby placing the large number of Sudanese Christians and churches in jeopardy

*Religious Liberty*

## Forum in Poland

*Evangelical Leaders from 41 countries on four continents attended a Leadership Forum in Poland. Topics included resource sharing, training, mentoring, networking, youth ministry, apologetics, church planting, evangelism, church revitalisation, media, discipleship, counselling, arts, science and finances. Christian leaders from various fields of study led over 300 workshops. Some speakers highlighted the war in Ukraine and the effect it has had not just on Ukraine, but on all of Europe and beyond.*

*Evangelical Focus*

## Small gains in Saudi Arabia

There continue to be small improvements in religious freedom in Saudi Arabia, such as the removal from school textbooks of aggressively intolerant content concerning minority religions. But public non-Muslim worship is still forbidden, meaning that Christians must still meet in secret.

*Barnabas Fund*