

Pakistan's Christians

A mob in Pakistan's Punjab province burnt down 32 churches and up to 100 homes in a Christian neighbourhood. The attacks were sparked by a false blasphemy accusation. The government has arrested nearly 150 people from the mob, but that does not seem to be enough to stop further attacks.

Elsewhere, in the city of Faisalabad, a Muslim extremist group used pictures of burnt pages from the Quran to storm a predominantly Christian neighbourhood, burning five churches and many Christian homes. Pakistan's blasphemy laws easily arouse such fanaticism.

Meanwhile, in Islamabad, justice has been administered in the case of a Christian woman who was murdered after refusing to marry a Muslim man and convert to Islam. Her murderer was sentenced to 25 years imprisonment.

Mission Network News/Barnabas Fund

Ethiopia: Training Christian school teachers

"The plan for our education ministry is still active. We are working with school teachers from primary to secondary level to train them to know the Bible and help the youth. We gather the teachers every Friday at 4 pm in two Christian schools, where we have Bible study using your Bridgeway books. We want to make a new generation to be disciples of Jesus Christ."

Bridgeway

Christians in Iraq facing dispossession

Up to 300,000 Assyrian Christians in Northern Iraq are being systematically dispossessed of lands occupied by them and their forebears for generations. They will be replaced by colonising Muslims who will quickly erase any Christian heritage. These threatened Christians cry out for their brothers and sisters elsewhere to intercede in prayer on their behalf.

Religious Liberty

A Middle Eastern bookshop

When a Muslim man ('Youssef') in a Middle Eastern country had a dramatic conversion to Jesus Christ, he decided to open a Christian bookshop. After two years of frustration with officials, he was given permission. Meanwhile in a neighbouring country another Muslim ('Samir') had begun questioning Islam after witnessing a beheading. One day, in unusual circumstances, Samir got hold of a Bible, in the back of which he found a handwritten phone number. He phoned the number, hoping it might lead to someone who could give explanations of the Bible.

The phone number was that of Youssef, who visited Samir and explained as much of the Bible as he could. Samir soaked it up 'like a sponge.' The outcome was that Samir also came to know Jesus as his Saviour. Some time later Samir paid a surprise visit to Youssef's shop to tell of a Muslim friend he had led to Christ.

Youssef's shop remains open and the Bible is its biggest seller. He asserts he will never shut down – but if forced to, he will keep selling Bibles, 'even from a wheelbarrow.'

VOM

The youth of Bolivia

Although 67% of Bolivia's people are under age 30, there is not a lot of specific outreach to them. Scripture Union is one ministry seeking to reach them, but local congregations need to put in more effort. Widespread unemployment, urban violence and the easy availability of drugs mean that reaching and discipling them is vital.

Operation World

Muslim violence in Nigeria, Congo, Mozambique

Over the past 20 years, tens of thousands of believers in Sub-Saharan Africa have been slaughtered by Islamist extremists. Nigeria is the worst affected, followed by Mozambique and Congo. Recent news tells of 21 people killed in two Christian villages in Plateau State, Nigeria. Twelve of the dead were internally displaced people who had fled to the area to escape previous violence. Jihadists in the Congo (DRC) killed 17 Christians in separate attacks, mostly in the Beni area of North Kivu Province. In shocking incidents in northern Mozambique, Christians are abducted and sometimes beheaded by jihadists. These ultra-radical Islamists kill even moderate Muslims who do not join their cause. Christians throughout these dangerous regions need our prayers.

Bangladesh's Christian pre-schools

Seven Christian pre-schools in Bangladesh provide free education for Christian children from impoverished communities. The majority of the children's parents are low-paid day labourers, often ostracised by their Muslim neighbours. More than 225 children attend the schools, where they are taught English, Bangla and maths as well as Bible stories, hymns and Christian values.

Barnabas Fund

The hill tribes of South-East Asia

Most people in the ethnic minority groups of South-East Asia are looked down upon by the dominant culture group of the country where they live. In some countries, especially Myanmar, they suffer discrimination, oppression, cruelty and the burning of their houses and church buildings at the hands of the government. Yet there is a strong Christian presence in almost all these tribal groups.

The Christian ministry Far East Broadcasting Company has a vital role in serving 17 language groups across the region and each year sees thousands respond to the gospel and become followers of Jesus Christ. Last year FEBC had 233,968 social media users, 208,498 Facebook Messenger users, 40,496 Zoom meeting participants, 98,145 files downloaded to mobile apps, 9,129 participants in village events and 2,796 baptisms.

FEBC



Hope in Hungary

Although many Hungarians have lost contact with the gospel, and the church in some places sees itself as being under siege, innovative ministries have sprung up around the nation. One goal is to plant a church in every city, town and village. In a society where young people are open to whatever new ideas appear, teaching of religious knowledge is still possible in the several hundred Christian schools and even some public schools. Youth conventions, camps and summer outreach programs have been fruitful fields of activity.

Operation World

Ghana: Praying and evangelising

A local Christian writes: "The Lord laid upon my heart to gather some brothers and sisters in church to pray every midnight for souls and move out especially on weekends for evangelism. We started praying and evangelising like this five months ago and so far we have seen 100 new souls join the church and many of them are now in a discipleship training program. We are trusting God for grace to continue to the end of the year. This is a new development in the church. We sleep inside the church first and then wake up at midnight to start the prayers through the night till morning. The power of God is increasing in the church with diverse kinds of testimonies."

Bridgeway

Gaza and Israel

The Gaza-Israel war has displaced over half of Gaza's 2.3 million residents. Workers among the local Christian population in Gaza say they feel like sheep among wolves. In the border region of Israel, the pastor of a church in Ashdod says at least 30 men from his church are among the 350,000 Israeli reservists so far deployed.

Christians in Gaza and Israel are always in tension with the majority populace around them, whether Muslims or Jews, and their circumstances at present are worse than usual. But reports are that Christian leaders from Jewish and Palestinian backgrounds are standing together. As we pray for an end to the war, we should pray also that people will experience the love and hope of Christ as believers work to meet needs in all the regions of conflict.

Mission Network News

Schools in Burkina Faso

One year on from the coup in Burkina Faso, one-quarter of the nation's schools are still closed, mainly because of increased dangers through an escalation in violence. But one Christian organisation is determined to keep its Village of Opportunity school open. It provides vocational training in a gospel context to female students.

Mission network News

Few Christians in Libya

Libya is effectively a lawless land where the few local Christians and those passing through from other countries face extreme violence. With no central government to maintain law and order, Islamic extremist groups and organised crime groups wield power. They target and kidnap Christians, and some believers have been killed.

Large numbers of refugees from sub-Saharan Africa pass through Libya trying to reach Europe, among them many Christians. They are likely to meet harassment or be abducted to be used as slave labour by organised crime groups. Estimates suggest there are only about 180 believers who are Libyan nationals. But there may be 30,000 among migrant workers, people mainly from Egypt, Sub-Saharan Africa and Asia.

Open Doors