

### From Zimbabwe

*“I’m so grateful for receiving another box of books and Bibles from your gifted hands and generous friends. People here in this rundown country have trouble getting enough money simply to eat each day, and would never have money to buy Bibles. I am able to give them to the right people. Let me say there is no one who has single-handedly impacted my life and ministry as you have done. I train new preachers, teach the Scriptures, run a radio program, evangelise the lost, and pastor churches, and I honestly don’t know where I’d be without your support and prayers. My government may fleece me in what they charge me to collect the boxes, but the contents are worth the cost.”*

*Bridgeway*

### Suriname needs an awakening

The small country of Suriname on the north coast of South America is largely a mixture of Afro-Caribbean (nominal Christian), Indian (Hindu) and Indonesian (Muslim). The gospel has made little progress in the evangelising of those of non-Christian background, and Christians need a spiritual awakening. Arab Muslim missionaries are now active and a Muslim University has been built.

*Operation World*

### Moving forward in Burkina Faso

During a time of political upheaval in Burkina Faso – a resource-poor West African country of 23 million (64% Muslim) – a recent Evangelism Training Conference was attended by over 700 church leaders. Apart from the daily sessions of teaching, training and discussions, there were evening outreach sessions that saw another sixty people respond to the invitation to become followers of Jesus Christ. Despite hostile opponents, the gospel is being proclaimed and the church is growing in Burkina Faso.

*Kruse*



### Lebanon’s fragile existence

The regional war that began in October 2023 is causing great anxiety to people in Lebanon, a third of whom identify as Christians. Insecurity is especially acute among those in the south, from where many are fleeing. Lebanon already shelters 1.5 million refugees, mainly from Syria, including many Christians. All this puts additional strain on Lebanon’s economy, which was already nearing collapse. The entire region needs fervent prayer.

### Christians in Libya

*Very few Libyan nationals are Christians. Any Christians in the country are mostly workers from other countries or asylum-seekers on their way to Europe. In the chaos and violence of a strongly Islamic country (which has two rival governments and many well armed groups), Christians are vulnerable and poor. Most people will not rent premises to tenants who might use them for Christian worship. Even if Christians manage to meet for worship, they risk their lives.*

### Nepal’s church still growing

The church in Nepal continues to grow strongly. This is often resented by the Hindu majority as well as by Buddhists and followers of local animistic religions, but even anti-conversion laws have not stopped the growth of the church.

### Uzbekistan: some restrictions eased

*In the early decades after its creation in 1991, Uzbekistan was a repressive place for Christians. But with the election of a new president in 2016, state hostility towards Christian converts from Islam lessened and house meetings were no longer targeted by police. The number of converts and the number of churches granted official registration are slowly increasing, though opposition from local Muslim communities can still be troublesome.*

### Baptisms in Mauritania

In November 2023 fifteen believers in Mauritania, West Africa, were arrested when a video of a baptism ceremony became public. Mauritanian law lays down the death sentence for any citizen who leaves Islam, but in answer to urgent prayer, the fifteen believers, all converts from Islam, were released without charge. The focus of prayer now is that Mauritanian laws that criminalise being a Christian will be repealed.

*Barnabas Fund*

## The Fulani of Niger and Nigeria

Fulanis are a tribal people found mostly in the neighbouring West African countries of Niger and Nigeria. The northern of the two countries, Niger, lies largely in the Sahara Desert, has a population of about 25 million and is 97% Muslim. Nigeria, to the south, has a population of around 200 million (by far the largest in Africa), of whom half identify as Christian and almost half as Muslim. But the aggression and brutality of many Fulani in Nigeria have given their tribe a bad name. The so-called Fulani herdsmen are in reality an Islamic terrorist group who, in collaboration with Boko Haram, have overrun Christian regions across northern and central Nigeria, burning and murdering without any serious intervention from the national (Muslim-led) government.

In neighbouring Niger, however, growing numbers of Fulani are turning to Christ. About twenty years ago a vibrant outreach ministry began through the initiative of a man who first heard the gospel from foreign missionaries. When his own family and others of his tribal friends became Christians, they formed an evangelistic group that has moved around the country proclaiming the gospel with much apparent blessing. They estimate the number of converts to be in the thousands.

But whereas many of Niger's Fulani are open to the gospel, large numbers of militants aggressively oppose the gospel. People who become followers of Christ know they will face opposition somewhere. Because literacy in Niger is low, local evangelists and pastors make extensive use of solar-powered audio Bibles in sharing the gospel and discipling believers.

*Voice of the Martyrs*

## Christians in Gaza today

*News from Gaza indicates that of the resident Christians in Gaza (fewer than one thousand), twenty have been killed and most of the rest are sheltering in two church buildings in the Old City area. Their constant concern is to maintain their supplies of food and medicines.*

*Mission Network News*

## War in Sudan: no end in sight

Sudan's warring generals told a UN political mission to 'pack up and go home.' As global attention is on the wars in Ukraine and Gaza, atrocities in Sudan go unnoticed. Hastily dug mass graves confirmed by satellite imagery give proof of Darfur genocide. In one year Sudan's civil war has displaced over seven million people. Most aid groups are Islamic and deny help to Christians who have come from a Muslim background. But Sudanese Christians and international Christian aid agencies are distributing food and other necessities. They are also bringing much-needed hope through the gospel. Among the Masalit tribe of the Darfur region, a dozen believers have started a house church among Masalit refugees.

*BF*

## The challenges of Yemen

Among countries closed to the gospel, Yemen is one of the world's most difficult. There are few Christians among its 34 million people, but these Christians are keen to share their faith in spite of the risks. Work is progressing on a translation of the Bible into the people's heart language, and new worship songs are being written.

Also the gospel is penetrating through radio. The local partner to a British-based broadcaster receives 1200 responses per month. Most Christians in Yemen are isolated and, because of government surveillance, face great risks if they try to visit or meet for fellowship.

*FEBC/MNN*

## Reaching Portugal's children

The Bible is largely a forgotten book in Portugal, a nominally Catholic country where very few school children even attend religious education classes. Some years ago the Bible Society, concerned that most children are going through school without ever hearing about Jesus, set itself an ambitious goal to give one million of Portugal's 1.7 million children at least one opportunity to learn who Jesus is. Through the school system, it distributed the 16-page *Action Bible*, a small book telling the story of Jesus in a graphic style easily understood by children in the 4-14 age bracket. Pray that the sowing of the seed will generate interest among this needy generation.

*Sower*

## Life in Bangladesh

*The Prime Minister of Bangladesh, at the age of 76, has been elected to her fourth consecutive term in office (and fifth term overall). Despite unrest among opposition political groups, the prime minister maintains a policy of protecting the rights of Christians and other non-Muslim minorities. So far her government has paid for the restoration of 84 church buildings and partly funded another 643 church building projects. She has reaffirmed the equality of all Bangladeshi citizens.*

*Barnabas Fund*