

Give thanks for Answered prayer

One hundred and forty children with little or no access to a Sunday school have had the rare opportunity to meet other Christian children and learn about Jesus at a children's camp organised by Open Doors – thanks to those who regularly pray for and support children of the persecuted church.

Thirteen-year-old Imran (BOTTOM RIGHT) is part of a community of new believers from Muslim backgrounds in Bangladesh. His church is relatively young and there is no Sunday school yet – the focus is on ministering to the adults.

But at the children's camp, which is organised every year by Open Doors, he was given the chance to learn about God's love the fun way – through crafts, drawing, colouring, Bible storytelling and quizzes, worship, stage play, and outdoor games – and to meet with other Christian children his age.

The theme of the camp was Mark 10:14: "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these."



"I enjoyed all the activities here!" said Imran. "I'm returning home with a great hope that Jesus loves me and He is always with me. I have no fear or doubts in Him."

"I'm returning home with a great hope that Jesus loves me"

As a reminder of this hope, Imran was given a Bible storybook at the end of the camp.

PRAY

Please pray for Imran and the other children who attended the camp. Pray that they will continue to grow in their faith and find ways to meet with other Christian children. Pray also that churches in Bangladesh will take good care of the younger generations of the Bangladeshi church. They, too, belong to the kingdom of God.



WORLD WATCH LIST

6 ERITREA



The leaders of Eritrea and Ethiopia have declared an end to the state of war that has existed between the two countries since 1998.

Embassies will be reopened, flight links restored and direct phone calls allowed. Landlocked Ethiopia will look to start using Eritrea's Red Sea ports. "We can imagine that the decision the prime minister of Ethiopia took was not a simple one," Eritrea's President Afewerki was quoted as saying. "But we can assure you we will face the future together."

Open Doors' Field Director for the work in the region said: "We thank our supporters for faithfully praying over many years for both Eritrea and Ethiopia. These developments are the result of those prayers. But the work is not done yet.

"We ask that people join us in continued fervent prayer for successful normalisation of relations between the two countries. Please pray for God's wisdom for the leaders and that He will bring hope and encouragement to the church that has been deeply affected by the enmity that existed between the two countries. We also look forward to seeing Ethiopia take up a robust role in supporting the persecuted church in Eritrea and work towards the release of all imprisoned for their religious beliefs."

PRAY

Lord Jesus, we praise You for bringing an end to the war between Eritrea and Ethiopia. Please continue to give wisdom to President Afewerki and Prime Minister Abiy as they work towards peaceful relations between their countries. We pray that this will lead to an improvement in the human rights situation in Eritrea in particular, and for greater religious freedom in both countries so that Your people may be free to worship You in peace.

PRAY THROUGH THE WORLD WATCH LIST

Sign up for weekly emails and we will send you a written prayer for a country on the list each week along with prayer requests from the persecuted church. Go to www.opendoorsuk.org



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OpenDoors

prayer diary

60 years of serving persecuted Christians

August 2018



"HE TENDS HIS FLOCK LIKE A SHEPHERD: HE GATHERS THE LAMBS IN HIS ARMS AND CARRIES THEM CLOSE TO HIS HEART."

Isaiah 40:11

PRAY

Horn of Africa



Wednesday 1 August

Muktar* leads a group of secret believers in a dangerous area of the Horn of Africa. "Our vision is to reach the Somali people and plant churches among them," he says. Pray for his protection - taking on this role makes you a target for extremists.

Thursday 2 August

Open Doors helps believers like Muktar with financial support and training to help them be more effective in their ministry to secret believers. Pray for safety and wisdom for those involved in this ministry.

Friday 3 August – Somalia

Foreign jihadists and the militant group al-Shabaab, who have control over much of rural Somalia, target and kill those suspected of converting to Christianity. Pray that their influence would wane and that the Lord would turn their hearts to His love.

Saturday 4 August – Somalia

Pray for a Somali sister fighting for custody of her 11-year-old son. While he was living with her ex-husband, the boy was being exposed to drugs and alcohol, facing emotional abuse, and being denied education, so she took him into hiding. Her ex-husband is now threatening to kill them. Pray for her as she prepares to go to court for full custody.

Sunday 5 August – North-east Kenya

The militant group al-Shabaab has killed Christians, destroyed churches and forced Christians to flee their homes. Pray for protection for the church in this region and courage to continue sharing the gospel.

Monday 6 August – North-east Kenya

The church here has limited capacity to provide training and trauma support to persecuted Christians. Pray that Open Doors' Trauma Skills training and Standing Strong Through the Storm courses will equip the church to be resilient in the face of opposition.



Tuesday 7 August – Eritrea

Give thanks for the release of Pastor Ogbamichael Teklaheimanot after 13 years in prison. Ask the Lord to heal him physically and spiritually as he recovers from his imprisonment.

Wednesday 8 August – Djibouti

Djiboutian believers cannot openly go to church. Pray for wisdom for secret workers coming alongside new believers and pray for opportunities for fellowship and discipleship.

**Name changed for security reasons*

West Africa



Thursday 9 August – Niger

When Habou chose to follow Jesus, his family accused him of bringing shame on them. His younger brother beat him so badly he spent almost two weeks in hospital. "I survived by God's grace alone," he told Open Doors visitors. He still suffers pain. Pray for his full recovery.

Friday 10 August – Guinea

Mary came to faith in Jesus from an African Tribal background. After she gave some of the land she inherited to the church to build a meeting place, she was attacked, and her property and produce destroyed. Two of her children had to drop out of school. Ask the Lord to strengthen Mary and provide for her family.

Saturday 11 August – Mali

Najim and her two sons were detained by jihadists in the 2012 militant uprising in northern Mali. They were released, but one of her sons was so badly tortured that he is now mute and deaf. The family fled to the south where Open Doors rented a house for them. Pray for God's healing from trauma.

Sunday 12 August – Nigeria

Pray for the release of Leah Sharibu (15), abducted by Boko Haram from her school in Dapchi in February. Open Doors partners recently visited her family to pray with them. Pray for God's peace to surround them.

Monday 13 August – Nigeria

Over 100 of the girls abducted from their school in Chibok in 2014 remain in captivity. Pray for continued urgency for those working to get the girls released, and ask the Lord to protect and sustain the girls in their faith.

Tuesday 14 August – Nigeria

Pastor Obida was one of 50 Christians killed when Fulani herders attacked two Christian villages in Taraba state earlier this year. Pray for God's healing and provision for his wife Comfort (RIGHT) and her four children, and for all those who lost loved ones in the attack.



Wednesday 15 August – Cameroon

Djibril*, a believer from a Muslim background, was falsely accused and imprisoned for his faith in Jesus. He was recently released, and his faith is still strong, but he has been physically weakened by his time in prison. Ask God to strengthen him and protect him from those who accused him.

PRAY FOR THE MIDDLE EAST

Thursday 16 August – Iraq

Since the start of the school summer holidays, thousands more families have been returning home to the Nineveh Plain after four years of living in displacement. Pray for the church leaders and their teams helping these families to return, and thank God for the many Open Doors supporters around the world whose prayers and gifts are making this work possible.

Friday 17 August – Iraq

Give thanks that Noeh (13), who was displaced from his home in Karamles by the so-called Islamic State, has passed his level 7 exams! Pray for him and his family as they plan to return to their house over the summer. "Noeh showed me the house, together with his parents," says an Open Doors partner. "They are very happy they can move back in."

Saturday 18 August – Iraq

Pray for churches running activities for children and youth over the summer. Pray that they will create space for children to have fun, make friends and encounter the love of Jesus.

Sunday 19 August – Iraq

The key factor that keeps young Christians in Iraq is the availability of jobs. Pray that there will be enough opportunities for Christian youth to find work and to earn their own living.

Monday 20 August – Syria

Churches involved in relief work have asked Open Doors to continue to support the neediest families. The elderly are especially vulnerable as many of their adult children have left the country. Pray for wisdom for local churches partnering with Open Doors to coordinate the relief work.

Tuesday 21 August – Syria

Pray for a group of Muslim-background believers who fled Afrin when it was invaded by the Turkish military. In May they began to meet again in a tent-church. Thank God for this meeting place, and pray for the pastor of the church. Pray that Afrin will soon be safe enough for them to return home.

Wednesday 22 August – Syria

Many Christian homes need restoring. Pray that churches will know which families to prioritise. "In our area about 100 homes need to be reconstructed," says a church leader. "Christian families should not go elsewhere just because they have no home to live in - that would empty our city of Christians."

Thursday 23 August – Syria

Pastor Musa* and Pastor Abdalla are planning to open activity centres in their churches in Aleppo, to bring new hope to both adults and children. Ask God to use these centres of hope to renew the faith and courage of many Syrians.

Secret Children

Friday 24 August – Myanmar

Pray for churches holding camps for children and young people. Government restrictions mean some events have to be held in remote locations. Pray for protection, spiritual nourishment and great fun for those who attend.

Saturday 25 August – Central African Republic

Pray for Jeovani (13), who lost his legs when Seleka rebels bombed his church. He recently had surgery to adapt the amputation to his growing bones. "We are amazed by his determination," says our contact. "Immediately after he got home, he asked his mother to prepare his wheelchair so he could go to school the very next day."



Sunday 26 August - Ethiopia

Give thanks that Wasihun (SEE COVER), whose father was murdered in front of him, was able to attend a youth camp for children impacted by persecution, along with his sister Bachu. Ask God to continue to heal and encourage them.

Monday 27 August – Tajikistan

When Hakim* became a believer, he told his mother about Jesus. His elder brother found out and beat him so badly that Hakim fled. He now lives with another family member. "Please pray for me," he says, "and I will try to stand all these difficulties for the sake of Isa Massih and with His strength."

Tuesday 28 August – China

Praise God that the eldest son of imprisoned Uyghur pastor, Alimjan Yimit, recently completed his college exams. "It went very well. Praise the Lord!" says a local source. "Alimjan is very excited for his son to start a new chapter in his life."

Wednesday 29 August – China

Pray for 45 church leaders who attended a training retreat to consider new ways to disciple young people. Pray that more pastors will accept the challenge of reaching China's youth.

Thursday 30 August – India

Pray for a young boy who was separated from his family when they were chased out of their village for accepting Jesus. They cannot go back to the village to search for him. Ask God to make a way for the boy to be returned to his family.

Friday 31 August – UK and Ireland

In response to rising persecution in Asia and the Middle East, many of our local church partners are stepping up their work on the field, and are asking us also to step up our support. Pray for wisdom for the Open Doors team as we consider how to respond effectively to this plea.