

# Prayer Alert

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Then a shoot will grow from the stump of Jesse, and a branch from his roots will bear fruit. The Spirit of the Lord will rest on him - a Spirit of wisdom and understanding, a Spirit of counsel and strength, a Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord. His delight will be in the fear of the Lord (Isaiah 11:1-5)

We are pleased to enclose this week's edition of Prayer Alert.

Many of us will be taking part in 'Shine Your Light' - this weekend! Thousands of people, groups, and churches will be sharing the Christmas message of hope and joy across the UK. See also this interesting article about [Shine Jesus Shine](#).

Let's pray for the Chile presidential election (second round) on Sunday 14 December - See the Prayer Alert 2025 [elections prayer guide](#).



**JOIN US ON INTERSEED!**  
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We invite the Prayer Alert community to join us on the free online Interseed House of Prayer app where we are praying and sharing thoughts on the weekly prayer guide issues and themes.

Interseed is available on the Android and iOS platforms. More info [HERE](#).

## Invitation - to serve with the PA team!

How would you like to join our Prayer Alert team? We are a group of volunteers based in different parts of England. If you appreciate what we do and are confident with browsing the internet, discovering relevant articles and basic editing, we would love to hear from you! Please hit 'reply', introduce yourself, and we will be in touch.

Thank you for partnering with us in praying for the nations.

David Fletcher and the Prayer Alert team.

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## Praise Reports

### [X Factor finalist discovers the joy of faith](#)

Singer-songwriter Talia Dean, once an X Factor finalist, discovered that fame brought none of the fulfilment she longed for. Though achieving what many dream of, she found herself exhausted, unwell, and deeply empty — 'an endless search to fill a void you can never fill with claps and cheers or money.' On New Year's Eve 2023, after years of feeling low and searching for 'something,' she wandered into a churchyard and desperately prayed for a sign of warmth or love. God answered through the unexpected kindness of strangers - the vicar's wife and daughters, who invited her in, prayed for her, and, as she describes it, filled the kitchen with heavenly light. Later that day, she asked the Lord for one more sign, and sunlight broke through the grey rainclouds into her room. Talia has now joyfully returned to her Catholic roots, creating worship music, including her BBC-performed song 'I will praise Your name'. She longs for others to discover faith, direction, and the soul-filling joy she has found in Christ.

Praise: God for meeting Talia in her brokenness and drawing many other artists to Christ's transforming love. (Psalm 16:11)  
More: [www.godreports.com/2025/12/x-factor-finalist-discovers-joy-of-faith-emptiness-of-fame/](http://www.godreports.com/2025/12/x-factor-finalist-discovers-joy-of-faith-emptiness-of-fame/)

### [Turning Point USA now in over 500 Texas high schools](#)

Texas governor Greg Abbott has announced that over 500 high schools across the state now host chapters of Turning Point USA's Club America programme, a conservative student movement designed to promote constitutional principles, traditional values, and civic responsibility among young people. At a press conference, he highlighted the growing need for such programmes in shaping future leaders. He honoured the legacy of Charlie Kirk, TPUSA's founder, who was assassinated last September, recognising his impact in inspiring students to stand for moral clarity and America's founding ideals. Club America now includes more than 1,200 chapters nationwide, teaching principles such as fiscal responsibility, free markets, and limited government. Several other states, including Florida and Oklahoma, have pledged support for students wishing to establish their own chapters.

Praise: God for courageous students rising to champion truth, freedom, and righteous leadership across America's schools. (1 Corinthians 16:13)

More: [www.christianpost.com/news/turning-point-usa-launches-chapters-at-500-high-schools-in-texas.html](http://www.christianpost.com/news/turning-point-usa-launches-chapters-at-500-high-schools-in-texas.html)

## British Isles

### NHS under huge strain from spike in 'super flu'

Hospitalisations for influenza in England have surged by more than 50% in a week, with NHS leaders warning that the current 'super flu' wave shows no signs of peaking. An average of 2,660 patients per day were admitted with flu up to 7 December, a figure NHS England says is still rising and could exceed 5,000 by the 14th - equivalent to filling three hospitals. Children aged five to 14 currently have the highest positivity rates, while the sickest patients tend to be adults over 75 and children under five. Experts attribute the unusually early and severe spike to a mutated strain of H3N2, meaning population immunity may be lower than usual. Hospitalisations for norovirus are also increasing, adding further pressure as the NHS faces winter strain and the possibility of a resident doctors' strike. Leaders have urged the British Medical Association to accept the Government's offer and avoid additional disruption during an already critical period.

Pray: that strength, protection, and healing surround patients, staff, and families amid rising illness and severe winter pressures. (Jeremiah 17:14)

More: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c8r30787e76o>

### £3.5bn plan to halve homelessness unveiled

The Government has unveiled a £3.5bn national plan to end homelessness, aiming to halve long-term rough sleeping by 2029/30. Housing secretary Steve Reed described homelessness as 'one of the most profound challenges we face', promising a future where it is 'rare, brief, and not repeated'. The strategy includes a new duty requiring prisons, hospitals, and social care to work together, preventing people from being discharged straight onto the streets. It also pledges to halve first-night homelessness among prison leavers, reduce the number of families living in B&B accommodation, and direct £50m to councils to create tailored action plans. A £124m supported housing scheme is expected to help 2,500 people off the streets. However, charities warn the plan falls short, noting that only £100m of the funding is new and highlighting major gaps, particularly around prevention, frozen housing benefit, refugee support, and the lack of available social homes. MPs and homelessness organisations say the strategy appears rushed and insufficient to meet the scale of need, with record numbers of people (especially children) expected to be homeless this Christmas.

Pray: for compassionate policies, sustainable housing solutions, and protection for every vulnerable person facing homelessness this winter. (Proverbs 14:21b)

More: [news.sky.com/story/ministers-falling-short-with-3-5bn-plan-to-halve-homelessness-charities-warn-13481848](https://news.sky.com/story/ministers-falling-short-with-3-5bn-plan-to-halve-homelessness-charities-warn-13481848)

### Reeves admits Budget leaks were damaging and unacceptable

Rachel Reeves has condemned a series of Treasury leaks ahead of her recent Budget, calling them 'inaccurate, damaging, and unacceptable'. She insisted the disclosure suggesting that she had abandoned plans for an income tax rise was not an authorised briefing but a leak, which undermined confidence in her commitment to restoring fiscal 'headroom.' Reeves confirmed that a full inquiry had begun, alongside a review of Treasury security processes to prevent further breaches. She expressed frustration at the volume of speculation surrounding the Budget, stressing the need to restore integrity to fiscal announcements. MPs also questioned her on her decision to freeze income tax thresholds for three more years. She denied breaking Labour's manifesto pledge, arguing that the promise referred specifically to tax rates, while acknowledging that the freeze would mean working people paying more. She said she and the prime minister had jointly decided the measure, rejecting suggestions she had been overruled.

Pray: for integrity, transparency, and godly stewardship as leaders manage national finances amid public scrutiny and economic pressures. (Proverbs 10:9a)

More: [www.thetimes.com/uk/politics/article/rachel-reeves-budget-leaks-treasury-tvm2pd7kw](https://www.thetimes.com/uk/politics/article/rachel-reeves-budget-leaks-treasury-tvm2pd7kw)

### Navy chief warns: fund defence or risk losing Atlantic to Russia

General Sir Gwyn Jenkins, head of the Royal Navy, has issued a stark warning that the UK risks losing its long-held maritime advantage in the North Atlantic unless defence funding increases urgently. He said Britain is 'holding on, but not by much', as Russia invests billions into rebuilding its naval power - especially its Northern Fleet - even while fighting in Ukraine. Russian activity in the North Atlantic has risen by 30% in two years, including incidents such as the Yantar spy ship shining a laser at RAF pilots. Jenkins warned that the greater threat lies beneath the surface, where vital undersea cables and energy pipelines are vulnerable to hostile interference. The Navy itself is facing severe strain: more vessels are tied up in port than operational, recruitment shortfalls are acute, and years of cuts and failed procurement programmes have left the fleet hollowed out. While avoiding direct criticism of the Government, Jenkins highlighted the widening gap between ministerial promises and available funding. He outlined a vision for a modernised 'hybrid navy', though it would not be fully ready until 2029 - a timeline some fear may be too slow given rising global threats.

Pray: for strengthened national defence, wise leadership, and protection over the UK and allied nations amid increasing global threats. (Psalm 18:2a)

More: [news.sky.com/story/royal-navy-chief-gives-stark-warning-fund-defence-or-risk-losing-atlantic-to-russia-13481131](https://news.sky.com/story/royal-navy-chief-gives-stark-warning-fund-defence-or-risk-losing-atlantic-to-russia-13481131)

### Man sentenced for attempted pipe bomb attack on GAA club

John Wilson, 59, has been sentenced to three years for attempting to plant two crude pipe bombs on cars at the East Belfast GAA training grounds in August 2020. The devices, intended to intimidate members of the newly formed club, failed to detonate. The judge said the act involved the 'deliberate use of explosives to cause fear and distress' and was motivated by a sectarian aim to stop the public using the pitches. However, he ruled that the offence did not meet the threshold for terrorism charges. Wilson, who continues to deny all involvement, was arrested the day after anonymously calling police to report the devices. The court heard emotional testimony from a club founder who described the attack as 'beyond cruel'. The judge acknowledged Wilson's good work history and family life but noted that the planning and intent behind the offence demonstrated clear determination. Wilson will serve half his sentence in custody and half on licence.

Pray: for healing in Belfast, protection from sectarian hatred, and peace to overcome cycles of fear and division. (Matthew 5:9)

More: [www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c62vnqvxre1o](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c62vnqvxre1o)

## Last-minute offer may avert strike by resident doctors

A major strike by resident doctors in England, due to begin on 17 December, may be averted after ministers offered the British Medical Association a new deal centred on expanding training opportunities rather than pay. The BMA has agreed to put the offer to members in an online survey closing on 15 December. If members support it, the five-day walkout could be cancelled. The proposal includes 4,000 additional specialist training posts by 2028, with 1,000 available next year, and measures to prioritise UK-trained doctors for competitive roles, as well as covering exam fees and other expenses. However, it contains no pay increase; health secretary Wes Streeting insisted that pay negotiations are closed following nearly 30% rises over three years. Criticising the BMA for not immediately suspending strike plans, he warned that hospitals must now begin cancelling appointments to prepare for potential disruption during a difficult winter. The BMA says strikes have forced government action but stresses the offer does not address long-term pay erosion. If members indicate the deal is insufficient, the strike will proceed.

Pray: for a resolution that protects patients, strengthens the NHS workforce, and brings fairness and peace to strained negotiations. (Philippians 4:5a)

More: [www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c4gk3d72mvzo](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c4gk3d72mvzo)

## UK teacher fired for telling child Britain is still a Christian state

A primary school teacher who told a Muslim pupil that 'Britain is still a Christian state' was dismissed and reported to safeguarding authorities after the comment was deemed hurtful to Islam, triggering a police investigation into an alleged hate crime. The incident occurred after the teacher reprimanded boys for washing their feet in school sinks — an action linked to prayer preparation. He reportedly explained that the King is head of the Church of England and that Islam is a minority religion in the UK. Though the police later dropped the case, the school dismissed him, and a safeguarding officer recommended he be barred from working with children. The teacher successfully appealed the ban and is now suing the local authority with the support of the Free Speech Union (FSU). Lawyers argue that prayer had been informally banned on the playground and that expectations around behaviour had been unclear. Lord Toby Young of the FSU said it was alarming that stating an 'incontestably true' fact could lead to such consequences, warning of growing threats to free speech within education.

Pray: for truth, fairness, and protection for teachers facing hostility when upholding Christian identity and legitimate free speech. (Ephesians 4:15a)

More: [premierchristian.news/en/news/article/teacher-sacked-for-telling-child-britain-is-still-a-christian-state](http://premierchristian.news/en/news/article/teacher-sacked-for-telling-child-britain-is-still-a-christian-state)

## Europe

### Ukraine: Zelensky's response to Trump's criticisms

Donald Trump's push to end the war in Ukraine is increasingly shaped by his impatience with Volodymyr Zelenskyy and European leaders who he believes are obstructing peace and future US–Russia economic ties. Stating that 'Russia has the upper hand' (a claim [disputed by experts https://edition.cnn.com/2025/12/09/politics/ukraine-russia-battlefield-situation-trump](https://edition.cnn.com/2025/12/09/politics/ukraine-russia-battlefield-situation-trump)), he insisted Zelensky must 'play ball'. Meanwhile, Zelensky and European partners worked to revise the US-led peace proposal, removing provisions which they considered unacceptable and stressing the need for firm security guarantees. Many commentators, alarmed by Trump's pressure on Kyiv and his favourable posture toward Moscow, warn that conceding to Russia would reward aggression and endanger broader European security. In reply to Trump's claim that Zelensky is using the war as an excuse to avoid holding elections, Zelensky has offered to do so if security could be guaranteed, although it would mean altering the constitution: [see https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cn511474yv7o](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cn511474yv7o)

Pray: that Trump and Zelensky, and other leaders, will have wisdom in knowing how to achieve peace without rewarding aggression or oppression. (Proverbs 24:5)

More: [edition.cnn.com/2025/12/09/politics/ukraine-russia-battlefield-situation-trump](https://edition.cnn.com/2025/12/09/politics/ukraine-russia-battlefield-situation-trump)

### Responses to Trump's criticisms of 'weak, decaying' Europe

Donald Trump has intensified his criticism of Europe, portraying the continent as weak, 'decaying', and threatened by immigration. Using inflammatory language, he echoed 'great replacement' conspiracy themes, claiming that European countries risk becoming non-viable due to immigration. He insisted European cities such as London and Paris have fundamentally altered, and once again made a personal attack on London's mayor Sadiq Khan. His remarks followed the recent release of a new US national security strategy warning of Europe's supposed 'civilisational erasure' and signalling support for nationalist parties. European leaders reacted with dismay: Germany's chancellor Friedrich Merz rejected the idea that Europe needs saving, calling parts of the strategy unacceptable. Pope Leo XIV also cautioned that the shift in US policy risks damaging the long-standing transatlantic alliance, and European Council president António Costa warned Trump not to interfere in Europe's affairs ([see https://www.theguardian.com/world/2025/dec/08/europe-leaders-no-longer-deny-relationship-with-us-changed](https://www.theguardian.com/world/2025/dec/08/europe-leaders-no-longer-deny-relationship-with-us-changed)).

Pray: that US and European leaders will refrain from confrontation and rhetoric which fuels division and undermines unity. (Psalm 15:2)

More: [www.theguardian.com/us-news/2025/dec/09/trump-hints-walking-away-ukraine-calls-europe-weak-decaying](https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2025/dec/09/trump-hints-walking-away-ukraine-calls-europe-weak-decaying)

## Worldwide

### Israel again the deadliest country for journalists

Reporters Without Borders (RSF) report that 2025 was the third consecutive year in which Israel was identified as the deadliest country for journalists; 29 Palestinian reporters were killed amid Israel's ongoing military campaign in Gaza. The organisation stated that 67 journalists were killed worldwide, noting that many deaths occurred in conflict zones where reporters were 'targeted for their work'. It criticised what it called a failure of international bodies to protect journalists, and highlighted a global decline in governmental courage to defend press freedom. Mexico ranked second with nine journalist deaths, while Ukraine and Sudan also remained highly dangerous environments for media workers. RSF also said that 503 journalists are currently imprisoned globally, with China (121), Russia (48), and Myanmar (47) leading in detentions; 135 journalists are missing, and twenty are being held hostage. Press freedom groups continue to condemn Israel's restriction of independent media access to Gaza, where monitoring groups claim that hundreds of journalists have been killed over the past two years.

Pray: that protection, justice, and freedom be upheld for journalists risking their lives to report truth in conflict zones. (Psalm 12:5)  
More: [www.aljazeera.com/news/2025/12/9/israel-the-top-killer-of-journalists-worldwide-once-again-says-rsf-report](http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2025/12/9/israel-the-top-killer-of-journalists-worldwide-once-again-says-rsf-report)

### **'War against drugs': USA confirms double strike on a suspect vessel**

US military strikes on alleged Venezuelan drug boats are facing intense criticism after reports that a 'double tap' attack on 2 September killed survivors clinging to a burning vessel. The White House confirmed a second strike was ordered by Admiral Frank Bradley, saying it was lawful and authorised by defence secretary Pete Hegseth, though officials denied he instructed forces to 'kill everybody'. More than eighty people have died in similar Caribbean operations since September, yet the USA has provided little hard evidence of drug trafficking. Lawmakers from both parties are demanding investigations, with some Democrats arguing the second strike might constitute a war crime if incapacitated survivors were deliberately targeted. The administration insists it is acting in self-defence against 'narco-terrorist' groups, while Venezuela has condemned the strikes as unlawful aggression.

Pray: that truth, accountability, and compassion guide decision-makers confronting allegations of unlawful violence and escalating tensions. (Psalm 89:14)  
More: [www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c0r95q9kv1go](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c0r95q9kv1go)

### **Thailand / Cambodia: more than half a million displaced by renewed fighting**

Fighting between Thailand and Cambodia has escalated into a third consecutive day of violence, forcing more than half a million civilians to flee their homes. Both governments accuse each other of reigniting the conflict, which has already killed soldiers and civilians and triggered mass evacuations from border provinces. Reports describe rockets landing near hospitals, air raids conducted by Thai F-16 jets, and Cambodian artillery targeting Thai territory, leaving thousands in makeshift shelters with limited supplies. The clashes are the deadliest since five days of fighting in July which killed dozens and displaced some 300,000 people on both sides of the border before a shaky truce was agreed, following an intervention by Donald Trump. Trump said late on Tuesday that he would make a phone call to stop the renewed fighting. Even so, analysts say that the lack of willingness to negotiate suggests the conflict may be prolonged. Latest news - three civilians have been killed inside Thailand: [see https://news.sky.com/story/first-civilians-killed-in-thailand-as-conflict-with-cambodia-erupts-again-following-ceasefire-13482025](https://news.sky.com/story/first-civilians-killed-in-thailand-as-conflict-with-cambodia-erupts-again-following-ceasefire-13482025)

Pray: that displaced families will find safety, protection, and peace as violence threatens their lives and homes. (Psalm 46:1)  
More: [www.aljazeera.com/news/2025/12/10/thailand-cambodia-border-clashes-enter-third-day-as-500000-flee-fighting](http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2025/12/10/thailand-cambodia-border-clashes-enter-third-day-as-500000-flee-fighting)

### **Minneapolis: pepper spray used on protesters against crackdown on Somalis**

A confrontation between federal agents and residents in a Somali neighbourhood of Minneapolis has heightened fear and tension within the community. Witnesses reported that ICE agents used pepper spray to disperse a crowd of protesters after checking identifications in restaurants, on the streets, and at a senior housing complex. The crackdown follows the decision by Donald Trump to end temporary protected status for Somalis, calling them 'garbage' and saying he does not want them in the country. The move has drawn denunciations from leaders of the Somali community and governor Tim Walz. About 84,000 of the 260,000 Somalis in the country live in the Minneapolis-St Paul area, the overwhelming majority of them US citizens. Over half were born in the U.S., and 87 per cent of those born elsewhere are naturalised citizens. Federal officials justify the operation as targeting criminals, giving details of nine criminals who have been arrested recently, but local leaders argue that such actions unfairly stigmatise an entire community.

Pray: that communities facing fear and injustice would be protected and strengthened by advocates of peace and compassion. (Psalm 34:17)  
More: [www.independent.co.uk/news/world/americas/minneapolis-ice-protests-immigration-trump-b2881554.html](http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/americas/minneapolis-ice-protests-immigration-trump-b2881554.html)

### **Sudan: former Janjaweed commander sentenced by ICC for Darfur war crimes**

The International Criminal Court (ICC) has sentenced former Janjaweed commander Ali Muhammad Ali Abd-Al-Rahman, better known as Ali Kushayb, to twenty years in prison for war crimes and crimes against humanity committed in Darfur in 2003–04. Convicted on 27 charges, he is the first person tried by the ICC for atrocities linked to the Darfur conflict. Judges found that he both ordered and personally participated in attacks aimed at 'wiping out' non-Arab communities, including killings, mass displacement and widespread sexual violence. Survivors testified to villages being burned and families destroyed. The ruling comes as Sudan faces renewed conflict, with the Rapid Support Forces (successors to the Janjaweed) accused of carrying out similar abuses today. While the ICC hopes the sentence will offer justice and deterrence, experts question its immediate impact, noting that millions of survivors remain displaced and key figures, including former president Omar al-Bashir, are still wanted. The verdict nevertheless stands as a significant acknowledgment of long-ignored suffering.

Pray: that enduring justice and protection reach Sudanese communities still suffering violence, displacement, and deep wounds from past atrocities. (Psalm 103:6)  
More: [www.africanews.com/2025/12/09/sudanese-militia-leader-sentenced-to-20-years-for-darfur-atrocities/](http://www.africanews.com/2025/12/09/sudanese-militia-leader-sentenced-to-20-years-for-darfur-atrocities/)

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