



MCLEAN BIBLE CHURCH

GLOBAL  
OUTREACH 2025

# PRAYER GUIDE





## A NOTE FROM PASTOR DAVID PLATT

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Dear Church Family,

The progress of the gospel in the world is dependent upon the prayers of God's people in the church. God Himself has designed it this way. Jesus told us, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore, pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest" (Matthew 9:37-38). This prayer guide is intended to help our church family obey this command from Jesus. I encourage you not only to take one, but to use it daily and weekly. Use it alone, with your family, or with your Church Group.

As you use it to guide your prayers, I want to encourage you: Pray with faith! Pray with confidence that God is not only listening to you but also that you are participating with Him in the accomplishment of His purposes in the world. What a thought! What a privilege! Let us take full advantage of this opportunity we have been given to be a part of the spread of God's glory in the world, particularly among people and places where Jesus is not yet known, from our knees.

For His Glory,

*David Platt*

## A NOTE FROM GLOBAL OUTREACH

Global Outreach serves MBC by equipping and mobilizing church members to make disciples of Jesus Christ and multiply churches among all nations. One of the ways we accomplish this mission is through prayer. Prayer is the foundational work of missions because God is the author of salvation and the head of the Church. Through prayer, the Church participates in God's work to advance the gospel to the ends of the earth, and we prayerfully depend on Him. As Samuel Zwemer (1867-1952), a pioneer missionary to the Middle East, once said, "The history of missions is the history of answered prayer." We invite our MBC Church family to pray with us this year for our missionaries, our partners, and the countries where the gospel is growing or has yet to take root!

## HOW TO USE THIS PRAYER GUIDE

This prayer guide is organized into 52 weeks. The guide includes:

- A prayer entry for each MBC missionary.
- Prayer entries for MBC partner organizations and the people or region they serve.
- Prayer entries for the top unreached nations of the world, based on [joshuaproject.net](http://joshuaproject.net).

We encourage you to use these entries as you pray personally during your daily devotions, together as a family or with your housemates, and weekly as you gather with your Church Group. While we may not physically join with these gospel workers in their church-planting efforts, we can faithfully support them through prayer for the places and people God loves. Let's commit to this and celebrate the answers God will provide in 2025!

*\*To safeguard missionaries and partners serving in high-security regions, pseudonyms, regional references, and general statistics are used.*

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

WEEK		ENTRY	PAGE
1	Jan 1-4	REED & CLAIRE	1
2	Jan 5-11	MONGOLIA	2
3	Jan 12-18	THE BALKANS	3
4	Jan 19-25	IRAQ	4
5	Jan 26 - Feb 1	JAMES & GRACE	5
6	Feb 2-8	JAPAN	6
7	Feb 9-15	SPAIN	7
8	Feb 16-22	PAKISTAN	8
9	Feb 23 - Mar 1	KEN & RUTH	9
10	Mar 2-8	GREECE	10
11	Mar 9-15	NIGER	11
12	Mar 16-22	ALGERIA	12
13	Mar 23-29	HEATHER	13
14	Mar 30 - Apr 5	ETHIOPIA	14
15	Apr 6-12	KAZAKHSTAN	15
16	Apr 13-19	SOMALIA	16
17	Apr 20-26	MIRIAM	17
18	Apr 27 - May 3	NORTH KOREA	18
19	May 4-10	GLOBAL CRISES	19
20	May 11-17	LIBYA	20
21	May 18-24	DAVID & KRISTEN	21
22	May 25-31	ITALY	22
23	June 1-7	SAUDI ARABIA	23
24	June 8-14	NEPAL	24
25	June 15- 21	STEPHANY	25
26	June 22-28	NORTH AFRICA	26

WEEK		ENTRY	PAGE
27	June 29 - July 5	IRAN	27
28	July 6-12	MAURITANIA	28
29	July 13-19	JAMES & LYRIC	29
30	July 20-26	FRANCE	30
31	July 27 - Aug 2	DJIBOUTI	31
32	Aug 3-9	UZBEKISTAN	32
33	Aug 10-16	UAE	33
34	Aug 17-23	UKRAINE	34
35	Aug 24-30	AFGHANISTAN	35
36	Aug 31 - Sept 6	BANGLADESH	36
37	Sept 7-13	JOSEPH & JENNIFER	37
38	Sept 14-20	SRI LANKA	38
39	Sept 21-27	PORTUGAL	39
40	Sept 28 - Oct 4	YEMEN	40
41	Oct 5-11	CENTRAL ASIA	41
42	Oct 12-18	KENYA	42
43	Oct 19-25	MALDIVES	43
44	Oct 26 - Nov 1	TURKMENISTAN	44
45	Nov 2-8	BEN & ERIN	45
46	Nov 9-15	SOUTH ASIA	46
47	Nov 16-22	TAJIKISTAN	47
48	Nov 23-29	OMAN	48
49	Nov 30 - Dec 6	LEBANON	49
50	Dec 7-13	SOUTHEAST ASIA	50
51	Dec 14-20	TUNISIA	51
52	Dec 21-31	AZERBAIJAN	52

# REED & CLAIRE

SERVING IN THAILAND SINCE 2023

Major Religion:	Buddhism
Joshua Project Status:	Unreached
Percent Evangelical:	1.02% (1 in 98)

Reed and Claire were both raised in the DMV area and lived in northern Virginia for many years. Reed worked as a manager in a manufacturing company, and Claire was a teacher and reading specialist. They were each converted as adults. As faithful members of MBC Prince William, they served in Kid's Quest, Access, and Global Outreach. They have two children.

Reed and Claire had no plans to engage in global missions, but things dramatically shifted after an MBC short-term trip in 2019 when they developed an interest in serving overseas.

While they did not feel strongly about a specific people or place, they received counsel from the church, and the Lord provided an opportunity to serve in Thailand. They were commissioned as MBC missionaries and moved to Thailand in the summer of 2023.

In Thailand, Claire is serving as a teacher in an international school where she ministers to local children. Their family joined a church plant, where Reed is working with other missionaries to proclaim Christ. He is concentrating on learning the language over the next several years.

## Pray

- That God would grant more opportunities and courage to be intentional in reaching their community with the gospel.
- That God would help form deeper relationships with other members of the church.
- That God would bring more families with teenagers to join the church and foster Christ-centered connections for their teenagers.
- That God would provide motivation and perseverance to continue studying and learning the language.

### ENCOURAGEMENTS FROM 2024

Reed and Claire's first year in Thailand brought challenges and blessings. They saw answered prayers and church growth, welcoming new members and celebrating three baptisms.

Their organization completed three book translations and launched a website with gospel resources for Thai believers. Language learning went well, helping them build connections in the community. Though difficult moments arose, God used those times to strengthen their faith. Grateful for MBC's support and prayers, they eagerly anticipate what God will do in year two!

[Visit Joshua Project to learn more about the unreached in this region.](#)





# MONGOLIA

<b>Major Religion:</b>	Buddhism
<b>Joshua Project Status:</b>	Unreached
<b>Percent Evangelical:</b>	0.86% (1 in 116)

Mongolia, situated in East Asia between Russia and China, is renowned for its rugged landscape and nomadic lifestyle. While Buddhism is the dominant religion, the number of nonreligious individuals, particularly among the youth, is on the rise. Urbanization and modernization are contributing to a shift in values and beliefs, creating new opportunities for Christian outreach and engagement.

In Mongolia, MBC partners with Radstock. Radstock collaborates with local churches to advance the spread of the gospel. They have launched the In the Beginning book project, which aims to publish a storybook version of the biblical books Genesis and John in Mongolian dialects. This project highlights the unique nature of the biblical God, contrasting Him with other deities and showcasing Him as the eternal Creator who became incarnate in Jesus Christ.

The goal is to produce fifteen thousand copies of this book to be used as an evangelistic tool across the country. By bridging the narrative from Genesis to the incarnation of Jesus, the book is intended to connect with readers of all ages and lead them toward Jesus. This will serve as an invaluable resource for churches striving to reach and transform the lives of the lost in Mongolia.

## Pray

- That God would provide the funds needed to complete the book project.
- That God would move the hearts of Mongolians to turn to Jesus as the one true God.
- That God would bless the pastor and team overseeing the book project as they continue to minister in different places throughout Mongolia.



# THE BALKANS

<b>Major Religion:</b>	Islam & Christianity
<b>Joshua Project Status:</b>	Minimally reached
<b>Percent Evangelical:</b>	1.21% (1 in 83)

The Balkans, nestled in southeastern Europe, are a region rich in cultural diversity and history. This area, comprising eleven unique countries, has weathered numerous conflicts and divisions, shaping a complex yet fascinating historical narrative. Despite these challenges, the Balkans are valued for their stunning landscapes and vibrant, resilient cultures.

In the heart of this region, one MBC partner is committed to sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ in two specific Balkan countries. Their mission centers on holistic development, bringing hope and renewal through entrepreneurship and business initiatives in close partnership with healthy local churches. The team, a blend of national and international staff, lovingly navigates the region's diverse ethnic and religious landscape, fostering projects that bring both physical and spiritual progress to the communities they serve, many in a Muslim context.

Over the past decade, this partner has nurtured the growth of small businesses rooted in Christian principles, often in an environment overshadowed by corruption and political challenges. They achieve this through business coaching, where vetted Christian entrepreneurs walk alongside local clients, helping them bring their business plans to fruition. In 2024, they took a significant step forward by launching a program that addresses youth mental health from a compassionate Christian perspective, offering both awareness and practical support.

## Pray

- That God would strengthen the church in this region and that believers would faithfully follow Christ and shine brightly in the marketplace.
- That God would provide clients to join the entrepreneurship program and that they form long-term, gospel-oriented relationships with their coaches.
- That God would protect the youth of this region and that the online mental health resources would lead to discipleship relationships and life change.

Additionally, a faith and work initiative was created to help believers weave their Christian faith into their professional lives. This program, which includes an annual conference, monthly gatherings, and various resources, offers a warm, supportive community for those exploring how the gospel can impact every aspect of their lives. All of this supports local churches.





# IRAQ

<b>Major Religion:</b>	Islam
<b>Joshua Project Status:</b>	Unreached
<b>Percent Evangelical:</b>	0.28% (1 in 357)

Home to the biblical Babylonians and Assyrians, Iraq, the “cradle of civilization,” has endured immense challenges in recent decades. The aftermath of the Iraq War, the rise and fall of ISIS, and ongoing political instability have left the country in a prolonged state of recovery. Yet Iraq remains a land of remarkable resilience and hope.

Christians in Iraq, once a vibrant and historically significant community, have faced severe persecution, particularly in areas devastated by ISIS. Many churches were destroyed, and countless Christians were displaced or forced to flee. Although ISIS has been largely defeated, the scars of its brutal violence continue to affect communities across the nation.

Believers continue to face significant challenges, including ongoing security concerns and economic instability. While the Iraqi government is working to address these issues, progress is gradual, and many communities remain in need of ongoing support.

In recent years, there has been a slow but encouraging recovery. Local churches are actively engaged in rebuilding efforts, offering vital support to displaced families. There is also a renewed focus on interfaith dialogue and reconciliation as Iraq works to mend its fractured social fabric.

## Pray

- That God would bring healing and restoration to Iraq, enabling communities to rebuild and recover from the devastation of recent conflicts.
- That God would provide protection and strength to the Christian community, allowing them to worship freely and contribute to the nation’s healing.
- That God would grant wisdom and integrity to Iraq’s leaders, guiding them toward effective governance and justice for all citizens.
- That God would provide relief and opportunities for those displaced or economically affected, helping them find stability and hope in their daily lives.



# JAMES & GRACE

*Serving in the Arabian Peninsula Since 2024*

Major Religion:	Islam
Joshua Project Status:	Minimally reached
Percent Evangelical:	1.5% (1 in 67)

James and Grace began attending MBC Montgomery County in 2018 after moving to the DMV area from the Midwest. James worked as a physician, and Grace taught the Bible to women while working part-time as a researcher. As members of MBC, they served as Church Group leaders and as volunteers in the church nursery along with their two sons.

Their interest in serving among the unreached in the Middle East began over seven years ago. Grace was serving on their church's global outreach volunteer team; and in 2016, they attended a missions conference for health care workers. At that conference, as James puts it, "God hit me over the head" with the prospect of serving the unreached in countries that are typically closed to missionaries but open to professionals. Since that pivotal moment, their family continued to pursue the possibility of serving God overseas.

James and Grace chose to attend MBC in part because of its focus on missions and desire to make disciples of all nations. They were further equipped through the church, and in late 2023, God opened the door for James and Grace to move to the Arabian Peninsula through James's occupation. They have since become members at a healthy church and are transitioning to life abroad as they seek to proclaim Christ in this Muslim-majority context.

## Pray

- That God would continue to provide good friends for each member of the family.
- That God would encourage, strengthen, and give joy to James, making him a light and witness in his workplace.
- That God would grant guidance, wisdom, and provision for their older son as he applies to universities for the fall of 2025.
- That God would give each family member opportunities, boldness, and clarity to share the gospel.

## ENCOURAGEMENTS FROM 2024

James and Grace are grateful to God for placing them in a wonderful church home where they continue to build relationships and serve. God moved in their older son's heart, leading him to become an official church member and to be baptized. This has been a powerful testament to God's work in their family!

[Visit Joshua Project to learn more about the unreached in this region.](#)





# JAPAN

<b>Major Religion:</b>	Buddhism
<b>Joshua Project Status:</b>	Unreached
<b>Percent Evangelical:</b>	0.57% (1 in 175)

Reaching and Teaching International Ministries (RTIM) “is a missions organization that assists local churches as they seek to make mature disciples, establish healthy churches and train local leaders around the world.” Beginning in 2025 and extending over the next decade, RTIM, in collaboration with key ministry partners, will concentrate on strategic global cities to establish “gospel hubs.” Selected for their profound need for the gospel, efforts in these global cities will center on evangelism, discipleship, theological training, internships, and church planting.

With approximately 230 million people worldwide living outside their country of birth and about four million of them being students, coupled with the prediction that by 2050, around 60% of the world’s population will reside in urban areas, RTIM’s initiative is timely. Tokyo, Japan, is one of the first cities chosen for this strategic focus.

Japan, known for its innovative and tech-savvy culture, has the highest life expectancy in the world. However, it also faces a growing mental health crisis among its youth and a severe shortage of young evangelicals, with 90% of Japan’s less than 1% evangelical population being over the age of thirty. This highlights Japan’s urgent need for gospel-centered churches to engage and reach the younger generation.

## Pray

- That God would allow healthy churches to be planted in Japan over the next decade so that lost people can hear the gospel.
- That God would move individuals to consider going and being a part of church-planting teams in Japan.
- That God would establish Tokyo as a thriving gospel hub for years to come.
- That God would be glorified and the name of Jesus proclaimed in Japan.

In 2024, RTIM launched phase one of the project, creating resources and a documentary series to spotlight Tokyo’s gospel needs. This initiative aims to inspire a new generation of missionaries and churches as they prepare to address Japan’s critical needs through strategic church planting.



[Visit Joshua Project to learn more about the unreached in this region.](#)

# SPAIN

<b>Major Religion:</b>	Roman Catholic
<b>Joshua Project Status:</b>	Superficially reached
<b>Percent Evangelical:</b>	1.61% (1 in 62)

Iglesia Bautista Fe, in Seville, Spain, established in 2012, has grown into a vibrant congregation with ninety-five members and one hundred thirty regular attendees. The church is actively developing future leaders, with three pastors in training, four pastoral interns, and two deacons.

The church's vision is to equip and send pastors and missionaries to fulfill the Great Commission, focusing on unreached towns in Spain and unengaged people groups in North Africa and other parts of the world. God is at work among a new generation of Spaniards who have been raised in secular households. These individuals are eager to deepen their understanding of the Bible and are committed to serving the Lord, no matter the cost.

This year, the church witnessed the conversions of two young adults from secular backgrounds. An eighteen-year-old from Spain, who was raised agnostic, initially showed little interest in God, even after his mother's conversion when he was fifteen. However, his perspective changed dramatically during a church event where he encountered the gospel. His heart was moved, and over the following months, he began seeking, eventually embracing faith in Christ and eagerly requesting baptism to publicly declare his commitment.

A nineteen-year-old Hungarian woman, who had

## Pray

- That God would grow and unite the members of Iglesia Bautista Fe.
- That God would bless and equip the church's pastor, interns, and deacons.
- That God would grant boldness to church members to proclaim the gospel.

grown up as an atheist and spent part of her life in Oman, relocated to Seville to work as an Au Pair. Feeling lost and battling depression, she discovered Iglesia Bautista Fe online and attended a service. Deeply impacted by the warmth and generosity of the church community, she continued to engage with the gospel through Bible studies and worship, and her heart was transformed. She came to believe in Christ and asked to be baptized. Now, with a renewed sense of purpose, she is eager to return to Hungary and share the gospel with others.





# PAKISTAN

<b>Major Religion:</b>	Islam
<b>Joshua Project Status:</b>	Unreached
<b>Percent Evangelical:</b>	Unknown

Pakistan, a country of over 240 million, is known for its rich cultural diversity. The majority Muslim population has a deep connection to Islamic traditions and heritage. Christians, who make up a small minority, often encounter considerable social and systemic challenges, including discrimination and persecution. Pakistan ranks second globally in terms of unengaged, unevangelized people groups, with three hundred fifty communities having no churches, missionaries, or Christian presence. Additionally, it has the world's second-largest Muslim population, underscoring the immense need for Christian outreach and evangelism.

In recent years, religious minorities, particularly Christians, have encountered increasing threats of violence and persecution. Pakistan's blasphemy laws are often misused to harass non-Muslims, leading to numerous incidents of violence and forced conversions to Islam. Many Christian communities endure poverty and face significant social and economic obstacles.

Despite these hardships, the church in Pakistan remains active and continues to grow. Local congregations are deeply involved in social outreach, offering education, health care, and support to marginalized communities. The resilience of Pakistani Christians amid adversity powerfully demonstrates their unwavering faith and dedication.

## Pray

- That God would shield Pakistani Christians from violence and injustice, granting them unwavering courage and strength in their faith.
- That God would bring about legal and social reforms to safeguard religious minorities and foster tolerance and understanding among different faiths.
- That God would bless and sustain the efforts of local churches and Christian organizations as they provide aid and development to impoverished communities.
- That God would raise up leaders dedicated to justice and equality, striving to create a society where all individuals, regardless of faith, can live in peace and dignity.



*[Visit Joshua Project to learn more about the unreached in this region.](#)*

# KEN & RUTH

*Serving in Central Asia Since 2023*

Major Religion:	Islam
Joshua Project Status:	Unreached
Percent Evangelical:	Less than 0.1% (1 in 1,000)

Ken and Ruth were both raised in the DC area. They each separately heard the gospel, believed in Jesus as Lord, and developed a strong desire to take the gospel to those who had never heard the good news. They first moved overseas in 2002 and served among an unreached people group for the next twelve years, working to start and strengthen local churches.

Ken and Ruth then returned to the States for a season. During that time, they served on staff at MBC. As MBC members, they developed a deep love for MBC and served in different ministries, including Global Outreach and Church Groups. They faithfully and consistently prayed for the unreached, and God continued to draw their hearts to those who had little to no access to the gospel.

In 2023, after much prayer and counsel from church leadership, Ken and Ruth returned overseas so Ken could serve as the lead pastor of an international church in an unreached megacity in Central Asia. This church is one of the few Christian churches in a city of close to twenty million people! They ask their MBC family to pray for them fervently as they serve!

## Pray

- That God would deepen love and unity among the church elders, ministry leaders, and congregants.
- That God would bless and guide their evangelistic efforts throughout the city.
- That God would empower the preaching and teaching in their church, making their work fruitful and impactful for His glory.

## ENCOURAGEMENTS FROM 2024

Ken and Ruth rejoice as God continues to strengthen their local church. Last year, they welcomed new members, celebrated baptisms, and witnessed increased evangelistic outreach throughout the city. They are discipling many members who are growing in righteousness and spiritual maturity, reflecting God's transformative work in a dark place.

[Visit Joshua Project to learn more about the unreached in this region.](#)





# GREECE

<b>Major Religion:</b>	Christianity
<b>Joshua Project Status:</b>	Superficially reached
<b>Percent Evangelical:</b>	0.50% (1 in 200)

Greece boasts an impressive history and geography. It is home to eighteen UNESCO World Heritage sites and welcomes millions a year to its beaches, mountains, and extensive archaeological locations. In recent years, Greece has dealt with severe economic problems and a refugee crisis.

Avant Ministries focuses on planting and developing churches in unreached areas worldwide. In Athens, Greece, MBC partners support the growing Kypseli Church plant and teach at the Greek Bible College. With over one hundred members, the church recently purchased a new space in one of Athens's poorest neighborhoods. This strategic location serves as a hub for worship and ministry, reaching the community with the gospel and addressing both physical and emotional needs.

Recently while out walking in their neighborhood, this partner and his wife noticed a man with a Kenyan sticker on his bike. Having lived in Kenya for years, they struck up a conversation with this man, which led to an invitation to church. The man excitedly shared he had heard of the church and was eager to send his children. It's clear the Lord is making the church known as a place of safety and refuge in the community!

## Pray

- That God would bless and grow the church plant, making it a healthy center for the gospel.
- That God would mature the church members and give them opportunities to share the gospel with family and friends.
- That God would provide resources and skilled workers to complete the building renovations.
- That God would give this partner couple strength and wisdom from His Word, relying on His power in their ministry.
- That God would bless this partner couple's marriage, their children, and their aging parents.

This partner couple also works with international students at the college. They recently hosted a cross-cultural seminar to foster unity among students from various denominational backgrounds. A highlight was when Maria, a Greek student, shared how her faith was deepened by learning from her African peers, inspiring others to celebrate their cultural differences while finding unity in Christ.



[Visit Joshua Project to learn more about the unreached in this region.](#)

# NIGER

<b>Major Religion:</b>	Islam
<b>Joshua Project Status:</b>	Unreached
<b>Percent Evangelical:</b>	0.97% (1 in 103)

Niger, in West Africa, is known for its vast deserts and diverse ethnic groups, like the Hausa, Tuareg, and Fulani people. As one of the poorest countries in the world, a large portion of Niger's population lives below the poverty line, grappling with limited access to basic services. The country frequently faces severe droughts, leading to persistent humanitarian crises, widespread food insecurity, and the displacement of vulnerable communities. Despite these hardships, Niger's people remain resilient, drawing strength from their deep-rooted cultural heritage.

In recent years, extremist groups like ISIS and al-Qaeda, particularly near the borders with Mali, Burkina Faso, and Nigeria, have further destabilized the region, intensifying hardships for local communities. This instability was worsened by the 2023 military coup that ousted President Mohamed Bazoum, and the country is still dealing with the aftermath of that event.

Christianity is a minority religion in Niger, where Islam is the predominant faith. Although small, the Christian community is active, primarily in the southern and central regions. Despite numerous challenges, local churches are deeply involved in outreach efforts, offering support to vulnerable populations, and spreading the gospel of Jesus Christ.

## Pray

- That God would bring peace and stability to Niger, resolving security issues and improving living conditions for all citizens.
- That God would fortify and uplift the Christian community, granting them courage and wisdom as they practice their faith in a predominantly Muslim environment.
- That God would bless the efforts of local churches and organizations in combating poverty, hunger, and displacement, bringing relief and transformation to those in need.
- That God would provide rain and favorable agricultural conditions, alleviating food shortages and improving the livelihoods of those affected by yearly droughts.



[Visit Joshua Project to learn more about the unreached in this region.](#)



# ALGERIA

<b>Major Religion:</b>	Islam
<b>Joshua Project Status:</b>	Unreached
<b>Percent Evangelical:</b>	0.05% (1 in 2,000)

Algeria, the largest country in Africa by land area, is distinguished by its diverse landscapes, ranging from the vast expanse of the Sahara Desert to the picturesque Mediterranean coastline. The nation boasts a rich cultural tapestry woven from Berber, Arab, and French influences. Despite its historical and cultural wealth, Algeria has grappled with persistent economic challenges and political instability, marked by ongoing protests and calls for governmental reform.

Islam is the state religion in Algeria, and the practice of Christianity is heavily restricted. The government exerts tight control over religious activities, leading to significant obstacles and persecution for Christians. Church gatherings are closely monitored and converts from Islam face intense societal and legal pressures. Despite these challenges, a growing Christian community, largely composed of expatriates and a small number of local believers, continues to persevere, demonstrating remarkable resilience and faith. In recent years, courageous Berber believers have ventured into unreached Arab areas with the gospel, resulting in a notable number of Arabs coming to faith in Jesus.

Algeria has unexpectedly become a key center for theological training and church growth in North Africa. While the government maintains strict oversight of religious activities, the legal allowance to print and distribute Bibles offers a vital resource for believers.

## Pray

- That God would bring peace and stability to Algeria, guide the nation through challenges, and foster a just government.
- That God would protect and strengthen Christians, granting courage amid persecution.
- That God would open doors for the gospel to be shared safely.
- That God would alleviate economic struggles and provide employment opportunities.
- That God would work through social and political movements to bring transformative change.

This distinct advantage has allowed the Algerian church to take a prominent role in preparing and supporting the next generation of Christian leaders in the region, ensuring the continued spread of the gospel despite ongoing challenges.



*[Visit Joshua Project to learn more about the unreached in this region.](#)*

# HEATHER

SERVING IN INDIA SINCE 2021

Major Religion:	Hinduism
Joshua Project Status:	Unreached
Percent Evangelical:	Unknown

Heather grew up in a loving, Christian family that prioritized missions and attended a healthy local church. As a young graduate student in DC, she met and married a nonbeliever. A few years after the birth of her second son, her marriage ended.

Later, she enjoyed a career as a diplomat. She reflects, “I had traveled to more than fifty-five countries, and during my overseas postings, I attended local churches. In these churches, I served as a Sunday school teacher and hospitality volunteer. Despite this, the hurt, pain, and stigma of my life choices held me back from being vulnerable. Instead, I just became focused internally; and even though I prayed and read my Bible, I was not connected significantly to a local church, and thus did not grow during this period.”

In 2018, while on a new assignment to DC, Heather began attending MBC Montgomery County and became a member soon after. In a 2019 sermon, Pastor David asked the church, “What if God is calling you for more than just the American dream?” After prayer and counsel, Heather felt the Lord urging her to move overseas. She was equipped and commissioned through the church and is now serving in India as she pursues marketplace opportunities for gospel advancement.

## Pray

- That God would grant Heather wisdom in accordance with Ephesians 1:17-18 and that she would practice Colossians 3:23 in all she says and does.
- That God would provide for and protect her family and children, drawing them closer to His heart.
- That God would continue to grow, mature, and multiply the church that Heather serves.

## ENCOURAGEMENTS FROM 2024

By God’s grace, Heather’s church successfully moved into a new, spacious hall, which has provided the congregation a comfortable place to worship. The hall can also accommodate up to one hundred people for biblical seminars, fostering growth in learning how to live according to God’s will. Heather’s work term was also extended for an additional two years, and she is overjoyed to continue serving and supporting the local church.





# ETHIOPIA

<b>Major Religion:</b>	Christianity
<b>Joshua Project Status:</b>	Reached
<b>Percent Evangelical:</b>	17.98% (1 in 5)

Addis Ababa, a vibrant city of over six million people, is a place where faith is deeply ingrained in daily life. The Coptic Orthodox Church is the largest religious group and its traditions have influenced and shaped Ethiopian culture. Protestant churches in the region have faced challenges, as false teachings have become prevalent. In addition, Islam is on the rise, fueled by an influx of Muslim refugees from neighboring countries.

Christ Covenant Baptist Church (CCBC), a church plant in Ethiopia's capital, is led by Pastor Nigussie. Their mission is to fulfill the Great Commission by proclaiming the gospel and making disciples within the framework of a gospel-centered and biblically ordered healthy local church.

CCBC is dedicated to raising biblically qualified leaders who will be sent out to plant churches in other cities and towns. By God's grace, CCBC grew from a single Bible study group into two, which eventually paved the way for the launch of a Sunday morning gathering. They also received legal recognition, allowing them to operate as an official church in Addis Ababa and the surrounding region. In the summer of 2024, CCBC formally covenanted together, marking a significant milestone in their mission. With hearts full of faith, they eagerly anticipate all that the Lord has in store for them in 2025 and beyond.

## Pray

- That God would bless and establish this new church plant.
- That God would grant continued fruitfulness in evangelism and discipleship.
- That God would raise up qualified elders.
- That God would provide wisdom and strength for the planting team and lead pastor.



# KAZAKHSTAN

<b>Major Religion:</b>	Islam
<b>Joshua Project Status:</b>	Minimally reached
<b>Percent Evangelical:</b>	1.67% (1 in 60)

Kazakhstan, the largest country in Central Asia, is a land of breathtaking landscapes, abundant mineral resources, and vibrant ethnic diversity. Since gaining independence from Soviet rule in 1991, Kazakhstan has made significant strides in improving its economy and human rights. Unlike other nations in the region, Kazakhstan does not grant special status to Islam, with the government striving to maintain a moderate expression of the faith within its borders (Operation World). Despite this, 73% of the population still identifies as Muslim, though the practice of Islam is often interwoven with Indigenous traditions.

In 2011, the government enacted laws to restrict public worship, posing significant challenges to growing churches. Kazakh Christians, especially those from Muslim backgrounds, often endure ostracism from their families. Despite these hardships, churches continue to gather, faithfully proclaiming the gospel and drawing strength from their shared faith.

One MBC partner church in the region remains deeply committed to reaching the lost and advancing the kingdom of God. This church is actively investing in the next generation of leaders through its ongoing pastoral internship program. Recently, they welcomed five new interns from various cities across Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan, providing them with hands-on ministry experience and mentorship.

## Pray

- That God would bless the regular ministries of the church (preaching of the Word, evangelism, and discipleship, etc.) as well as their pastoral training program.
- That God would raise up a team to plant a church in Uzbekistan.
- That God would strengthen the church's partnership with other evangelical churches in Kazakhstan and Central Asia.

Moreover, the church recently hosted its second Bible training workshop, a significant event that brought together over forty pastors from cities across Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan. This workshop equipped these leaders with valuable tools and encouragement to faithfully and accurately handle and proclaim the Word of God in their communities. The church is also earnestly praying about planting a new church in Uzbekistan, in a region where a gospel witness is currently absent.





# SOMALIA

<b>Major Religion:</b>	Islam
<b>Joshua Project Status:</b>	Unreached
<b>Percent Evangelical:</b>	0.84% (1 in 119)

Over 85% of Somalia's population is ethnically Somali. Strategically located on the Horn of Africa, Somalia controls vital maritime routes that hold potential for trade and commerce during peaceful times. Islam is the predominant religion, and Christianity is almost entirely absent due to severe restrictions. In the 1990s, the church was driven underground, with widespread fear and prejudice against Christians fueled by misleading propaganda. Today, Somali Christians endure intense persecution, often facing imprisonment or death. Despite a Somali Bible translation being completed in 1977, its distribution is illegal.

With over 73% of Somalis living on less than two dollars a day, and nearly four million displaced internally, the humanitarian crisis is severe. Persistent droughts and famines exacerbate the widespread suffering. Continuous conflicts obstruct aid delivery, and the expulsion of most foreign NGOs has left the most vulnerable without essential support. Women and girls face severe abuse and mistreatment, further deepening the crisis.

The creation of a parliament in 2012 brought a flicker of optimism, but the nation is still entrenched in conflict, with extremist groups maintaining a dangerous presence. While Al-Shabab has been expelled from most urban centers, it continues to operate in rural areas. Despite the immense challenges of being a Christian in Somalia, God is still at work among a people who have demonstrated remarkable resilience through decades of adversity.

## Pray

- That God would bring peace and stability to Somalia, fostering a functional government and ending violence.
- That God would protect and encourage Somali believers, giving them courage to remain faithful amidst persecution.
- That God would open doors for aid to reach those suffering from famine and displacement and for the gospel to be shared safely.
- That God would stir Somali leaders and people toward justice, compassion, and reconciliation.



*[Visit Joshua Project to learn more about the unreached in this region.](#)*

# MIRIAM

SERVING IN EGYPT SINCE 2018

Major Religion:	Islam
Joshua Project Status:	Partially reached
Percent Evangelical:	4.5% (1 in 22)

As a middle schooler, Miriam fell deeply in love with Jesus. She loved reading and was captivated by missionary biographies. In high school, Miriam traveled on several short-term trips, and her love for the nations grew. After graduation, she learned a shocking statistic: Only 3% of Christian missionaries serve among the world's nearly two billion unreached people. Those numbers lit a fire in her; and from that day, she prepared to spend her life making Christ's name known among the unreached.

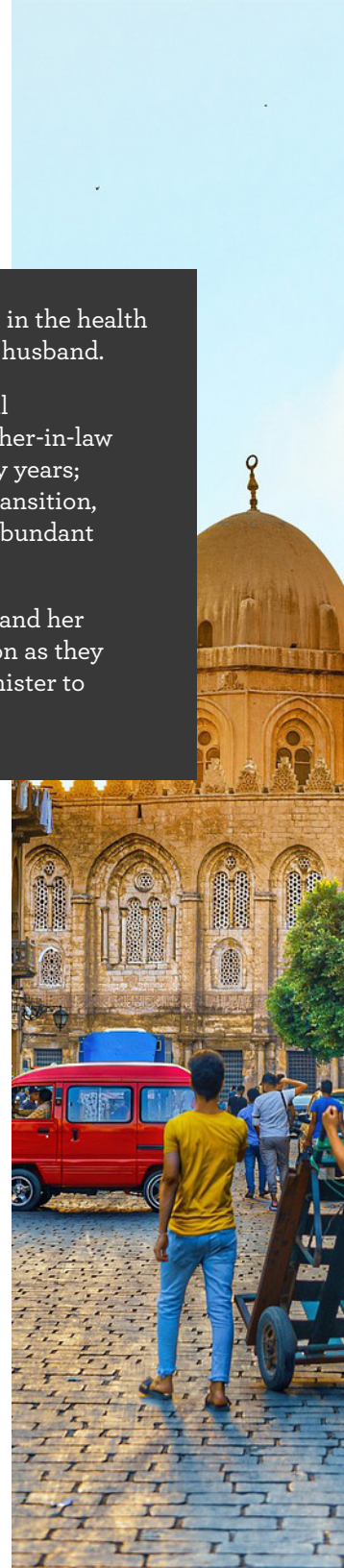
Miriam became a member of MBC Tysons in 2016 when her family moved to northern Virginia. She served as a Church Group leader and Global Outreach intern and is glad to be commissioned from MBC. In 2018, Miriam moved to Egypt. While there is a moderate amount of gospel work taking place in Egypt, much work remains. Many Egyptians will likely never meet a Christian in their lifetime. She and her husband, who is Egyptian, are faithfully working to make Christ known in this region.

## Pray

- That God would work miracles in the health of Miriam's mother-in-law and husband.
- That God would bless the small congregation that Miriam's father-in-law has shepherded for over twenty years; provide a smooth leadership transition, strength for new leaders, and abundant spiritual renewal in that area.
- That God would grant Miriam and her husband guidance and direction as they seek to reach, support, and minister to people in their community.

## ENCOURAGEMENTS FROM 2024

For medical reasons, Miriam's mother-in-law came to live with them last year, as the care she would receive in their home and city was superior to other parts of the country. Her presence has been a blessing, and getting to know her deeply has been a gift Miriam treasures. Her presence also has brought the family into deeper relationship with their Muslim neighbors and allowed them to witness to many doctors and nurses. Last year, they also welcomed their second baby boy!



# NORTH KOREA

<b>Major Religion:</b>	Nonreligious
<b>Joshua Project Status:</b>	Unreached
<b>Percent Evangelical:</b>	1.57% (1 in 64)

North Korea, home to over twenty-six million unreached people, is a nation where Christian persecution is both intense and widespread. Operation World describes the situation as a “nightmare,” with the state cultivating a personality cult around its leader, Kim Jong Un, and his late grandfather, Kim II Sung. Isolated from the outside world, more than three million people have died from starvation since 1994.

For decades, political dissidents, including Christians, have been sent to state-run prison camps, with an estimated fifty to seventy thousand Christians currently imprisoned. The Bible is banned, and its possession can lead to severe punishment. Free North Korea Radio (FNKR) broadcasts hope daily into North Korea, and their Operation Truth initiative aims to boldly reach people by land, sea, and air. This initiative delivers essential supplies like food, radios, and flash drives filled with crucial resources, including the one thing Kim Jong Un fears most: the Bible.

A family who recently escaped North Korea by boat reported receiving rice bottles with a Bible from Operation Truth. During North Korea Freedom Week, nearly all defectors in a US delegation shared that they had listened to outside broadcasts, including Free North Korea Radio, before escaping. Many were so deeply impacted by these broadcasts that they now work for FNKR.

## Pray

- That God would bring freedom and liberation to North Korea.
- That God would allow many North Korean people to hear the good news of the gospel, leading to many conversions in 2025.
- That God would grow and protect the underground church in North Korea.
- That God would protect and sustain the staff and volunteers at FNKR.

While it is impossible to conduct surveys within North Korea due to the regime’s success in keeping the population in both literal and spiritual darkness, these testimonies serve as a reminder that Free North Korea Radio and like-minded ministries are making a difference.



*[Visit Joshua Project to learn more about the unreached in this region.](#)*



# GLOBAL HUMANITARIAN CRISES

World Relief (WR) is a Christian humanitarian organization partnering with local churches to develop sustainable solutions for urgent needs, addressing some of the world's most severe crises. Recent WR projects span the Middle East, Ukraine, Sudan, Chad, and Cambodia, bringing gospel hope to suffering communities. WR reports that over 65.3 million people are displaced globally, equivalent to one-fifth of the US population. Every three seconds, someone flees their home due to violent conflict, with most conflicts lasting over twenty years. Here are some stories from WR frontline workers, highlighting last year's relief efforts:

- *Displaced Palestinian children in Egypt formed a strong bond with the Egyptian church volunteers. The children often requested to hear parables about Jesus. As the children voiced their curiosity, the church volunteers emphasized how Jesus holds children dear and cherishes them. This gave the volunteers a beautiful opportunity to share the gospel, not only with the kids, but with their parents as well.*
- *We continue to work on the frontlines of major crises such as in Ukraine. We have shifted our strategy to psychosocial support, as this will be important for the future generations of the country. We continue to work with the local church and are seeing God move in the face of great darkness.*

## Pray

- That God would grant boldness to World Relief workers as they show Christ's love through word and deed in times of crises.
- That God would sustain frontline partners and churches in current places of crises and conflict, keeping them strong in their faith.
- That God would bring healing and peace to current places of crises and conflict and that the gospel would spread and transform these nations through healthy local churches.

- *As we think of some of the greatest crises, we know many places have very little gospel witness. Cambodia is a country that is in many ways still recovering from the genocide in its past. We are working with over 110 Cambodian churches as they mobilize, multiply, and disciple their members. Recently, forty-four youth converted to Christ and were baptized in a river.*



# LIBYA

<b>Major Religion:</b>	Islam
<b>Joshua Project Status:</b>	Unreached
<b>Percent Evangelical:</b>	0.16% (1 in 625)

With Africa's longest Mediterranean coastline and the vast Sahara Desert, Libya is a country of striking contrasts. Since the fall of Muammar Qaddafi's regime in 2011, Libya has grappled with persistent political instability, characterized by civil conflict and rival factions, until a ceasefire was reached in 2020. The prolonged conflict severely damaged the nation's infrastructure and triggered a significant refugee crisis. The catastrophic floods of September 2023, brought on by Storm Daniel, were the worst natural disasters in Libya's modern history.

Christianity in Libya is primarily represented by Roman Catholic and Orthodox communities, but Protestants are an active minority. These smaller groups are vibrant, while others struggle with nominalism. Persecution of Libyan Christians is intense; when discovered, they often face imprisonment and torture. Several martyrs have been reported over the past decade (Operation World).

The 2024 Libyan elections were expected to occur during the year, but specific dates were never set due to ongoing political challenges. These elections were viewed as a vital step toward bringing stability to a country that has faced years of conflict and division. In 2025, the international community remains attentive, as internal divisions and regional security issues continue to pose significant challenges.

## Pray

- That God would bring political peace to Libya and rebuild its infrastructure, allowing communities to flourish and be reached with the gospel.
- That God would protect the church, that persecuted believers would look to Christ and endure in faith, and that He would use the martyrdom of His saints to strengthen and grow the church.
- That God would save nominal Roman Catholic and Orthodox believers, establishing healthy churches rooted in biblical teaching and practice.
- That God would protect migrants attempting to reach Europe by crossing the Sahara Desert; that they might hear the gospel and be converted.



# DAVID & KRISTEN

SERVING IN SOUTHEAST ASIA SINCE 2024

Major Religion:	Buddhism
Joshua Project Status:	Unreached
Percent Evangelical:	Less than 2% (1 in 50)

David and Kristen met in college while serving on a short-term trip. They began attending MBC in 2006 and became active, faithful church members. They served in various capacities, from leading kids, college, and Church Group ministries, to participating in local outreach. Kristen also served on staff, and together they played a role in launching the MBC Maryland location.

In 2019, David and Kristen, along with their three young children, moved to Southeast Asia to spread the gospel. Over three years, they worked in communications, learned the local language, and served in a small village church, where they taught children’s Sunday school and hosted an evangelistic kids’ club.

Upon returning to the US in 2022, David and Kristen rejoined MBC Montgomery County as members while simultaneously serving at a DC-area church attended by people who spoke the Southeast Asian target language they were learning. Kristen discipled young women, and David regularly preached. With prayer and guidance from MBC leadership, they made the decision to return to Southeast Asia in the summer of 2024. They are now collaborating with a team to support the local church, encourage pastors, mentor young adults, and care for local communities.

## Pray

- That God would continue to help David, Kristen, and the children learn the local language.
- That God would provide them with opportunities to share the gospel and that unbelieving people would have a heart and mind to receive it as truth.
- That God would give David and Kristen opportunities to disciple local believers.
- That God would unite their family and help them persevere well in their faith.





# ITALY

<b>Major Religion:</b>	Roman Catholic
<b>Joshua Project Status:</b>	Superficially reached
<b>Percent Evangelical:</b>	1.46% (1 in 68)

Despite the church's roots in Italy dating back to New Testament times, evangelicals in Italy today make up less than 2% of the population. Italy is home to many who are culturally affiliated with the church but lack a saving faith in Christ. Since 2010, Breccia di Roma Church and the Kyra Karr Foundation have been committed to proclaiming the gospel in Rome. Their work includes preaching the Word, teaching sound doctrine, evangelizing, providing theological training, and serving refugees and the poor.

In 2017, the church acquired a permanent meeting space in the heart of Rome, just outside the Vatican walls. This building offers a remarkable opportunity for the church to serve as a central hub for gospel ministry across the city and to plant new churches. MBC has supported this work by sending short-term teams to serve alongside Breccia di Roma, resulting in mutual encouragement between the churches.

In 2024, Breccia di Roma experienced many encouraging moments, including the baptism of Angela, a woman with a remarkable story who quickly became a blessing to the church. However, the year was also marked by significant challenges. The church faced a legal battle over religious liberty that escalated to Italy's supreme court. Despite two prior favorable rulings, the judge reversed them, issuing a negative verdict that closed the case.

## Pray

- That God would grant wisdom to Breccia di Roma as they look to appeal the decision of the Italian Supreme Court. The implications are very important.
- That God would grant conversion growth at the church and for many to come to know the Lord.
- That God would provide the means necessary for the Breccia di Roma Prati church plant to purchase a space that will become a permanent place of worship.

This decision was a serious setback for the evangelical community and all religious minorities in Italy, as it violates the Italian Constitution. The church is now considering an appeal at the European Union level.



[Visit Joshua Project to learn more about the unreached in this region.](#)

# SAUDI ARABIA

<b>Major Religion:</b>	Islam
<b>Joshua Project Status:</b>	Unreached
<b>Percent Evangelical:</b>	0.53% (1 in 189)

As the birthplace of Islam and home to its holiest site, Saudi Arabia wields considerable influence over billions of Muslims worldwide. However, the nation is equally known for its harsh restrictions on religious freedom and human rights. With a population exceeding thirty-three million, the vast majority of these people remain unreached by the gospel.

Saudi Arabia has been governed by an absolute monarchy for centuries, with Islam firmly established as the state religion. The practice of any other faith is strictly prohibited, and despite a large expatriate community making up over 30% of the population, the government enforces severe penalties on those who practice or promote other religions. Foreign workers frequently endure poor conditions, discrimination, and social restrictions. Christians, under constant surveillance, risk imprisonment, corporal punishment, deportation, or even execution if they attempt to gather for worship, whether publicly or privately.

The number of Saudi Christians is slowly increasing, aided by technology that allows believers to share their faith despite the stringent restrictions. Yet meaningful interactions with Saudis remain scarce due to language barriers and the oppressive environment.

## Pray

- That God would protect believers in Saudi Arabia and grant them the freedom to worship and grow as disciples through His Word.
- That God would send Arabic-speaking Christians to Saudi Arabia to boldly proclaim the gospel.
- That God would awaken the younger generation of Saudis to their need for salvation in Christ.
- That God would create more opportunities for Saudis to hear and respond to the gospel as the country opens to infrastructure projects over the next ten years.

In 2024, Saudi Arabia revealed ambitious infrastructure plans in preparation for hosting the 2034 FIFA World Cup, signaling potential innovation and development in the coming decade. However, the country has also faced severe weather events, with flooding causing significant casualties and widespread damage.



[Visit Joshua Project to learn more about the unreached in this region.](#)

# NEPAL

<b>Major Religion:</b>	Hinduism
<b>Joshua Project Status:</b>	Unreached
<b>Percent Evangelical:</b>	Unknown

Nepal is renowned for its stunning mountainous landscapes, particularly the Himalayas. It's also the birthplace of Buddhism, with the city of Lumbini being the most sacred pilgrimage site for Buddhists worldwide. Although Nepal is officially a secular state, Hinduism strongly influences the government and daily life. As a result, Christians often face persecution, with many Nepalese viewing Christianity as a foreign religion, and the government closely monitoring all non-Hindu faiths. Despite the New Testament being translated into Nepali by William Carey in 1821, low literacy rates in Nepal mean that much of the population still struggles with basic education.

Nepal's political landscape in 2024 was marked by internal divisions within major parties, the formation of new alliances, and increasing public dissatisfaction. The government's handling of various socioeconomic challenges drew widespread criticism. Additionally, churches and Christian organizations faced significant scrutiny from the government, often making evangelism and discipleship efforts difficult.

## Pray

- That God would strengthen existing healthy churches so that they can multiply throughout the country.
- That God would sustain Christians to endure amidst pressure and persecution, enabling them to share the gospel with boldness and courage.
- That God would provide the means needed for translations of faithful, gospel-centered resources.
- That God would bring stability and reform to the Nepalese government and cause them to treat people of all faiths favorably.

In this challenging environment, the church in Nepal is focused on key areas like pastoral training and building strong biblical foundations to last for generations. There is also a significant need for translating, publishing, and distributing the Bible and other biblical resources across the country, often in remote and difficult-to-reach areas.



[Visit Joshua Project to learn more about the unreached in this region.](#)



# STEPHANY

SERVING IN GERMANY SINCE 2018

Major Religion:	Christianity
Joshua Project Status:	Partially reached
Percent Evangelical:	2.12% (1 in 47)

As a child, Stephany saw many cultures firsthand and developed an interest in living abroad that grew over time. At eighteen, she aspired to serve the Lord overseas and waited for an opportunity while working after college. Stephany first visited MBC Arlington in 2015. Soon after, she became a member and began to serve as a Church Group co-leader and in other areas of the church as needed.

Stephany now lives and works in Germany. She supports and trains missionaries in over twenty countries through a missions organization. In addition to her work with church planters, Stephany has plugged into a local church plant. Her husband Andy, who is from Norway, is also a missionary who serves church planters in Europe. They enjoy working for separate organizations that partner with each other for the spread of the gospel among the unreached in Europe.

## Pray

- That God would help Stephany's team as they work to make seven training tracks available in thirty-two major European languages and that it equips and blesses the local church.
- That God would mobilize local believers to fulfill their God-given calling and impact their nations for Christ.
- That God would bless Stephany and her husband as they serve locally in Germany and across Europe, working with international teams.
- That God would help foster strong relationships between various organizations to best serve the body of Christ in Europe.

## ENCOURAGEMENTS FROM 2024

Stephany was most encouraged to see how God continues to save and transform lives in her local church, where they celebrated thirty-five baptisms across multiple locations last summer. Additionally, her organization trained over 780 leaders from twenty-one European countries in church planting, discipleship, and mentoring, offering instruction in thirteen different languages. This achievement was an answer to prayer, as God helped pastors and teams to establish new churches and reignite the gospel across Europe.

[Visit Joshua Project to learn more about the unreached in this region.](#)



# NORTH AFRICA

<b>Major Religion:</b>	Islam
<b>Joshua Project Status:</b>	Unreached
<b>Percent Evangelical:</b>	Less than 0.02% (1 in 5,000)

In this North African country, where the government fluctuates between conservative and liberal stances, being a Christian is particularly challenging. Churches are small, and Christian evangelism is prohibited by law.

One MBC partner pastors a small yet steadily growing church in this difficult environment. They are continually blessed by witnessing how the Lord Jesus is building His church, giving thanks for the conversions and baptisms that have taken place over the past year. The Lord is working through the local church members to share the gospel with their families and neighbors.

Here's a glimpse into how the Lord transformed lives last year. One young woman, known as "The Artist," was recently baptized and welcomed into the church's membership. Her journey has been marked by remarkable faithfulness in the face of intense persecution from her family. Despite enduring physical abuse and severe restrictions on her freedoms, she remains steadfast in her commitment to Christ. Her dedication is evident as she actively participates in every church activity and seeks out opportunities to serve wherever she can.

## Pray

- That God would intervene in a critical church situation, bringing either unity or the opportunity to plant a new congregation.
- That God would bless and strengthen new Christians, helping them endure suffering and find full joy in Christ.
- That God would bless and protect the two men being prepared as elders, guiding their hearts and the church for the work ahead.

Another powerful testimony comes from "The Baker," who, after his baptism and addition to the church, has become a passionate evangelist among his peers. His enthusiasm for sharing the gospel has led him to bring several friends to church. Recently, his closest friend, known as "The Soccer Player," made a public confession of faith in Christ. Church leaders are deeply thankful to the Lord for the incredible work He is doing in each of these young people's lives!



[Visit Joshua Project to learn more about the unreached in this region.](#)

# IRAN

<b>Major Religion:</b>	Islam
<b>Joshua Project Status:</b>	Unreached
<b>Percent Evangelical:</b>	1.2% (1 in 83)

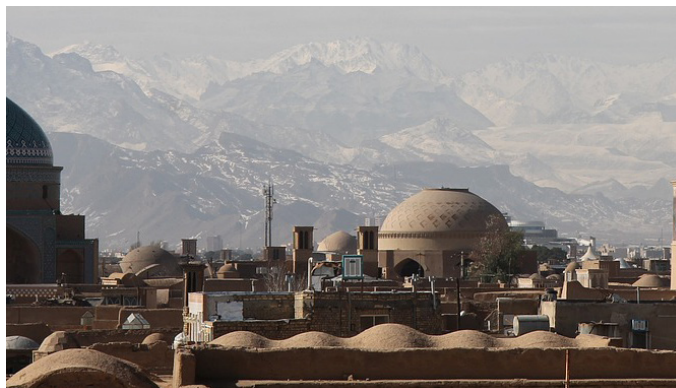
Iran, historically known as Persia, occupies a strategic position at the crossroads of Central Asia, South Asia, and the Arabian Peninsula. As an Islamic Republic, religion plays a significant role in governance, though opinions vary on how much influence it should have. Since 1989, Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei has held the highest political and religious authority, exercising ultimate control over all branches of government. Iran also has elected officials; and the notable death of President Ebrahim Raisi in a 2024 helicopter crash led to the election of reformist Masoud Pezeshkian as his successor. This political shift, alongside escalating tensions between Iran and Israel, concerning Iran's support for Hamas, has heightened global concerns about broader regional conflicts.

Christianity has deep roots in Iran, but today it represents a small community. According to the Joshua Project, evangelicals make up roughly 1.2% of the population, though estimates suggest the actual number could be closer to 0.5%. Despite this, Christianity has experienced a resurgence in recent years, particularly among the youth. With around two-thirds of the population under age thirty, many young Iranians are increasingly drawn to the gospel, especially as they seek answers to the challenges they face around them.

## Pray

- That God would continue to grow the number of faithful believers in Iran and multiply them.
- That God would help believers in Iran connect with other healthy believers and churches, even as they gather in secret.
- That God would reveal the truth of His Son, Jesus Christ, to more Muslims in Iran and comfort persecuted converts through His Word and the fellowship of believers.
- That God would ensure the safe distribution of the Bible and other translated materials throughout Iran to those who need it most.

Believers in Iran risk harsh penalties, including fines, flogging, and imprisonment. In some cases, judges have the authority to issue death sentences, making the decision to follow Christ a perilous one. Despite these risks, the Christian faith continues to quietly grow, particularly in underground house churches.



[Visit Joshua Project to learn more about the unreached in this region.](#)



# MAURITANIA

<b>Major Religion:</b>	Islam
<b>Joshua Project Status:</b>	Unreached
<b>Percent Evangelical:</b>	0.12% (1 in 833)

Mauritania, often referred to as the “land of a million poets,” is deeply shaped by its strong Islamic heritage, which permeates its culture, literature, and educational system. Despite its wealth in fishing and mineral resources, the nation continues to grapple with food insecurity, with nearly one-third of its children affected by hunger. Although slavery was officially abolished in 1981, illegal forced labor still poses a significant challenge in the country.

With 99.5% of the population adhering to Islam, leaving the faith is seen as a deep act of betrayal. As a result, many who convert to Christianity are forced to worship in secret to protect their citizenship and social status. The rise of radical Islam has intensified, leading to harsh restrictions on religious freedom. Evangelism is banned, importing Bibles is heavily restricted, and public criticism of Islam can be punishable by death. These conditions highlight the critical need for more gospel workers and the development of strong, healthy churches.

In 2024, Mauritania witnessed significant political unrest following the re-election of President Mohamed Ould Cheikh Ghazouani. Accusations of electoral fraud by opposition leaders led to widespread protests, during which the government responded by blocking mobile Internet access and arresting protest leaders. These events highlight the extent of governmental control and oversight in the country.

## Pray

- That God would bring economic stability and growth to Mauritania, improving living conditions and alleviating poverty.
- That God would protect and fortify the Christian community, making them resilient and wise as they live out their faith under restrictive circumstances.
- That God would create discreet opportunities for the gospel to be shared, reaching those who seek hope and truth despite legal and social obstacles.
- That God would bless humanitarian and development initiatives, ensuring aid reaches those in need and contributes to the overall well-being of the population.



# JAMES & LYRIC

SERVING IN KAZAKHSTAN SINCE 2018

Major Religion:	Islam
Joshua Project Status:	Minimally reached
Percent Evangelical:	1.67% (1 in 60)

James and Lyric were born and raised in Southeast Asia. They later emigrated to the United States to raise their children and are now blessed with grandchildren. As longtime members of MBC Tysons, they were involved in a home Bible study and various MBC fellowships. After retiring, James and Lyric began to wonder if God wanted them to use their time to live and serve among unreached peoples. They searched the Scriptures, sought counsel from MBC leaders, and prayed for God’s direction.

It was clear that their thirty years of international development experience had prepared them for life overseas. They now serve in the Muslim-majority country of Kazakhstan. In this context, it is hard to establish deep relationships with other Christians. That’s why James and Lyric spend time training local pastors and leaders through a program called Transformational Development (TD). These programs equip local churches to serve the practical needs of their communities. By meeting these needs, they can build relationships, which in turn opens the door for gospel proclamation.

## Pray

- That God would allow a healthy church to be planted in the Karakalpak community and that it would have an eternal impact.
- That God would open the hearts of the Karakalpak women to participate in the TD process, allowing them to experience the love of Jesus through it.
- That God would provide safety, health, and security and that James and Lyric’s visas would be approved, enabling them to continue serving in Kazakhstan.
- That God would bless the egg poultry business, inspiring church members to engage in activities that improve their lives.

## ENCOURAGEMENTS FROM 2024

Church members launched a successful egg poultry business last fall to raise family incomes. The partner church began building relationships with the displaced Karakalpak community from Uzbekistan, aiming to establish a local church. The pastor’s wife plans to start a TD process with the Karakalpak women, praying it will improve their lives and open avenues for them to learn about Jesus.



# FRANCE

<b>Major Religion:</b>	Roman Catholic
<b>Joshua Project Status:</b>	Superficially reached
<b>Percent Evangelical:</b>	1.23% (1 in 81)

France, the largest country in the European Union, recently captured global attention as host of the 2024 Summer Olympics. Despite its rich Christian heritage, the nation has seen a sharp decline in Christianity, with most people now indifferent or even hostile to the gospel.

In response to this challenging spiritual landscape, Mauricio Prunera and his wife planted Église Chemin Nouveau (New Path Church) in Saint-Lô, Normandy. After years of gathering in their home, they secured a building in 2021 that not only accommodates weekly services but also offers temporary housing for refugee families. The influx of migrants from Africa and the Middle East has given Chemin Nouveau a unique ministry opportunity, as many from the Global South are receptive to gospel conversations.

The year 2024 was a momentous and joyful time for Chemin Nouveau, as they celebrated their first-ever baptisms. Five men—three French, one Ivorian, and one Beninese—joyfully took this important step of obedience, having fully grasped the commitment and meaning behind baptism in Christ. What made the day even more special was that one of those being baptized was the pastor's own son—a profound and personal joy for any parent.

## Pray

- That God would have mercy on the eighty thousand residents of Saint-Lô and its surrounding towns.
- That God would continue His work in the lives of Chemin Nouveau members, guiding them to become devoted followers of Christ.
- That God would provide for the purchase of the building they've rented for the last three years.
- That God would bless the pastor's family—Mauricio, Rachel, Esteban, and Lidia—and raise up more leaders and staff as the church continues to grow.

The church extended invitations to many friends and connections, never expecting the Lord to bring 130 people, both adults and children, to the celebration. For those familiar with the gospel's reality in France, this gathering was a profound testament to God's work.



[Visit Joshua Project to learn more about the unreached in this region.](#)



# DJIBOUTI

<b>Major Religion:</b>	Islam
<b>Joshua Project Status:</b>	Unreached
<b>Percent Evangelical:</b>	0.12% (1 in 833)

Djibouti, situated in the Horn of Africa, holds strategic importance due to its proximity to the Bab-el-Mandeb Strait, a crucial maritime passage. It functions as a key hub for global shipping and hosts multiple foreign military bases. However, despite its strategic location, Djibouti struggles with significant economic issues, including high unemployment and widespread poverty. The nation relies heavily on foreign aid and remittances from its diaspora.

Islam, the dominant faith in Djibouti, is deeply woven into its cultural and legal framework. The small Christian community, primarily composed of expatriates and a few local believers, faces restrictions. While private religious practices are generally permitted, public Christian activities are met with caution by the government. Christians often encounter social pressures and limited freedom for open worship.

Despite these difficulties, the Christian community remains steadfast. Local and international organizations continue efforts to encourage and support believers through humanitarian aid and opportunities for fellowship. Secret meetings and private worship gatherings are common among local Christians.

## Pray

- That God would bring economic stability and growth to Djibouti, alleviate poverty, and improve living conditions for its citizens.
- That God would protect and strengthen the Christian community, giving them courage and wisdom to practice their faith amidst social and governmental constraints.
- That God would create opportunities for the gospel to be shared more widely, both through the witness of expatriates and the discreet efforts of local believers.
- That God would bless humanitarian and development initiatives, ensuring that aid effectively reaches those in need and contributes to the overall well-being of the population.



# UZBEKISTAN

<b>Major Religion:</b>	Islam
<b>Joshua Project Status:</b>	Unreached
<b>Percent Evangelical:</b>	0.19% (1 in 526)

Uzbekistan, a Central Asian nation rich in cultural heritage, is renowned for its historic Silk Road cities. While the country boasts a growing economy and significant historical importance, it grapples with challenges such as political control, economic inequality, and ongoing human rights concerns. Since taking office in 2016, President Shavkat Mirziyoyev has introduced some reforms, yet the government continues to maintain strict control over many aspects of life.

Although Islam is the dominant religion and the Constitution of Uzbekistan guarantees religious freedom, religious activities are closely regulated in practice. Registered religious groups are allowed to worship, but unregistered organizations, including many Christian communities, face legal hurdles. The government frequently monitors religious gatherings, and evangelism is particularly restricted for unregistered groups.

Despite the challenges, the Christian community in Uzbekistan remains steadfast and continues to expand. Many churches gather discreetly and actively participate in outreach, offering humanitarian aid and social services. These efforts are reaching previously unreached groups, including the Karakalpak people, an Indigenous group in Uzbekistan. A small but steadily growing Karakalpak church has taken root in the country.

## Pray

- That God would bring positive reforms to Uzbekistan, enhancing religious freedom and fostering greater openness and tolerance in society.
- That God would strengthen and protect the Christian community, giving them resilience and courage to practice their faith despite government restrictions.
- That God would create opportunities for the gospel to reach more people through discreet evangelism and the compassionate work of local and international organizations.
- That God would equip and grow the Karakalpak church, leading many Karakalpak people to know Jesus as Lord.



[Visit Joshua Project to learn more about the unreached in this region.](#)

# UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

<b>Major Religion:</b>	Islam
<b>Joshua Project Status:</b>	Minimally reached
<b>Percent Evangelical:</b>	1.19% (1 in 84)

Grace Baptist Church (GBC) is in a conservative Islamic city in the United Arab Emirates. The city’s population is primarily composed of expats from across the Arab world and beyond. This cultural diversity offers both unique opportunities and challenges for ministry in this vibrant city.

GBC is an English-speaking evangelical congregation with members from a wide range of nationalities, including the UAE, the Philippines, India, Nigeria, Ethiopia, the UK, the US, Côte d’Ivoire, Iran, Uganda, and Sierra Leone. Many people come to the UAE for work, often staying a few years before moving on, providing the church with a special opportunity to share the message of Christ. These members often carry the gospel with them as they relocate to other regions.

The leadership at GBC is committed to teaching the principles of a healthy church and how the Lord intends to display His glory through churches that fulfill the Great Commission. Despite the limited freedoms and unique challenges for Christians in the Muslim world, they trust that the Word of God is not bound (2 Tim 2:9).

## Pray

- That God would grant GBC boldness in proclaiming the gospel to local unbelievers and to every ethnicity in the city.
- That God would inspire a Christ-exalting, joyous pursuit of holiness in the congregation, making the gospel attractive to non-Christians who may have confused it with self-righteous moralism.
- That God would empower the members of GBC to stand firm in hope and display Christ’s surpassing power in their afflictions.
- That God would soften the hearts of the local authorities, allowing them to continue tolerating a Christian witness in the UAE.

Though GBC is in a unique situation and does not yet have a permanent building, they recently moved into a larger rental space. In 2024, the church celebrated its tenth anniversary and eagerly anticipates what the Lord has in store for them in their eleventh year!





# UKRAINE

<b>Major Religion:</b>	Christianity
<b>Joshua Project Status:</b>	Partially reached
<b>Percent Evangelical:</b>	3.64% (1 in 27)

Christian Educators Outreach (CEO) works globally to teach God's Word and make disciples. Since the 2022 invasion of Ukraine, millions of Ukrainians have become internally displaced persons (IDPs). CEO works through the Stream of Love facility in Vinnytsia. The facility provides housing for thousands of IDPs, serves as a key humanitarian aid hub in western Ukraine, and offers Christian education at a school started in 2022 for both local children and IDPs.

The Stream of Love facility and CEO staff are making a profound impact in the lives of many Ukrainians by addressing their immediate needs while sharing the gospel. Last year, a family from Luhansk, whose city remains under enemy control, found refuge in long-term housing at the facility. Their children, Artem and Veronika, attended the school, while their father, Anatoliy, assisted with maintenance. With support from CEO, the facility provided stability amid the chaos, allowing them and others to experience God's grace and truth.

Lisa, a little girl from the Donetsk region, tragically lost her parents during an attack. She was evacuated to Vinnytsia and adopted by her uncle's family. There, she found a sense of normalcy by completing fourth grade at the Christian school. Through these ongoing ministries, families like Lisa's encounter the good news of Jesus.

Vinnytsia's main hospital, like many in Ukraine, cares

## Pray

- That God would bring peace to Ukraine.
- That God would grant ministry leaders supernatural endurance in facing daily challenges.
- That God would make the grace, mercy, and hope of Jesus Christ evident to all who interact with the Stream of Love ministry.

for wounded soldiers but struggles to provide adequate meals due to limited funding. The facility kitchen is able to fill in the gaps and provides meals for soldiers, front line workers, and even local residents in need. Each week, meals are delivered to the hospital, and in the first half of 2024, over ten thousand meals were provided!



[Visit Joshua Project to learn more about the unreached in this region.](#)

# AFGHANISTAN

<b>Major Religion:</b>	Islam
<b>Joshua Project Status:</b>	Unreached
<b>Percent Evangelical:</b>	0.01% (1 in 10,000)

This landlocked country is rich in poetry and culture, with over 70% of its population speaking or understanding Dari. However, it wasn't until 2008 that the Dari Bible was first published. For the past forty years, Afghanistan has been trapped in cycles of poverty, hunger, and widespread illiteracy, particularly among women who have been denied access to education by the Taliban. Since the Taliban's return to power in 2021, two decades of economic and developmental progress have largely unraveled.

Over the past four years, the Taliban has ignored international calls to form an inclusive government, isolating themselves further. Women and girls suffer most under this isolation, facing a surge in gender-based violence and forced marriages, with girls barred from higher learning and women excluded from most forms of employment.

All these setbacks position Afghanistan as one of the most unreached nations in the world; it is home to thousands of mosques but few churches. Living openly as a Christian can lead to death, so believers must gather in secret to avoid being discovered by the Taliban. With the Taliban in power, most Christian organizations withdrew their foreign staff, leaving local Afghan Christians more exposed and with fewer resources. Yet in the face of these challenges, the church continues to experience slow but steady growth.

## Pray

- That God would end gender-based oppression and safeguard the lives and health of vulnerable women and children, allowing them to hear of Christ's great love for them.
- That God would bring about a spiritual breakthrough, enabling the entry, distribution, and translation of His Word into dialects that still lack Scripture.
- That God would guide foreign agencies in finding creative ways to send much-needed resources and encouragement to Afghan believers.
- That God would bring an end to the Taliban's rule and establish a just and equitable government over Afghanistan.



# BANGLADESH

<b>Major Religion:</b>	Islam
<b>Joshua Project Status:</b>	Unreached
<b>Percent Evangelical:</b>	Unknown

Bangladesh, located in South Asia, is renowned for its vibrant cultural heritage, lush landscapes, and significant historical sites. While the country has made strides in economic development, it continues to face challenges such as political instability and poverty. Frequent natural disasters, including cyclones and floods, exacerbate these issues, further complicating life for many of its citizens.

In 2024 widespread political unrest erupted as protests initially focused on government job quotas. The situation escalated when the government used force to quell the demonstrations, resulting in over two hundred deaths. To manage the unrest, authorities shut down Internet access in parts of the country. Despite the turmoil, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina remains in power.

The majority of Bangladesh's population practices Islam. Hinduism is the largest minority religion, alongside smaller communities of Christians and Buddhists. Although the constitution protects religious freedom, Christians often face societal discrimination and occasional violence. Converts from Islam to Christianity endure significant pressure from their families and communities, with legal restrictions on evangelism.

## Pray

- That God would bring stability and prosperity to Bangladesh, addressing poverty, political unrest, and the challenges posed by natural disasters.
- That God would protect and strengthen the Christian community, granting them courage and resilience as they live out their faith amid societal pressures and restrictions.
- That God would open doors for the gospel to reach more people in Bangladesh, using the work of churches and organizations to positively impact communities.
- That God would bless and support disaster relief and development efforts, providing for those affected by natural calamities and improving living conditions throughout the country.

Despite these challenges, the Christian community in Bangladesh is active and growing. Churches and Christian organizations are involved in various social and humanitarian initiatives, including education, health care, and disaster relief, which also serve as avenues for evangelism and outreach.





# JOSEPH & JENNIFER

SERVING IN THE MIDDLE EAST SINCE 2012

<b>Major Religion:</b>	Islam
<b>Joshua Project Status:</b>	Unreached
<b>Percent Evangelical:</b>	Less than 0.5% (1 in 200)

Joseph first attended MBC in the 1990s after graduating from college. He gained a vision for cross-cultural work while on an MBC short-term trip. Later, he completed his theological studies, earning a doctorate in theology. As a teenager, Jennifer taught backyard Bible clubs and Sunday school classes. She met Joseph in seminary, then served for five years in East Asia before they married, where she researched languages and studied minority-group cultures.

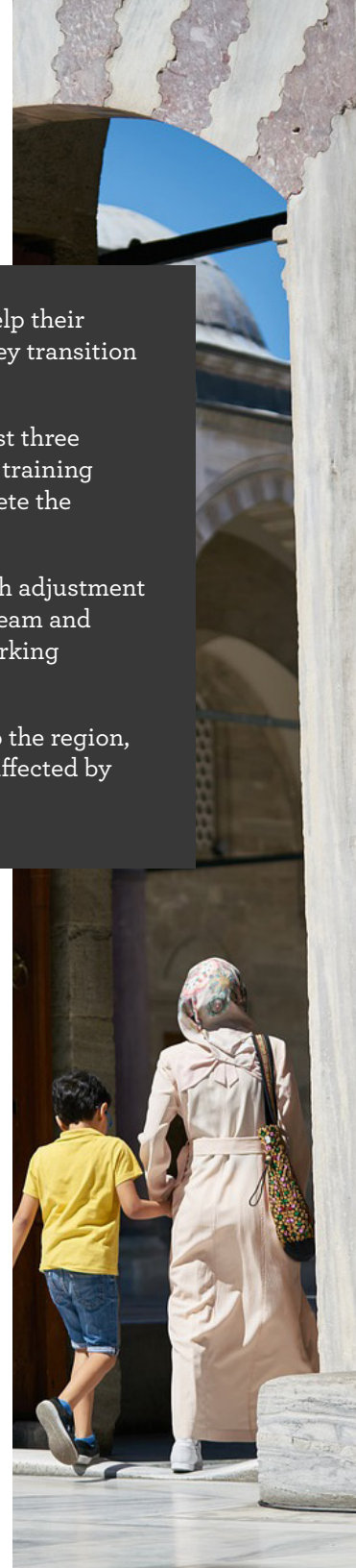
Joseph and Jennifer’s current work in the Middle East centers on providing theological education and leadership training to believers, especially those from a Muslim background. Joseph teaches at an evangelical seminary and leads a discipleship group for men off campus. Jennifer loves being a mom to their two children, and she also leads a Bible study for local women. She often visits her neighbors with the goal of sharing Christ.

## Pray

- That God would continue to help their children adjust smoothly as they transition to new schools.
- That God would provide at least three qualified students for the 2025 training program and help them complete the program.
- That God would grant a smooth adjustment for a new family joining their team and foster a healthy, productive working relationship.
- That God would bring peace to the region, protecting and guiding those affected by unrest.

## ENCOURAGEMENTS FROM 2024

Last year, one local student successfully completed the first year of their training cohort program. Additionally, the team collaborated with a media group to produce raw footage for a video series on Christian history in the Arab world, which is based on a book by a local professor. The series will serve as a valuable gospel resource for the region.



# SRI LANKA

<b>Major Religion:</b>	Buddhism
<b>Joshua Project Status:</b>	Minimally reached
<b>Percent Evangelical:</b>	Unknown

Sri Lanka, the “pearl of the Indian Ocean,” has endured significant hardships, including a 2004 tsunami, a twenty-six-year civil war, ethnic tensions, a 2019 Easter bombing, and the COVID-19 pandemic. These challenges culminated in a severe economic crisis in 2021, leading to political upheaval in 2022 when protestors forced the president and prime minister to resign.

Sri Lanka is 70% Buddhist, but the evangelical church is slowly growing. Younger leaders are increasingly serving in rural areas, and Christian persecution, though sporadic, can be intense. One partner, Back to the Bible, promotes Bible engagement by making Scripture accessible, training believers to apply it, and equipping church leaders to serve biblically. They also support surrounding countries, especially those with severe restrictions on religious freedom, by producing and distributing Bible resources.

In 2024, they completed audio recordings of thirteen books of the Bible in the language of a “restricted access country” (RAC), bringing the total number of books in this language to twenty-nine. These new audio files were added to Bible apps and other gospel resources, making Scripture more accessible in this highly restricted region.

## Pray

- That God would encourage the recording team to persevere in making the Scriptures available in RAC languages.
- That God would open doors to better serve secret believers in restricted regions.
- That God would provide the necessary resources, personnel, and funds to complete the recordings for the next books.
- That God would protect the recording team as they travel to meet and encourage believers serving in restricted areas.

One significant moment occurred when the lead translator for the project visited the nearby restricted country and heard a local woman listening to the audio Scriptures on her mobile phone in a public square! Hearing the narrator’s voice was a powerful confirmation that their work was reaching people, even in places where listening to Scripture is illegal. This encounter greatly encouraged the recording team, affirming that their efforts have eternal impacts.



[Visit Joshua Project to learn more about the unreached in this region.](#)

# PORTUGAL

<b>Major Religion:</b>	Roman Catholic
<b>Joshua Project Status:</b>	Partially reached
<b>Percent Evangelical:</b>	3.52% (1 in 28)

Portugal, one of Europe's oldest and most tranquil nations, is known for its rich maritime heritage, beautiful beaches, and the world's oldest functioning bookstore. While traditionally a Catholic country, Portugal has experienced a notable transformation, with over one hundred theologically sound, gospel-preaching churches now thriving across the nation.

Among these is First Baptist Church of Lisbon (FBC), a historic congregation located in the heart of the city. Established in 1922, FBC Lisbon is currently led by Pastor Tiago Oliveira, a native of Portugal with a deep passion for revitalizing the church. In addition to his pastoral role, Pastor Tiago serves as the president of Martin Bucer Seminary, an evangelical seminary that operates in partnership with FBC Lisbon.

Pastor Tiago's vision extends beyond the walls of FBC Lisbon. Through the seminary and a growing network of healthy churches, he is committed to training future pastors who will be equipped to plant and revitalize churches throughout Portugal. Pastor Tiago's goal is to see a robust and vibrant evangelical presence spread across the nation, renewing the spiritual landscape of Portugal.

## Pray

- That God would grow FBC Lisbon in both number and maturity.
- That God would draw people to Himself and that many would repent of their sins and be converted to Christ.
- That God would bring new seminary students, especially those who aspire to pastoral ministry or missions.
- That God would grant FBC Lisbon unity and partnership with like-minded churches.

Although the congregation remains small, with eighty to eighty-five people attending Sunday services, God is bringing together worshippers from around the world. Each Sunday, people from Portugal, Brazil, Angola, Mozambique, China, Denmark, and other nations worship together. This growing diversity visibly reflects God's calling of His people from every tribe, tongue, and nation. Through FBC Lisbon, a living demonstration of the unity and inclusivity of God's kingdom is evident as believers from diverse countries worship and serve together.



[Visit Joshua Project to learn more about the unreached in this region.](#)



# YEMEN

<b>Major Religion:</b>	Islam
<b>Joshua Project Status:</b>	Unreached
<b>Percent Evangelical:</b>	0.02% (1 in 5,000)

Yemen is a country with a rich historical and cultural heritage, but since 2014, it has been devastated by continuous conflict, leading to one of the worst humanitarian crises in the world. The civil war, involving various factions, has caused extensive destruction, mass displacement, and widespread poverty. Essential resources like food, health care, and basic services are critically lacking, leaving millions in urgent need. In 2024, a Security Council report estimated that over 609,000 children were suffering from acute malnutrition, marking a 34% rise from previous years. Additionally, the ongoing Israel-Gaza conflict has further complicated the challenges facing the region.

Islam remains the dominant religion in Yemen, where the country is governed by Islamic law, and religious freedom is severely limited. Converting from Islam to Christianity is not only illegal but also socially unacceptable, and Christians face intense persecution. Public expressions of Christian faith are banned, and even private worship puts individuals at risk of harassment, imprisonment, or worse.

Despite these harsh conditions and the ongoing conflict, Yemen's small Christian community continues to endure. Local and international organizations discreetly provide humanitarian aid and share the gospel, navigating the constant threat of persecution. Though their numbers are few, this resilient group remains steadfast, holding onto their faith in the face of overwhelming adversity.

## Pray

- That God would bring an end to the conflict in Yemen, restoring peace and stability so that communities can rebuild, and essential aid can reach those in need.
- That God would protect and strengthen the Christian community, giving them the courage and resilience to practice their faith despite the difficult circumstances they face.
- That God would open doors for the gospel to reach those who have not yet heard it, using both direct and indirect means, even in the face of severe restrictions.



# CENTRAL ASIA

<b>Major Religion:</b>	Islam
<b>Joshua Project Status:</b>	Unreached
<b>Percent Evangelical:</b>	Less than 0.1% (1 in 1,000)

Central Asia is a crossroads of bustling cities, rural mountains, serene coastlines, and complex histories and heritages. Evangelical communities in this region often operate under significant societal and governmental pressure. Despite these difficulties, believers remain committed to sharing the gospel and building strong, healthy churches. Their faithfulness in these challenging environments serves as a powerful testimony to the resiliency of the gospel.

Union Church exemplifies this resilience. A vibrant, multiethnic congregation of about one hundred members, it is strategically located in the heart of a Central Asian megacity with a population of around twenty million. For nearly two hundred years, this English-speaking church has faithfully proclaimed Christ. The pastor and his wife, sent out by MBC, are deeply committed to nurturing Union Church into a biblically healthy congregation.

MBC partners closely with Union Church, offering books, resources, encouragement, and training as they boldly share the gospel of Jesus Christ in a predominantly Muslim context. The church's central location allows it to effectively minister to a large community of locals and refugees from neighboring war-torn countries, providing not only food and clothing but also sound biblical teaching.

## Pray

- That God would bless and protect this church and that the pastor would continue to preach sound doctrine and shepherd the saints well.
- That God would use this church to raise up many qualified pastors and deacons.
- That God would bless the church leaders and members with unity and grace.

Union Church's strategic role extends beyond its city, impacting the entire Central Asian region. Though the evangelical community there is small, its members courageously live out and proclaim their faith in Christ, often under immense pressure to remain silent. MBC collaborates with Union Church to raise up and train local leaders, equipping them to serve as deacons, elders, and missionaries in the areas where they are most needed.



[Visit Joshua Project to learn more about the unreached in this region.](#)

# KENYA

<b>Major Religion:</b>	Christianity
<b>Joshua Project Status:</b>	Significantly reached
<b>Percent Evangelical:</b>	45.43% (1 in 2)

Kenya, known for its natural resources and wildlife, is relatively stable compared to its neighbors and has a significant evangelical presence. According to Operation World, nearly half of Kenyans are affiliated with Protestant churches, with most identifying as Christians. However, many churches are influenced by prosperity teachings and lack sound biblical instruction.

Throughout Africa, sound theological resources are often unaffordable and inaccessible. Many pastors, especially in rural areas, lack theological education, leaving them ill-equipped to shepherd their congregations. Ekklesia Afrika addresses this need by providing theological resources, publishing Christian literature, and hosting conferences with Emmanuel Baptist Church in Nairobi, Kenya. Their SOMA program offers cohort-based training, translates books into Swahili, and prints locally to support pastoral education.

In 2024, Ekklesia Afrika partnered with Crossway Publishers in the “1 Million Bibles Initiative,” distributing ten thousand Bibles across Kenya. These Bibles were given to pastors, churches, communities, and ministry organizations within Ekklesia Afrika’s network, many of whom had limited access to study Bibles or the Bible in general.

Ekklesia Afrika equips pastors like Harrison Fondo in Kilifi County, a region influenced by Islam and various

## Pray

- That God would financially provide for Ekklesia Afrika so they can continue their operations and ministries.
- That God would give Ekklesia Afrika wisdom, encouragement, and the help needed to remain faithful in ministry.
- That God would provide the resources needed to best strengthen the church in Africa.
- That God would increase healthy churches in Africa that are faithfully preaching God’s Word and shaped by a biblical vision for the church.

cults. After completing the SOMA program, Pastor Harrison began training local pastors in expositional preaching. This training expanded to his 230-member congregation at Trinity Baptist Church Gongoni. He also established two cohort centers as theological hubs, providing affordable biblical resources that teach sound doctrine and equip members for ministry. The congregation is deepening its understanding of God’s Word through preaching and personal study. May the Word continue to sustain and protect churches throughout Kenya from false teachings.



*[Visit Joshua Project to learn more about the unreached in this region.](#)*



# MALDIVES

<b>Major Religion:</b>	Islam
<b>Joshua Project Status:</b>	Unreached
<b>Percent Evangelical:</b>	0.01% (1 in 10,000)

The Maldives, famed for its coral reefs and turquoise waters, is a tropical haven nestled in the Indian Ocean. This island nation has a predominantly Muslim population, and Islam is infused into its national identity and legal system. Operating as a presidential republic, the Maldives has experienced political upheaval in recent years, with ongoing debates surrounding governance and democratic reforms.

Religious freedom in the Maldives is highly restricted, and all Maldivian citizens are legally required to adhere to Islam, the state religion. Practicing any other religion is strictly prohibited, and conversion from Islam carries severe penalties. Consequently, the small Christian community, primarily composed of expatriates, faces considerable challenges. Public worship is forbidden, and Christians must often meet in secret to practice their faith.

Despite these restrictions, the Christian expat community remains active, and discreet efforts to offer support and share the gospel locally continue. International Christian organizations also provide aid and assistance, operating within the confines of local laws while maintaining a presence to support believers and provide relief.

## Pray

- That God would bring about greater openness and respect for religious diversity in the Maldives, enabling more freedom of worship and expression for all faiths.
- That God would protect and strengthen the Christian community, granting them courage and wisdom as they live out their faith in a restrictive environment.
- That God would create discreet and effective opportunities for the gospel to be shared, reaching those who seek truth despite legal and social barriers.
- That God would guide and bless efforts to foster mutual understanding and respect among different communities, promoting a more tolerant and harmonious society.



# TURKMENISTAN

<b>Major Religion:</b>	Islam
<b>Joshua Project Status:</b>	Unreached
<b>Percent Evangelical:</b>	0.11% (1 in 909)

Turkmenistan, a Central Asian country famed for its expansive deserts and rich cultural traditions, is governed as an authoritarian state under President Serdar Berdimuhamedov, who succeeded his father, Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov, in 2022. The government exerts tight control over various aspects of life, including religious practices and freedoms. It is considered one of the world's most repressive countries, with strict limits on political and civil freedoms.

Sunni Islam is the predominant religion. The state imposes stringent regulations on all religious activities and all religious groups must register with the government. The Christian community, which includes expatriates and a small number of native believers, faces many obstacles and limited opportunities for public worship.

Registering with the government can be a double-edged sword though, as it typically leads to heightened surveillance and scrutiny, complicating efforts for believers to gather openly. Even officially registered churches endure harassment and forced closures. Pastors often face exile, abuse, fines, and imprisonment.

Christians in Turkmenistan remain resilient, with churches operating discreetly and believers meeting privately to worship. Both local congregations and international organizations work quietly to provide support and encouragement to Christians, navigating the country's restrictive legal environment.

## Pray

- That God would bring about greater freedom in Turkmenistan, allowing for open and unrestricted religious practices.
- That God would provide protection and strength to Christians in Turkmenistan, enabling them to remain steadfast in their faith despite government restrictions.
- That God would facilitate opportunities for the gospel to reach those who have not yet heard it, through discreet outreach and the witness of expatriate communities.
- That God would guide and support efforts to foster a climate of respect and tolerance among different faith communities, contributing to greater societal harmony.



[Visit Joshua Project to learn more about the unreached in this region.](#)

# BEN & ERIN

SERVING IN GERMANY SINCE 2017

<b>Major Religion:</b>	Christianity
<b>Joshua Project Status:</b>	Partially reached
<b>Percent Evangelical:</b>	2.12% (1 in 47)

Ben began attending MBC Tysons when he was just two years old. He joined the church when he was fourteen and eventually served on the worship staff for over twenty years. Erin began attending MBC in 1991 and served with Access Ministry staff for seven years. While at MBC, their daughters Elise and Emily were involved in many ministries.

Ben and Erin had an interest in Germany for many years. In 2017, Ben joined Eurobrass, an evangelistic Christian ensemble that tours Germany. The next year, they moved to the Black Forest region of Germany to serve with Artists in Christian Testimony International. They also perform handbell concerts as a way to share the gospel. God provided a special-needs school near their town, with a life and job skills training program, that Emily could attend. Elise is now studying at a university in the US.

Germany's historic appreciation for brass music opens many ministry doors. But despite centuries of rich spiritual heritage, Germans are quite secular. Technically, of the eighty million people in Germany, roughly half "belong" to either the Protestant or Catholic Church. But only 4% of Catholics and 3% of Protestants attend church on a regular basis. Among those who are Protestant, even fewer would identify as evangelical.

## Pray

- That God would bring improved health to Ben and Elise, restoring their strength and well-being.
- That God would help improve Emily's behavior and grant wisdom in making decisions about her future.
- That God would use the handbell and brass concerts to point people toward Jesus and the hope found in Him.
- That God would continue to bless the relationships being built with the Ukrainian families, deepening connections and opportunities for ministry.

## ENCOURAGEMENTS FROM 2024

Last December, the team had the opportunity to perform five handbell concerts, sharing the true story of Christmas with their audiences. Ben composed a new piece for the Eurobrass ensemble titled "A Light has Dawned," inspired by Isaiah 9:2. Erin continued to faithfully minister to four Ukrainian families with special-needs children, who have all decided to remain in the village permanently.

[Visit Joshua Project to learn more about the unreached in this region.](#)





# SOUTH ASIA

<b>Major Religion:</b>	Hinduism & Islam
<b>Joshua Project Status:</b>	Unreached
<b>Percent Evangelical:</b>	Unknown

One of MBC's partners, Good Church International (GCI), works among thousands of the remaining unreached people groups in South Asia. GCI operates through collaboration with US churches, supporting a thoroughly vetted, financially efficient, and church-based ministry. Their mission is to train and equip Indigenous pastors to faithfully teach God's Word and serve as gospel ministers in areas marked by deep spiritual need, limited resources, and government opposition.

Last year, in one South Asian country, GCI supported over fifty seminary students in full-time studies, providing for their tuition, books, and housing as they prepared to become church planters. Eleven new students were welcomed into the 2027 cohort, while twelve graduates from the 2024 class celebrated the completion of their studies! However, last year saw increased government scrutiny of the seminary and its associated church, including a Sunday raid that disrupted their worship service.

These obstacles are a stark reminder of the critical nature of this work and the real spiritual opposition determined to impede the spread of the gospel in the region. Despite this intimidation, the faith of the church members, students, and leaders remains steadfast, and the network of devoted pastors and churches continues to expand!

## Pray

- That God would protect church leaders, church members, and the seminary against oppressive government scrutiny and give them courage to persevere.
- That God would sustain and bless the 2024 graduates as they work to plant churches and that they would be well equipped for the task ahead.
- That God would help the new pastoral interns grow in their love of Christ and mature into healthy and effective leaders.



# TAJIKISTAN

Major Religion:	Islam
Joshua Project Status:	Unreached
Percent Evangelical:	0.07% (1 in 1,429)

Tajikistan, located in Central Asia, is renowned for its rugged mountainous landscapes and cultural traditions. As the smallest nation in the region, it is heavily shaped by its historical connections to the Persian Empire. The country is a secular republic with a predominantly Sunni Muslim population, alongside a smaller Shia minority. Last year saw a hopeful improvement in the country's economy, with both inflation and public debt decreasing.

Under the leadership of President Emomali Rahmon, who has held power since 1992, the government exercises tight control over various aspects of life, including religious practices. While the constitution technically guarantees religious freedom, these rights are limited in practice. All religious groups must register with the state, and unregistered activities often face scrutiny and regulation. This restrictive environment affects all faith communities, including Christians, who encounter significant obstacles in openly practicing their beliefs.

Despite these limitations, Tajikistan's Christian community continues to persevere. While most Christians are expatriates, a small number of local Tajik believers practice their faith discreetly, facing considerable risks. Underground churches and private gatherings provide vital support for those seeking fellowship and spiritual growth.

## Pray

- That God would bring greater freedom and stability to Tajikistan, easing restrictions on religious practices and allowing communities to flourish.
- That God would strengthen and protect the Christian community, granting them courage and resilience in the face of persecution and pressure.
- That God would open doors for effective outreach and evangelism, enabling the gospel to reach both expatriates and local Tajiks who have not yet heard it.
- That God would guide efforts to foster mutual understanding and respect among different faith communities, promoting peace and cooperation across the country.



# OMAN

<b>Major Religion:</b>	Islam
<b>Joshua Project Status:</b>	Unreached
<b>Percent Evangelical:</b>	0.63% (1 in 159)

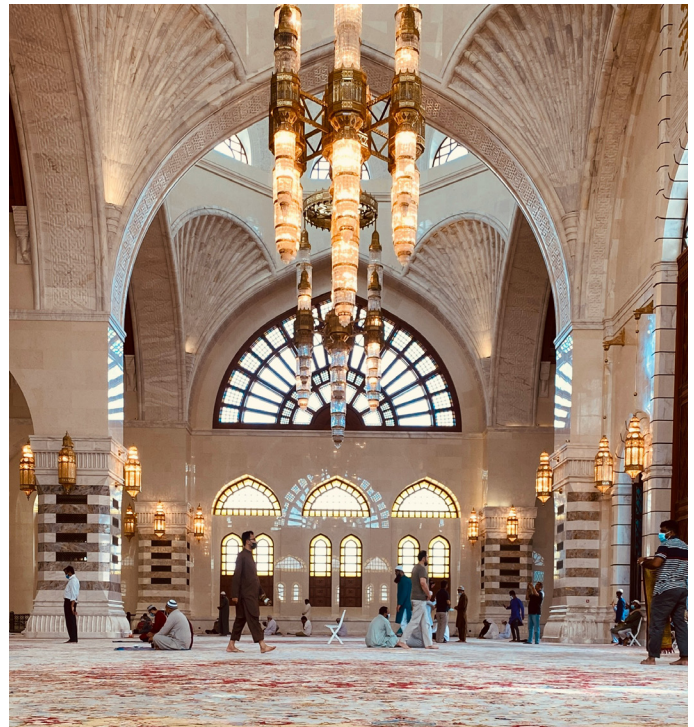
Oman, located on the southeastern edge of the Arabian Peninsula, is famed for its stunning landscapes, from rugged mountains to expansive deserts. The nation's deep-rooted cultural inheritance and its past prominence as a maritime power enhance its unique identity. Religious life in Oman is primarily shaped by Islam, with most Omanis practicing Ibadi Islam, a distinctive sect different from both Sunni and Shia branches.

Governed as an absolute monarchy, Oman is typically considered politically stable compared to many neighboring countries. However, in 2024, the nation faced an unprecedented shock when ISIL carried out a rare attack on a mosque, resulting in six deaths and numerous injuries. This event led to heightened security measures across the country. Additionally, after years of economic downturn, Oman expects to see some needed economic rebounds in 2025.

The Christian community in Oman, largely made up of expatriates and a small number of local believers, operates under a cautious atmosphere of tolerance. While the government is generally accepting of religious diversity, it imposes strict regulations on religious activities, limiting public worship and banning any form of evangelizing. This means Christians must navigate their faith carefully, adhering to the rules while still finding ways to serve and witness through respectful means. Despite these limitations, believers remain active and play a vital role in many local charities, which serve as a tangible expression of the love of Christ.

## Pray

- That God would provide economic stability and opportunities for Oman's youth.
- That God would protect and encourage Christians to live out their faith with wisdom.
- That God would open doors for the gospel to reach more people through service and compassion ministries.
- That God would bless efforts toward greater interfaith understanding and agreement.



*[Visit Joshua Project to learn more about the unreached in this region.](#)*



# LEBANON

<b>Major Religion:</b>	Islam
<b>Joshua Project Status:</b>	Minimally reached
<b>Percent Evangelical:</b>	0.71% (1 in 141)

Lebanon, a beautiful country overlooking the Mediterranean Sea, has a rich history spanning thousands of years. Known for their generosity, many Lebanese are fluent in both Arabic and French, with French serving as the official language until 1943. However, recent years have brought significant hardships. The COVID-19 pandemic, a catastrophic explosion in 2020 that resulted in thousands of casualties, an ongoing economic crisis, and regional conflicts have all presented serious challenges for Lebanese Christians.

One MBC church partner, strategically located in a city center, has engaged in outreach despite ongoing challenges. For the past few years, widespread despair has gripped the population as the collapsing economy and devalued currency rendered lifelong savings nearly worthless, leaving most citizens anxious about providing for their families. In late 2024, tensions between Israel and Hezbollah escalated along the northern Israeli-Lebanese border, resulting in mutual rocket strikes, civilian casualties, and the displacement of thousands. Despite these hardships, the church remains steadfast, witnessing the continued advance of the gospel.

Last year, the church also found great encouragement as more individuals, many of whom had no experience with church, began attending. These newcomers included new converts—some of whom kept their faith private due

## Pray

- That God would use the church to be a faithful gospel witness in the city, especially to those who are displaced by conflict and in need of care.
- That God would raise up leaders and people for a new Arabic-speaking church that this church hopes to plant.
- That God would grant peace and stability in the country and region.

to security concerns—and seekers eager to learn about Christianity. The church had the privilege of baptizing several people last year, including individuals from Lebanon and Armenia. As the church continues to grow both in size and spiritual maturity, they are especially grateful to now have four dedicated elders serving the congregation.



[Visit Joshua Project to learn more about the unreached in this region.](#)

# SOUTHEAST ASIA

<b>Major Religion:</b>	Islam
<b>Joshua Project Status:</b>	Partially reached
<b>Percent Evangelical:</b>	Less than 3% (1 in 33)

Southeast Asia is home to some of the world's most vibrant and rapidly expanding megacities, serving as thriving centers of economic growth, cultural diversity, and urban innovation. These bustling cities feature dense populations, energetic street life, and a mix of modern skyscrapers alongside traditional neighborhoods.

In one of this region's largest Muslim cities, a partner has planted a new church with a bold vision to create a missional community focused on discipleship, medical ministry, and leadership development. In early 2024, this church secured a two-year lease on a building located in the heart of a closed Muslim community, just two blocks from the church. This facility will serve as a hub for medical services, community development, and an urban church-planting institute.

The building's proximity to the church allows it to function as an outreach center, engaging with Muslim neighbors who might not attend church but who are more likely to connect through the outreach center. The church aims to equip its members to serve missionally, using this center to build relationships and make disciples among their unreached neighbors.

This effort aligns with the church's broader vision of planting healthy congregations throughout the city. In 2024, the church celebrated significant milestones: They covenanted together as members for the first

## Pray

- That God would grant wisdom to church leaders as they disciple their families and other church members.
- That God would grow and mature the local church leadership and raise up new leaders.
- That God would strengthen evangelistic efforts and bring a harvest amongst the area's Muslim neighbors through the church and outreach center.

time, witnessed their first baptisms, then marked their first anniversary, and rejoiced as a once-hardened Muslim neighbor and his daughter came to faith in Jesus Christ! These milestones reflect the church's growing impact and commitment to reaching their community with the gospel of Jesus Christ.



# TUNISIA

<b>Major Religion:</b>	Islam
<b>Joshua Project Status:</b>	Unreached
<b>Percent Evangelical:</b>	0.03% (1 in 3,333)

The North African nation of Tunisia has a diverse geography, from Mediterranean beaches to the vast Sahara Desert. Since the 2011 Arab Spring, the country has made progress toward democracy, though it continues to grapple with economic hardships and political instability. Tunisia held its first presidential election under a new constitution in October 2024. President Kais Saied, in power since 2019, won again amid controversy, with critics accusing his government of suppressing opposition and limiting democratic freedoms. High unemployment, particularly among the youth, continues to fuel frustration and unrest across the country.

Most Tunisians practice Islam, with a small Christian minority mainly composed of expatriates and a few national believers. Christians in Tunisia face social pressures and restrictions on religious expression. Although the constitution protects freedom of belief, discrimination is common, and conversion from Islam often results in social backlash. Proselytizing is also generally frowned upon.

Amidst these obstacles, hope persists as local and international Christian organizations provide humanitarian aid and educational support. Underground church gatherings thrive, reflecting the strength of Tunisia's Christian community, even in the face of great odds.

## Pray

- That God would bring economic stability and opportunities to Tunisia, alleviating poverty and unemployment and fostering hope and prosperity for all Tunisians.
- That God would strengthen and encourage the Christian community, providing protection and boldness as they navigate their faith amidst restrictions.
- That God would open doors for the gospel to be shared more widely and effectively.
- That God would raise up local leaders and establish healthy churches that can grow in faith and efficiently support their communities.





# AZERBAIJAN

<b>Major Religion:</b>	Islam
<b>Joshua Project Status:</b>	Unreached
<b>Percent Evangelical:</b>	0.22% (1 in 455)

Azerbaijan, situated where Eastern Europe meets Western Asia, is celebrated for its natural scenery, from tall mountain ranges to sweeping lowlands. Its capital, Baku, is a key destination for tourists, known for blending historic architecture with a modern, dynamic atmosphere. Despite its scenic landscapes and economic potential, Azerbaijan faces considerable issues, particularly concerning poverty and ongoing regional disputes.

The long-standing conflict between Azerbaijan and Armenia over Nagorno-Karabakh has caused severe hardships in the region. In September 2023, Azerbaijan launched a significant military campaign that led to the dissolution of the breakaway region of Artsakh, displacing thousands of residents, many of whom sought refuge in Armenia, deepening the humanitarian crisis. And in 2024, President Ilham Aliyev secured his fifth consecutive term in office, a victory widely criticized for being achieved through the suppression of opposition parties and tight control over the media, casting doubts on the fairness of the election process.

Alongside these territorial and political challenges, Azerbaijan tightly controls religious practices. Though religious freedom is constitutionally protected, Christians often face restrictions. The government requires registration for meetings and regulates

## Pray

- That God would bring peace to Azerbaijan, resolve territorial disputes, and foster stability for displaced individuals.
- That God would meet the needs of those displaced and help them embrace the hope offered through Jesus Christ.
- That God would send committed workers to share the gospel with those who have not yet heard it, equipping them to overcome the challenges posed by religious restrictions.
- That God would raise up strong leaders and establish resilient, thriving churches that boldly proclaim the gospel, even in the face of government scrutiny.

religious materials. Christians, especially those worshipping privately, risk harassment and legal penalties, while foreign evangelism is banned, complicating outreach. Despite these barriers, Azerbaijan's Christian community remains steadfast. Underground churches still gather, and believers are committed to sharing their faith despite opposition.



[Visit Joshua Project to learn more about the unreached in this region.](#)



**GLOBAL OUTREACH**  
MCLEAN BIBLE CHURCH

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## SOURCES

*Some entries have been adapted from previous years' prayer guides.*

*Country and region statistics:*  
[joshuaproject.net](http://joshuaproject.net)

*General country information:*  
[operationworld.org](http://operationworld.org)

