

## The World Watch List 2025 is now available. Here are the key headlines

More than 380 million Christians worldwide face persecution and discrimination for their faith

### North Korea again number one

Since the first World Watch List in 1983, North Korea has been number one 23 times – that's almost 70% of the time. The persecution of our North Korean family has worsened in the last year



following a rise in reported incidents of violence. It coincides with stricter regulations announced by the North Korean authorities in early 2024.

### 4,476 Christians killed worldwide

Last year, 4,476 believers worldwide were killed for their faith. Most were from Nigeria, with 3,100, which is fewer than 2023. However, other countries in sub-Saharan Africa have seen rising numbers of Christian deaths, including Burkina Faso, where 201 believers lost their lives – that's more than a fivefold increase on 2023.

### Rising violence, from Burkina Faso to Kazakhstan

The most violent region is sub-Saharan Africa, where weak government and political tensions allow Islamic extremism to flourish. Persecution is rising in countries such as Burkina Faso (20) and Mali (14), as well as Chad (49), which enters the top 50 for the first time. Violence grows in situations of anarchy and internal conflict. Trapped in the chaos of civil war, Christians in Yemen (3), Sudan (5) and Myanmar (13) are easy targets.

But strong, authoritarian regimes are also places of officially sanctioned violence. In both Kyrgyzstan (47) – back in the top 50 for the first time since 2013 – and Kazakhstan (up nine places to 38), churches and believers have been attacked by police and security services, or through locally orchestrated mobs.

### Displaced church

The persecuted church is, increasingly, a displaced church, exiled to refugee or IDP (internally displaced people) camps. Sudan (5) is facing the largest displacement crisis in the world: in a country of 49 million people, the number of IDPs by mid-2024 had surpassed 7.7 million.

### Christians forced into the shadows

More and more Christians are having to worship undercover. In Afghanistan (10), it is effectively impossible to publicly express your faith. In Algeria (19), all Protestant churches have been forced to close and the number of Christians awaiting trial and sentencing is at an all-time high. In China (15), the era of relative tolerance is over. Unregistered churches are now illegal. Meanwhile, in Libya (4), the small Christian community is extremely careful to avoid a repeat of the March 2023 crackdown that swept up numerous Christians for arrest.

Source: [www.opendoorsuk.org](http://www.opendoorsuk.org)

# Ringstone in Aveland News Sheet

26 January 2025  
The Third Sunday of Epiphany



*We welcome Revd Peter Lister, and thank him for leading our Eucharist service*

## Psalm 19: God's Glory in Creation and the Law

The heavens are telling the glory of God;  
and the firmament proclaims his handiwork.  
Day to day pours forth speech, and night to night declares knowledge.  
There is no speech, nor are there words; their voice is not heard;  
**yet their voice goes out through all the earth,  
and their words to the end of the world.**

**In the heavens he has set a tent for the sun,**  
which comes out like a bridegroom from his wedding canopy,  
and like a strong man runs its course with joy.  
**Its rising is from the end of the heavens, and its circuit to the end of them;  
and nothing is hidden from its heat.**

The law of the Lord is perfect, reviving the soul;  
the decrees of the Lord are sure, making wise the simple;  
**the precepts of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart;  
the commandment of the Lord is clear, enlightening the eyes;**  
the fear of the Lord is pure, enduring for ever;  
the ordinances of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.  
**More to be desired are they than gold, even much fine gold;  
sweeter also than honey, and drippings of the honeycomb.**

Moreover by them is your servant warned;  
in keeping them there is great reward.  
**But who can detect their errors? Clear me from hidden faults.**  
Keep back your servant also from the insolent;  
do not let them have dominion over me.  
Then I shall be blameless, and innocent of great transgression.

**Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart  
be acceptable to you, O Lord, my rock and my redeemer.**

**Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the  
beginning, is now and for evermore, Amen**

### Collect for this Sunday

Almighty God, whose Son revealed in signs and miracles the wonder of your saving presence: renew your people with your heavenly grace, and in all our weakness sustain us by your mighty power; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

**Amen**

### Readings for this Sunday

**Nehemiah 8.1-3,5-6,8-10; 1 Corinthians 12.12-31a ;  
Luke 4.14-21**



### Post Communion Prayer for this Sunday

Almighty Father, whose Son our Saviour Jesus Christ is the light of the world: may your people, illumined by your word and sacraments, shine with the radiance of his glory, that he may be known, worshipped, and obeyed to the ends of the earth; for he is alive and reigns, now and for ever. **Amen**

### From today's Gospel reading

*Jesus unrolled the scroll and found the passage where it was written:  
The Spirit of the Lord is upon me.... God has sent me to proclaim.... a year  
acceptable to the Lord.*

#### Reflection:

Jesus tells his hearers, "Today this scripture passage is fulfilled in your hearing." Luke is reminding us we don't have to wait for some future time and place for God to come to set us free, it is happening "Today." The One anointed with the Spirit enables us now to be in right relationship with God and one another.

#### So, we ask ourselves:

- ✠ Where in my life do I not feel free from fear, guilt, the past, etc?
- ✠ In faith, can I embrace the truth of Christ's words for me today: he has come to proclaim liberty?



### Can you help?

**There is a collection box in St John the Baptist Church, on the left at the back of the church.  
Please be as generous as possible.**

Milk (UHT cartons)  
Tinned meat  
Custard  
Laundry powder / liquid  
Toilet roll

Fruit juice / squash  
Jam  
Snacks—pot noodles, rice etc  
Washing up liquid  
Razors and shaving foam

Coffee  
Deserts  
Toothbrushes

### Sunday and regular weekday Services in the Group

26 January	11am	Eucharist	Kirkby Underwood
	3pm	Evening Prayer	Morton
2 February	11am	Eucharist	Morton
	3pm	Evening Prayer	Kirkby Underwood
9 February	9am	Eucharist	Haconby
	3pm	Evening Prayer	Morton
16 February	11am	Eucharist	Morton
Wednesday	10 am	See below	Morton

From 1 January, the Wednesday service will be Morning Prayer.

**Do you know anyone who is unable to get to church but who would like to receive Holy Communion?** Please speak with your church warden, or email [ringstoneoffice@gmail.com](mailto:ringstoneoffice@gmail.com)

### Please pray for...

Eben Atkinson, Sheila Bates, Margaret Brumby, Marie Rose Cubacub, Christine Evans, Sue Grainge, Annie Hall, Clive Hall, Robert Hitchens, Jane Knight, Judy Long, Imogen Matthews, Pat Reid, John Rowntree, Maggie Sharman, Amanda Thomson, Clive Walker, Judy Watson, Kevin Whitfield, King Charles III, and for any others whom we name in the silence of our hearts.

We give thanks for those on the road to recovery.

We remember Ivan Spencer, Peter Ashton, Astrid Kuhn, and the souls of all the faithful departed. May they rest in peace and rise in glory; and we pray for those who mourn their loss.

Funeral anniversaries: Shirley Dawson, Peter Chubbuck (1 year); Evelyn Bates, Margaret King, Arthur Branch, Caroline Creasey, Patricia Gray (2 years)

### Safeguarding & Contact Information

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