

Secret believers in Yemen are encouraged and empowered by your prayers

Secret meetings, coded messages and pseudonyms – these are all part of what it means to follow Jesus in Yemen, such are the dangers. “It’s like we have our own language,” says Saad*, a church leader. Amidst it all, the Holy Spirit is moving – and it has much to do with your faithful prayers.

For years, Yemen has been embroiled in civil war, leading to fractures in governance, a rise in extremism and a catastrophic humanitarian crisis. Against this backdrop, religious freedom is non-existent, with Christians and other religious minorities increasingly forced into the shadows. With Islam the state religion, it’s illegal for Muslims to convert to another faith, and being discovered as Christian can bring house arrest, imprisonment, torture and even death.

“We don’t get to heal from the first shock by the time we’re hit by another,” says Zain*, reflecting on the challenges faced in 2024, including the death of a beloved brother. “But we feel encouraged when we hear that the global church is praying for us.”

“Your prayers have done many miracles – your prayers for safety and protection have been answered,” says another leader. “It’s a miracle that we’re able to come back home and safely sleep at night and then do it again and again.”

“Your prayers are what keep us going as leaders – we move protected because of your prayers,” says Salman*. “We’re living in blessing because of your support in prayer.”

This blessing includes people coming to know Jesus, particularly through social media, reaching rising numbers of Yemenis who are questioning Islam. “Throughout 2024, we received the needed support to create specific online ads for a better reach, and it succeeded!” continues Salman. “We’re able to reach more people and many baptisms took place!”

“God is with us,” says Odai*. “He provides for His children, and is working in us and through us, despite the challenges. We see people coming to Christ and believers growing in discipleship. This is proof that God is working in the Yemeni church.

“All of these struggles have built fear in the hearts of the believers, but they’ve also brought us together in prayer and drawn us closer to God,” he continues. “We have denied our own lives, and we are living for Him. We thank God that we met Him, and we thank you for your prayers.”



A gathering of secret Christian in Yemen

PLEASE PRAY

- ✠ Praise God for new believers! Pray that they will grow in faith
- ✠ For protection, boldness and wisdom for believers
- ✠ That more Yemenis will encounter Jesus.

Source: www.opendoorsuk.org

**Names changed for security reasons*

Ringstone in Aveland News Sheet



12 January 2025
Baptism of Christ

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

Collect for this Sunday

Eternal Father, who at the baptism of Jesus revealed him to be your Son, anointing him with the Holy Spirit: grant to us, who are born again by water and the Spirit, that we may be faithful to our calling as your adopted children; 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**

Psalm 29: The Voice of God in a Great Storm

Ascribe to the Lord, O heavenly beings, ascribe to the Lord glory and strength.

Ascribe to the Lord the glory of his name; worship the Lord in holy splendour.

The voice of the Lord is over the waters; the God of glory thunders, the Lord, over mighty waters.

The voice of the Lord is powerful; the voice of the Lord is full of majesty.

The voice of the Lord breaks the cedars; the Lord breaks the cedars of Lebanon.

He makes Lebanon skip like a calf, and Sirion like a young wild ox.

The voice of the Lord flashes forth flames of fire.

The voice of the Lord shakes the wilderness; the Lord shakes the wilderness of Kadesh.

The voice of the Lord causes the oaks to whirl, and strips the forest bare; and in his temple all say, ‘Glory!’

The Lord sits enthroned over the flood; the Lord sits enthroned as king for ever.

May the Lord give strength to his people! May the Lord bless his people with peace!

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

Post Communion Prayer for this Sunday

Lord of all time and eternity, you opened the heavens and revealed yourself as Father in the baptism of Jesus your beloved Son: by the power of your Spirit complete the heavenly work of our rebirth through the waters of the new creation; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

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, Ivan Spencer, Amanda Thomson, Clive Walker, 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 Astrid Kuhn, Carol Godfrey, Jo Honniball 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.

We pray for Nick Walker and Catherine Holden, who are getting married at Morton on 18 January

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



Readings for this Sunday

Isaiah 43.1-7

Acts 8.14-17

Luke 3.15-17,21,22



Safeguarding & Contact Information

Safeguarding: We take your welfare and safety very seriously!

Revd Neil (Rector): revdneil@yahoo.com, 01778 219626 or
Janice Hill (Group Safeguarding Officer): janicethreetun s@hotmail.co.uk,
01778 440733 and 07972 211936

Group Administrator and for entries to news sheet (by Tuesday please)
Sue O’Riordan: ringstoneoffice@gmail.com

.Can you help?



Here is a list of items that are running low, but feel free to donate any in-date, non-perishable food at any of our Donation Points

Milk (UHT cartons)	Fruit juice / squash	Coffee
Tinned meat	Jam	Deserts
Custard	Snacks—pot nodles, rice etc	
Laundry powder / liquid	Washing up liquid	Toothbrushes
Toilet roll	Razors and shaving foam	

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.

Sunday and regular weekday Services in the Group

12 January	9am	Eucharist	Haconby
	11.15am	Plough Sunday service	Rippingale
	3pm	Evening Prayer	Morton
19 January	11am	Eucharist	Morton
26 January	11am	Eucharist	Kirkby Underwood
	3pm	Evening Prayer	Morton
2 February	11am	Eucharist	Morton
	3pm	Evening Prayer	Kirkby Underwood
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? Contact Revd Neil on 01778 219626

Other services in the Group

Thursday 16 January	11am	Funeral of Astrid Kuhn	Morton
Saturday 18 January	2.30pm	Wedding of Catherine Holden and Nicholas Walker	Morton

Plough Sunday Service—12 January

Rippingale’s Plough Sunday service will be held on Sunday 12 January at later time of 11.15am
Reverend Ian Walters will be leading the service



From today’s Gospel reading

After all the people were baptized and Jesus also had been baptized and was praying, heaven opened and the Holy Spirit descended upon him in bodily form like a dove.

Reflection:

The Spirit comes upon Jesus while he is praying. Prayer is a key theme throughout Luke’s gospel. Nothing important happens for Jesus in this gospel apart from prayer. Prayer must accompany the disciple’s ministry as well. Prayer opens the disciple’s eyes and ears so we can recognize Jesus when he appears disguised in the clothes of the ordinary people and events of our day.

So, we ask ourselves:

- ✚ Do I treat prayer as a formality each day, something I am “supposed to do?”
- ✚ As a person in the world, what steps can I take to begin to deepen my prayer life?