

Unrest in Iran

Protests in Iran have gained global attention. How can we pray for the country at this pivotal time? How are Christians affected and how can we stand with the church in prayer?



Widespread unrest in Iran has captured headlines around the world. The protests on Iran's streets are certainly in response to economic pressures and livelihood pressures – but they are a reflection of a far deeper crisis. "What we are witnessing in Iran today is a cry for dignity, justice and life itself," shares an Open Doors source from the region. "It is a cry rising from streets soaked in fear and courage alike. Street protests have expanded across the entire nation, and security forces respond with mass arrests and lethal force, in an attempt to control the masses."

What does this mean for Christians?

Christians are always vulnerable in Iran. It's number nine on the Open Doors World Watch List, and believers – particularly converts from Islam – face severe religious freedom violations. Our Iranian brothers and sisters experience persecution from the government and often from their own communities too. In the eyes of the Iranian authorities, Christians are 'national security threats', supposedly foreign agents influenced by Western countries to undermine the Iranian regime.

"Iranian Christians view the current situation through a strong commitment to justice, human dignity and peace," shares the Open Doors local source. "This is shaped both by their lived experience of marginalisation and by Christian ethics emphasising non-violence and love of one's neighbour." She continues: "As Persian-speaking believers without recognised places of worship and under constant pressure, their desire for change is deeply personal, yet they understand the present moment not as a religious uprising but as a unified national movement. Whether visible on the streets or standing in prayer and solidarity, Iranian Christians who participate do so first as Iranian citizens, motivated by conscience and a shared hope for a future defined by equality, accountability and respect for human life across all religious and ethnic lines."

Please pray

Your prayers are urgently needed for Iran and for our Iranian brothers and sisters. Local believers ask that you join in praying for:

- † Peace, protection and wisdom for the people of Iran amid violence and uncertainty
- † Comfort for families who have lost loved ones, and divine healing for those injured and traumatised
- † Iranian Christians to have courage, protection and perseverance in this season of unrest

Ringstone in Aveland

News Sheet 18 January

Second Sunday of Epiphany

We welcome Revd Sylvia Rice-Oxley and thank her for leading our Eucharist service

Psalm 40.1-12: Thanksgiving for Deliverance and Prayer for Help

I waited patiently for the Lord; he inclined to me and heard my cry.

**He drew me up from the desolate pit, out of the miry bog,
and set my feet upon a rock, making my steps secure.**

He put a new song in my mouth, a song of praise to our God.

Many will see and fear, and put their trust in the Lord.

**Happy are those who make the Lord their trust,
who do not turn to the proud, to those who go astray after false gods.**

You have multiplied, O Lord my God, your wondrous deeds and your thoughts towards us; none can compare with you.

Were I to proclaim and tell of them, they would be more than can be counted.

Sacrifice and offering you do not desire, but you have given me an open ear. Burnt-offering and sin-offering you have not required.

Then I said, 'Here I am; in the scroll of the book it is written of me.

I delight to do your will, O my God; your law is within my heart.'

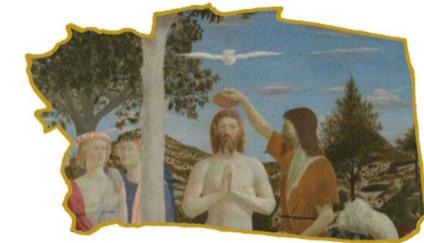
I have told the glad news of deliverance in the great congregation;
see, I have not restrained my lips, as you know, O Lord.

I have not hidden your saving help within my heart, I have spoken of your faithfulness and your salvation; I have not concealed your steadfast love and your faithfulness from the great congregation.

Do not, O Lord, withhold your mercy from me;
let your steadfast love and your faithfulness keep me safe for ever.

**For evils have encompassed me without number;
my iniquities have overtaken me, until I cannot see;
they are more than the hairs of my head, and my heart fails me.**

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





Readings for this Sunday
Isaiah 49.1-7; 1 Corinthians 1.1-9
John 1.29-42



The Collect for this Sunday

Almighty God, in Christ you make all things new: transform the poverty of our nature by the riches of your grace, and in the renewal of our lives make known your heavenly glory; 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**

The Prayer after Communion for this Sunday

God of glory, you nourish us with your Word who is the bread of life: fill us with your Holy Spirit that through us the light of your glory may shine in all the world. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**



From today's Gospel reading

John the Baptist saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world."

Reflection:

By calling Jesus "the Lamb of God," John evokes the Passover lamb and the suffering servant – images of sacrifice, deliverance, and mercy. Jesus comes toward us not in judgment, but bearing the weight of the world's brokenness, willing to take upon himself the sin that alienates humanity from God. In this moment, faith begins by looking, by recognizing who Jesus is and trusting what he comes to do for us.

So, we ask ourselves:

- † Where in my life do I most need to let Jesus take away sin, guilt, or burden I still carry?
- † Like John the Baptist, how can I point others – not to myself – but to Christ at work in the world today?



14th February at 7pm Games Night in Morton Church Hall

LOTS OF GAMES TO PLAY

JENGA, SNAKES AND LADDERS, DOMINOES ETC
 Tickets £10 per person to include buffet supper
(payable in advance please) by 10th February

from Dianne Newton on 01778 571890 or 07971 380034

Sunday and regular weekday Services in the Ringstone and Corby Glen combined Groups

Sunday 18 January	9.00am	Holy Communion	Bassingthorpe
11.00am	Eucharist		Morton
11.00am	Morning Worship	Corby Glen	
11.00am	Hymns & Prayers	Irnham	
11.00am	Morning Prayer	Swayfield	
		Swayfield Village	
		Hall	
Sunday 25 January	10.15am	Café Church	Kirkby Underwood
11.00am	Eucharist	Corby Glen	
11.00am	Morning Worship	Irnham	
11.00am	Morning Prayer	Morton	
3.00pm	Evening Prayer	Bitchfield	
6.00pm	Holy Communion		
Wednesday Services	10.00am	Morning Prayer	Morton
	10.00am	Morning Prayer	Corby Glen

Please pray for...

Jane Nichols, Jonathan Newell, Eben Atkinson, Sheila Bates, Margaret Brumby, Marie Rose Cubacub, Christine Evans, Sue Grainge, Annie Hall, Clive Hall, Robert Hitchens, Jane Knight, Imogen Matthews, Rory O'Riordan, 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 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.

Anniversaries...

Wedding Anniversaries: Nicholas and Catherine Walker (1 year)

Funeral anniversaries: Peter Ashton, Astrid Kuhn (1 year); Shirley Dawson, Peter Chubbuck (2 years)

Safeguarding & Contact Information

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Group Administrator and for entries to news sheet (by Tuesday please)