

Knightrider Street News



JANUARY 2026

MAIDSTONE
BAPTIST CHURCH



Taking the Good News of Jesus into our lives and into God's World
www.maidstonebaptist.net

Maidstone Baptist Church

Knightrider Street, Maidstone, Kent. ME15 6LU

Registered in England as a charity, no. 1128948

Verse for the year 2026:-

"This is the confidence that we have in approaching God, if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us." 1 John 5:14

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Church publications:

Monthly notice sheet:

Information for the notice sheet should be sent to the
General Administrator, c/o the church office.

Monthly magazine: Knightrider Street News

Editorial Deadline: *Second Sunday of previous month:20.00hrs by e-mail only*

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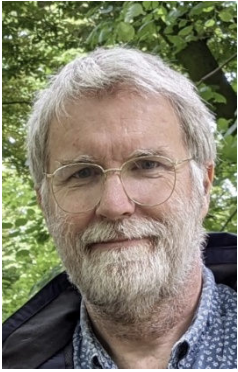
Tel: 07944 639851

Views and opinions expressed in KSN articles are those of individual contributors, and are not necessarily those of the Church leadership or editor.

Pastoral Visits:

At Maidstone Baptist Church we are happy to offer pastoral visits - for prayer, communion, or simply a chat. We can meet at church, in your home, or elsewhere, such as in a park or coffee shop.

If you feel this would be helpful, please speak to Nigel or Al, or to your Pastoral Leader.



So here we are at the start of a new year. I wonder what your hopes and dreams are for the coming year? As a Pastor as one year ends and a new one begins, I not only reflect on my personal journey and my plans for the year ahead, but I look back on the journey of the church at MBC and look forward to what God might have planned for the coming year.

The weekly Sunday attendance has nearly doubled in the last 2 years. We are a more diverse fellowship with increasing numbers of children, youth and young adults. A balance of those who have known God for many, many years and those taking their first tentative steps on their journey to discovering God. We truly have a lot to give thanks to God for! God is clearly doing something great, not only in our church, but as I have shared in sermons, God is moving across this nation. Hallelujah!!

Despite our increasing numbers on Sundays however, when we gather for prayer we have very few attendees and numbers remain disappointingly low. We have discussed some of the possible reasons for this in Church meetings and some ideas for growing our prayer life were shared in the last KSN. My disappointment is not in any group of people, but for what we are all missing out on by not praying together.

The Bible mentions prayer over 650 times. There are around 450 examples of answered prayers. The first time prayer is mentioned is in Genesis 4:26, at the time of Cain and Abel, when “the people began to call on the name of the Lord.” There are many examples of Jesus praying - He prays for his disciples, for Peter, on his own in the Garden of Gethsemane and teaches us how to pray the Lord's Prayer. If Jesus himself prayed then how much more should we!

This is the confidence that we have in approaching God: if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us.

1 John 5:14

Our Bible verse for 2026 is the above verse. I love the bold proclamation of confidence - He hears us! Prayer should be at the heart of all we do. We

will be beginning the year with a weekend of prayer. I really want our whole fellowship to be focussed on prayer. I want to increase my own personal prayer life. I want to encourage you to increase yours too. I know that many of you pray regularly at home and many of you are good pastoral pray-ers too, praying for the needs of others. I'm not dismissing what you do by any means, in fact I want to build on it.

But as we go through the year I would love to develop more opportunities for us to gather together in prayer; seeking the mind of God; asking for His guidance and direction. I am so excited for the opportunities that God may open up, for what He will lay on people's hearts, for where He will lead us.

May you all have a blessed and prayer-filled 2026.

Nigel

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BMS Birthday Scheme.

January 13th
January 17th

Mrs. Shirley Collins
Dr. David Jenkins



Happy Birthday to you both!

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Deadline for February Knightrider Street News:

Sunday January 11th

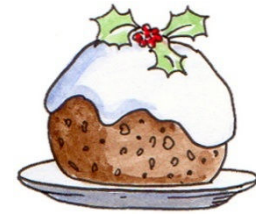
Please e-mail contributions to the address on inside front cover

No later than 20.00hrs on this date



On Sunday 7th December we welcomed Lois and Nana Owusu as we dedicated baby Leslie. As a church we promise to support Lois and Nana as they raise Leslie and to help them all grow in faith.

Christmas dinner at 5&2



On 6th December a great team of helpers, led by Elaine Watson, came together to provide a Christmas dinner with all the trimmings to many homeless and vulnerable people at our monthly 5&2 lunch.

***1 Peter 4:10** - Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms.*

Some prepped veg and stuffing balls, some manned ovens and stoves, some brought mince pies, some served the food and drinks, some washed up, some sat chatting with our guests and making them feel welcome. At the end of serving they were able to sit down and eat together.

5&2 is one of our main outreach events. It is open in the small hall at 12pm on the first Saturday of each month. It is open to everyone! If you would like a meal you are always welcome. If you'd like to know more please speak to Elaine Watson.







Prayer Points

JANUARY 2026

Thur 1st As we have arrived at a new year, give thanks for being a new creation. Let's pray for guidance; for those who have recently been bereaved, and for those who are fearful of what this new year might bring. As we look back over the past year - the ups and downs, the pains, sorrows and the grief - pray the comfort that only Jesus can give. Also remember the governments' awesome responsibility in dealing with world affairs such as climate change and the wars in the Middle East and Russia.

Fri 2nd Pray for our church leadership in this new year and for our minister Nigel and his wife Margaret with all the challenges ahead.

Sat 3rd May we pray for our worship as we continue seeing newcomers come to our fellowship week by week.

Sun 4th Let us pray for our young people and youth as a new year begins that they will be guided in their chosen career pathway as they serve the community. May we remember the elderly in our midst who are vulnerable.

Mon 5th Pray today for our members who are recovering from major illnesses or who have had surgery recently or are about to have investigations or are awaiting outcomes of investigations.

Remember also those who have had surgery cancelled due to shortages of nursing staff or doctors on strike.

Tue 6th Let us pray for the issues of global warming and the responsibilities that developed countries should accept.



Wed 7th May we pray for those on our streets here in Maidstone who are still sleeping rough with no fixed place of their own. Pray for the support team from the Knightrider Homeless Care Center.

Thur 8th Pray for our Boys' and Girls' brigades as they prepare for new projects up and down the country. Pray that the gospel mission will be at the forefront of all plans.

Fri 9th Remember in prayer our monthly 5 and 2 lunch service headed by Elaine on the first Saturday of each month.

Sat 10th May we pray for those who go out as part of the Street Pastor patrols and for an increase in volunteers so they can go out every week once more.

Sun 11th Pray for our local health and emergency services in this period of Winter as they are faced with overwhelming pressures to see to the needs of all who come for treatment.

Mon 12th Remember all our members who are isolated and cannot get out as before. Also those who are being cared for in residential or nursing homes.

Tue 13th We will pray today for any who cannot meet with us because of personal needs or who may be feeling discouraged, downcast or due to feelings of personal failure in their lives. The God who knows all things and has walked this earth knows exactly

what we are going through and about the personal things that affect us each day.

Wed 14th Pray for those who have just lost their jobs or may soon be made redundant. Pray for those who may be bullied in the workplace, victimised or harassed.

Thur 15th Pray for all those who are struggling in their walk in the Christian life, who may feel that all hope is lost. Pray that we will be given the strength to hang on in there on the promises of God's saving grace.



Fri 16th As we think of those who have been victims of crime, pray for harmony, safety and peace.

Sat 17th May we pray for peace within our neighbourhoods, streets and towns in these troublesome times, when spending time on the internet and social media can lead to us becoming victims of fraud or scams.

Sun 18th Pray for all our brothers and sisters who are being persecuted in this country and abroad because of their faith and pray for the ongoing war in the Ukraine and Gaza.

Mon 19th Let us pray for refugees who have arrived from war torn countries. Pray for their safety and continued care. Pray for the foreign office and the work that they do today. We remember those who recently have been trying to cross the channel in small boats in dangerous weather.

Tue 20th May we also pray for the local council in the Maidstone area who are responsible for organising the care and support of the many people who have arrived here and who need help so badly.

Wed 21st Pray again for Sir Kier Starmer our Prime Minister as he has an overwhelming task in leading this country through another year.

Thur 22nd Pray for our young people who attend Sunday School each week that they will grow in the strength of the Lord.

Fri 23rd May we pray for any near us who are suffering depression or anxiety in any form and who are unable to express their needs and are fearful and worried.

Sat 24th Pray for local schools and colleges as they embark on a new year, new term and new curriculum.

Sun 25th Pray for widows and widowers in the church and outside, in the pain of loss and grief that the arms of Jesus will warm around them.

Mon 26th Pray for all the suffering children and young families who have arrived in this country from countries where cruelty is a daily experience. Pray for their safety and care, even now as people are still trying to escape.

Tue 27th Let us pray for young children here in Kent who may be at risk of harm or abuse, even from members of their own family.

Wed 28th Pray today for new parents with young families in Maidstone and beyond, that they will be secured and safe in these dangerous and difficult times.



Thur 29th Pray for our youth and the culture of social media and the internet in these times of cybercrime and threats through these channels.

Fri 30th Pray for the County Council here in Kent that they will be guided in the right decision making for the town and county.

Sat 31st May we pray again for our churches together in Maidstone that this year will be a year to remember who we are, what we are doing, and where we are going.



Let us pray

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**Pray today for peace in the
Democratic Republic of Congo**

My name is Ikponmwosa Omoigiade but most people simply call me Ik. I am from Nigeria and I am Tearfund's Regional Resilience and Conflict Advisor for West Africa. My journey with peacebuilding has taken me across West Africa and beyond, witnessing the havoc conflicts cause, as well as the transformative power of peace.

In my role for Tearfund, I support our peacebuilding and humanitarian efforts across the region, working with partners and communities to build resilience in some of the most fragile situations.

In November 2024, I travelled to the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) in Central Africa on a visit that really deepened my understanding of peace

and its cost. As my flight descended over the vast expanse of DRC, I gazed down at the lush green mountains surrounding Lake Kivu, struck by the breathtaking beauty of the land that has experienced such unimaginable suffering.

I visited one region where over 120 armed groups operate, where ethnic conflicts between communities have claimed thousands of lives, and where the wounds of violence run generations deep. I was there to learn from our local partner, Action Entraide.

Hatred passed down generations

Here, communities were trapped in cycles of violence and revenge that stretched back decades. Young people were being recruited into armed groups. Families who had lived as neighbours for generations now viewed each other as enemies. Like a dark inheritance, hatred was being passed from parents to children. People couldn't travel to neighbouring villages without fear of being killed.

The roots of this conflict run deep in history. Land disputes between cattle breeders and farmers, compounded by extreme poverty and government neglect, created the perfect conditions for violence.

Armed groups thrived in this chaos, and young men with no economic opportunities were easy targets for recruitment.

The impact was devastating. Entire communities were displaced. Women were widowed and children orphaned. People living in fear, unable to trade in markets, and unable to send their children to school.

Trust had been eroded, and deeply traumatised individuals.

Impossible peace

Sitting in the Action Entraide office in Bunia, listening to these stories, I felt overwhelmed with such a sense of heaviness and hopelessness, that left me wondering whether peace here was possible.

But, through Tearfund's support, Action Entraide had been implementing Community Conflict Transformation Dialogues (CCTD), training peace champions and engaging faith leaders. This was being combined with

practical livelihood support, teaching young people carpentry and tailoring, offering them alternatives to joining armed groups.

Trades instead of guns

During my visit to the villages where Action Entraide had worked, I saw young people who were learning trades instead of holding guns – many of which were former armed-group members. I witnessed previously warring community members sitting together, trading, sharing meals: activities that would have been unthinkable in the past.

Peace is not merely the absence of violence, rather it is the presence of restored relationships, rebuilt trust, renewed hope. This was evident in young men choosing to learn a trade over picking AK-47s, people willing to plant trees together, literally investing in a shared future.

Please pray for:

- the protection and courage of peacebuilders like staff from Action Entraide, who daily put their lives at risk to build bridges.
- sustained peace in communities across the world where transformation has begun. Pray against any forces that seek to reignite violence.
- the youth across the DRC who face the daily temptation to join armed groups for survival. Pray that livelihood programmes will multiply, offering alternatives to young people.
- healing from trauma for the countless individuals and families who are carrying deep wounds from decades of conflict.
- government authorities and armed-group leaders who hold so much power over communities' futures, that God will soften hearts for encounters with him, and for them to prioritise people over power and greed.

Tearfund Advent Email 9/12/25

Tearfund, 100 Church Road, Teddington, TW11 8QE 0203 906 3906
info@tearfund.org



2nd Maidstone Girls' Brigade & 1st Maidstone Boys' Brigade



As usual we have had a busy session. Some of our younger members brought friends with them to our Bring A Friend evening at the end of November and 5 of the friends have been coming along since which has been great. We have had good numbers in our younger sections this term which has been lovely (and rather busy at times...).

Sessions for the older groups have included quizzes, challenges and sessions led by the young people. The younger sections have been thinking and doing things about advent and the build up to Christmas. We finished the session with fun evenings for all and by getting involved in the Church Carol Service.

We were pleased to once again prepare and serve a 3 course Christmas lunch for members of the Church fellowship and Brigade families, this year on Sunday 14th December. With over 100 people sitting down for lunch it was a busy weekend for us all to ensure a great time of fellowship and food. A special thank you to all involved in planning and preparing the hall and the food and to all the young people who came down to help. Thank you to all who supported us by coming along and to those who donated even though they weren't able to attend in person.

As part of this event we once again held a successful Christmas Cake / Yule Log auction for Brigade funds. Many thanks to Kirsty for making and donating the beautiful cakes and to those who generously contributed to the cake auction.

Please continue to remember the Brigade staff and young people in your prayers as they meet week by week – we do really value your support and interest. We start back for the new session on 7th January and would love to welcome new members into any of our sections.

Jane Haslam mbc-415@highg.net



Clicking into place

BMS World Mission workers Andrea and Ian are sharing God's love online across North Africa.

Maghdi* had so many questions. A chance encounter on social media had introduced him to a God who loved and forgave freely. And now he was unsure if the beliefs he had been brought up with were right after all... In the North African country where Maghdi lives, finding answers about Christianity is tough. Less than one per cent of the population identify as Christian, and constructing a church building is illegal. There is a Church, a body of believers – but it's very small and very hidden.

That's where BMS World Mission workers Andrea and Ian come in. Around twenty years ago, they joined a media centre in Spain to broadcast the good news of Jesus to unreached people across North Africa. At this time, no-one was making Christian television programmes for North African people in their own dialect. Since then, they've built a trusted team, including Arabic-speaking Muslim-background believers.

The team share engaging, culturally relevant short videos about Christianity on social media platforms such as Facebook and YouTube. "We make them to make people ask questions," Andrea and Ian explain. Which they do. After a video is published, the team's apologist, Habib*, is on hand to reply to individual questions via Facebook and WhatsApp. Often the comments are hostile, but sometimes people are genuinely seeking the truth.

Christmas downloaded

Last Christmas, they produced a series of 24 short animations telling the Christmas story – a digital Advent calendar. The videos were a hit. "The

rest of the year, we had 153 new subscribers to our YouTube channel,” says Andrea. “In December we had 692.”

And somehow, the simplicity of the animations touched Maghdi’s heart. For months, he’d been chatting to Habib online, asking excellent questions but then falling silent for weeks at a time. It emerged that his family were unhappy with his searching and had been trying to dissuade him.

The first question Magdhi asked the team was at Christmas time: “Why did Jesus come?” On day four of the Advent series, something finally clicked, and Maghdi gave his life to Jesus.

This was wonderfully unexpected news for Andrea and Ian. They had included a call to make a commitment in the final video of the series, but Maghdi hadn’t needed to wait. He told Habib, “This is the first time I have heard the Christmas story told so clearly.”

How do Andrea and Ian feel when someone comes to the Lord?

“Absolutely thrilled to pieces!” says Andrea. “It can be a very dry job, and then all of a sudden, somebody makes a commitment... It’s like, ‘Wow! We knew you were going to do something amazing with this, God.’ It makes you so excited.”

Following the success of the Christmas animations, the team’s work has gone from strength to strength. They produced another series for Easter, with more than 2,600 people checking out the Good Friday episode.

Growing the Church

When you’re the only Christian in your family, finding a sense of community is vital. The team put Maghdi in touch with another Christian in his own city who can study the Bible with him, so that he won’t be alone in his new-found faith.

Andrea and Ian are passionate about helping new believers to become confident, well-equipped followers of Jesus. They’ve produced a series of “How to” videos covering essential topics such as “How do I pray?”, “How do I read the Bible?” and “How do I worship?”

These videos are now being used by churches in North Africa

“Missionaries from other organisations in-country are asking, ‘Can we have your materials?’” says Andrea. Their impact is wider than Andrea and Ian might ever know, helping the Church to grow and mature in some of the toughest soil around.

All this amazing work is only possible through your generosity and prayers. “We are so grateful to be part of God’s plan of salvation for the world,” says Andrea. “To stand alongside each of you and serve in his Kingdom, holding out the hope of eternal life with God to those who do not know him.”

**Names (apart from Andrea and Ian’s) have been changed for security reasons.*

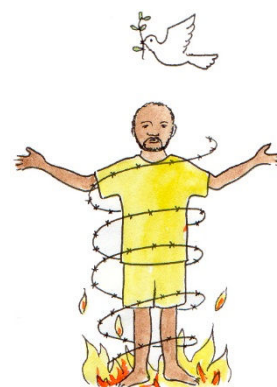
BMS Engage magazine 02/12/2025

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10 THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT VIOLENCE IN NIGERIA



Violence against Christians in Nigeria is in the headlines. What’s happening in Nigeria, who is responsible for the attacks, and how can we respond?

Simon

Open Doors Team

Violence is on the increase for many vulnerable communities in Nigeria

For many years, Christians in Nigeria have wanted the world to pay attention to the violent persecution they face. It seems that, finally, parts of the global community are starting to wake up to what's happening to God's people in Nigeria.

Some of the statistics have gone viral. At the same time, there are half-truths and misinformation doing the rounds. Amid all the noise, there is truth. And the truth is that Nigeria is – according to Open Doors' research – the most violent place in the world for followers of Jesus.

Here are ten things you need to know: to be clear about what's happening in Nigeria, and to help others see how they can break the silence around this issue even more.

1. Christians are, indeed, under attack

Several Islamist militant groups have built up a major presence in Nigeria, particularly in the Muslim-majority north of the country. Among these are Boko Haram and the Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP). ISWAP has ties with the same extremist groups and ideologies that occupied parts of Syria and Iraq ten years ago. Both Boko Haram and ISWAP want to build an Islamic state where only their extreme interpretation of Islam is allowed.

In recent years, other lesser-known Islamist militant groups have also started operating and are pushing into new areas, including into the south of Nigeria. In addition, Fulani militants have wreaked havoc in the Middle Belt of Nigeria. The Middle Belt is predominately comprised of Christian areas. The violence is staggering: Fulani militants are responsible for 55% of recorded Christian deaths between 2019 and 2023.

All these groups have unleashed waves of violence across the area, with thousands killed every year and millions driven from their homes – often these people are living in horrific conditions in displacement camps, unable to return home.

2. The violence is regional

This level of violence is not equal across all of Nigeria. Most of the violence takes place in the northern parts of Nigeria. Many Christians living in the south – particularly in places like Lagos, the most populous city in sub-Saharan Africa – don't face daily violence for their faith in Jesus. But with increasing frequency, violence has begun to spill into some southern, Christian-majority states.

3. This is a religious conflict... but it isn't *only* religious in nature

A tangle of different factors are at play in Nigeria. A significant factor is power and control. The extremists all want control, to rule over the land and the people who live there.

Another is poverty: if you have nothing, you are susceptible to radicalisation by Islamist groups.

For the Fulani people – who are mostly nomadic herders – a real factor is scarcity of resources brought on by climate change, which has driven herding groups further south in search of fertile land for their cattle. This is compounded by Christians owning most of the farming land.

However, elements of the Fulani tribe have been radicalised with violent Islamist ideology that justifies subjugating Christians as infidels. This creates an environment where religion is a key component of the violence.

4. Yes, Christians are being targeted

This is a hotly contested claim, not least by the Nigerian government. However, the statistics show a clear pattern.

Boko Haram and Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP) have explicitly and repeatedly declared Christians as targets. And many victims have told us that when Fulani militants attack, they don't just shout "Allahu Akbar" ("God is most great") – they also yell, "We will destroy all Christians."

Making matters more complicated is a serious problem with lawlessness in northern Nigeria. Kidnapping is big business, funding Islamist expansion and tied to active terrorist groups, with more than 20,000 people abducted

from 2019 to 2023. Many of these bandits have been known to target anyone who will pay a price – but they have learned that Christians, and specifically religious leaders, can fetch a higher ransom. This makes the Christians and religious leaders specifically vulnerable targets.

5. Muslims are targeted too – but not as much

According to the Observatory for Religious Freedom in Africa, which has painstakingly collected data on civilian violence and deaths in the region, the trends are clear: more Christians are killed by the extremists than Muslims, given the relative population size of Muslims and Christians in northern states. In fact, if you are a Christian, you are 6.5 times more likely to be killed than a Muslim and 5.1 times more likely to be abducted. This does not make the suffering of a Muslim less tragic; it just makes it less likely.

6. We must listen to the victims

It's vital to give those closest to the violence a voice, rather than just discuss statistics from a distance. Survivors tell us of the brutality of Boko Haram and ISWAP who have publicly and repeatedly said they would rid the nation of Christians and infidels. They tell us stories that upon being kidnapped, their captors say things such as, "If you were Muslim, you wouldn't be tortured like this," or that the kidnapped believer could end their suffering 'if they just proclaim to be a Muslim'.

7. It's not just in Nigeria

Radical Islamist violence is spreading across many nations in sub-Saharan Africa. Islamic militants and radicalised criminal gangs are exploiting existing conflicts, insecurities and poverty across sub-Saharan African nations such as Sudan and Eritrea in the east, Niger and Burkina Faso in the west, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) in Central Africa and as far south as Mozambique. Again, there are numerous different agendas and motives.

However, there is a common thread: extremist Islamist ideologies attempting to gain control of whole regions of Africa and persecuting Christians and others who do not adhere to their ideologies.

However, Nigeria is the epicentre of this violence, and if it goes unchecked there with millions more displaced from their homes, the implications for the rest of the continent are huge.

8. The media hasn't always got it right

The scale of the violence and persecution has not been a common headline in the global media. But it's unlikely that the media has been deliberately ignoring the violence. And indeed, the topic of violence against Nigerian Christians finally appears to be gaining some traction in the secular media, as well as being regularly discussed in Christian media.

However, many secular journalists have been quick to accept the Nigerian government's claims of the violence being non-religious. They will, for instance, describe Fulani militant attacks as 'clashes' between farmers and herders (rather than targeted attacks by militants armed with automatic weapons on defenceless Christian villagers).

9. People are losing faith that the government will actually act

The government has arrested and prosecuted some from Boko Haram and ISWAP; however, the same vigour of prosecution is less present with Fulani militants.

People on the ground do not trust that anyone will pay for their violent crimes. This is because Nigerians have seen hundreds of suspects arrested over the years and then most of them released, having never been charged or brought to trial.

The right to life, guaranteed under Section 33 of the 1999 Nigerian Constitution, is meaningless unless the state acts decisively to punish those who violate it. The ongoing culture of impunity will only result in more bloodshed and continue to erode public trust in the rule of law.

10. You can make a difference

It is time to break the silence over the slaughter occurring in Nigeria. Join Open Doors' *Arise Africa* campaign and sign the petition that calls for security, justice and restoration for Christians and other vulnerable people across sub-Saharan Africa. In 2026, the petition will be delivered to the UK Government, EU, UN, Africa Union and other local governments.

Raise your voice in petition, and call on the international community to take notice, take action and bring about restoration. Pray for Nigeria and its government. And pray for your brothers and sisters in sub-Saharan Africa who risk so much simply because they follow Jesus.

Please pray

- That real change will take place now that the world is paying attention to violence in Nigeria
- For truth to be heard and for our brothers' and sisters' voices to be heard
- For all Christians in sub-Saharan Africa who are afraid to know God's loving protection.

Arise Africa petition

The African church is asking us to join them in calling for protection, justice and restoration for persecuted Christians in sub-Saharan Africa. You can do that by signing the Arise Africa petition.

If you've already signed, please encourage your church, family and friends to add their voices. You can help us reach the target of one million signatures from around the world.

Together, we can stop the violence and start the healing.

Open Doors, PO Box 6, Witney, Oxon OX29 6WG Tel:01993 460015
Email: contact@opendoorsuk.org

December 2025

Regular Sunday Meetings.

Every Sunday: 10.30hrs In-person Worship at Knightrider Street

Services are also streamed on YouTube when possible.

Please Note: For safeguarding reasons photography and/or moving image recording, using any type of device, is **NOT** permitted in the church without **prior** permission.



Would you like to join
our Street or Prayer
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We are always looking
for volunteers to join us.

Please email:
maidstone@streetpastors.org.uk for more information



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