

attack occurred in a village in the northwest of Cameroon, a region where there is a lot of civil strife. Last year, two other men who worked with Bible translation projects in Cameroon died in similar incidents, and Christopher's murder follows the death of a key translator of the Bafaw Bible translation project.

James Poole, Executive Director of Wycliffe Bible Translators, said, "This tragic news reminds us how much the gospel message is urgently needed in Cameroon. Until people are transformed by Jesus, there will be no lasting peace. We continue to work with local partners to translate the Bible so that every Cameroonian can read the Bible in the language that speaks to them best. Please pray that the work of Bible translation in Cameroon will continue despite setbacks, and that people will discover the life-giving message of Jesus."

### Christians Seized in Iran (6)

Three more Iranian Christians were taken from their homes recently following the violent arrest of pastor Yousef Nadarkhani. Pastor Nadarkhani, a convert from Islam like the others arrested, was awaiting a summons to begin a 10-year prison sentence after his appeal of a conviction for "propagating house churches" and promoting "Zionist Christianity" was upheld in May.

Ten police officers arrived at the pastor's house and physically assaulted Yousef's son when he opened the door to them. Both Yousef and his son were tasered, despite

offering no resistance. The manner of their arrest may have been an attempt to intimidate the Christian community.

### Luis Palau Shares Health Update (7)

World-renowned evangelist Luis Palau, who was diagnosed with stage 4 lung cancer in 2018, received a "good report" regarding his health, his son has announced. On Facebook, Keith Palau shared an update regarding his father's health: "Dad had a full body scan, met w/oncologist," he wrote. "So blessed to get a good report that the tumors have not grown, and that his coughing/fluid buildup around the lungs is not due to tumor growth. Guess we get to have him around for a while longer!"

The evangelist remains confident in the future of his ministry, which includes his son Kevin as president, son Andrew as an evangelist, and son Keith on the development team. His ministry estimates that he has spoken to 30 million people in hundreds of cities in 75 countries. Palau, known as the Billy Graham of Latin America, has authored dozens of books and has been featured in radio broadcasts in English and Spanish on 3,500 radio outlets in 48 countries.

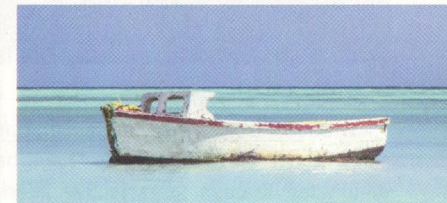
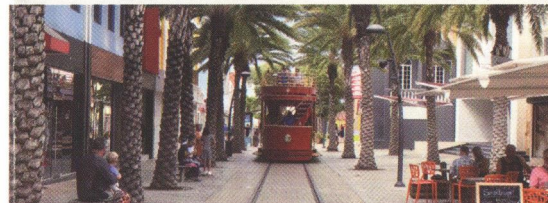
"And as long as I have breath . . . I will preach," he said in the statement. "I will raise high the banner of biblical evangelism. I will do my part. And I'm praying you continue to do yours as well."

### significant news for christians

Some news that's encouraging—some disturbing. Read with discernment. Watch and pray.

# THE Church Around the WORLD

December 2020



### Country in Focus: The Netherlands Antilles (1)

This island country in the Caribbean consists of five primary islands: Curacao and Bonaire, off the coast of Venezuela, and three of the Leeward Islands 500 miles to the northeast, St. Eustatius, Saba, and the Dutch half of St. Martin. The total land area is 300 square miles. The islands are well developed by Caribbean standards, and the mainstays of the economy are tourism, petroleum refining, and offshore finance.

There is complete freedom of religion on the islands, yet the freedom for the gospel has not resulted in a great harvest. Evangelical witness is progressing, slowly and steadily, but the prevalence of nominalism, superstition, and many marginal sects shows how few understand the message of salvation. Christian radio is a very strategic ministry, especially in the areas without a flourishing local church.

Prayer concerns:

- Pray that those who call themselves Christians might discover a dynamic relationship with the living Savior.
- Pray for a vital, growing church on every island.
- Pray that the Papiamentu Bible (published in 1977) would impact the people who use it.
- Pray for increased Bible literacy among the Christian population.

### Female Births in India to Drop by 6.8 Million (2)

A study shows that India could see about 6.8 million fewer female births between 2017 and 2030 because of sex-selective abortions.

"The masculinized SBR (sex birth ratio) for

India is a direct result of the practice of sex-selective abortions at the national level," the report claimed. There is an "intensity of son preference" in the Indian culture. The Uttar Pradesh area could lose the most female births, with researchers estimating about 2 million fewer from 2017 to 2030.

So encourage each other and build each other up, just as you are already doing.

1 THESSALONIANS 5:11





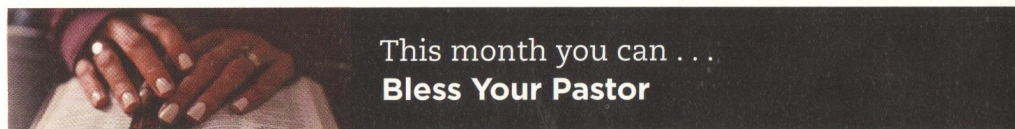
In 2019, a research analyst at the Population Research Institute said that since 1990, about 15.8 million girls “have been eliminated through sex-selective abortion

and other forms of prenatal daughter elimination. To put that in perspective, that is roughly the equivalent of the population of Portugal and Finland combined.”

China, South Korea, Taiwan, Vietnam, and nations in the Balkan Peninsula of Europe are also areas where “millions of girls have been lost” because of sex-selective abortion.

## Nepalese Officials Halt Church Construction <sup>(3)</sup>

Municipal officials in Nepal recently ordered a church to stop construction of a worship hall. When pastor Manish Bohra’s small church outgrew its rented room for



## This month you can ... Bless Your Pastor

With 9 out of every 10 pastors in America under “financial pressure,” and 6 out of 10 churches facing giving declines during the COVID-19 pandemic, the National Association of Evangelicals (NAE) launched its annual Bless Your Pastor campaign (BlessYourPastor.org).

Often under great stress, pastors and churches have quickly changed course this year, learning how to livestream services and develop creative opportunities to minister virtually. Pastors and church staff have been working tirelessly to bless others during this difficult time. Now it’s time to bless them.

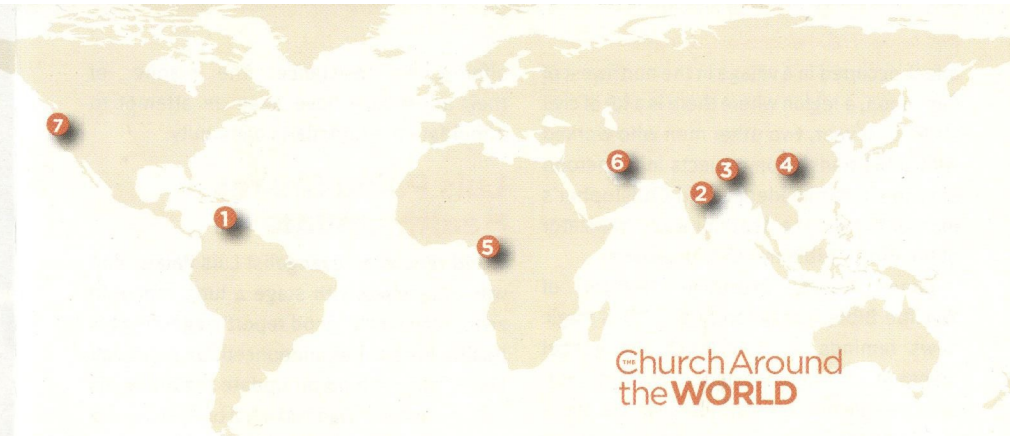
Even before this crisis, the majority of pastors and their families were walking

a financial tightrope—teetering on the edge of serious debt and wondering how they could pay essential bills. According to NAE’s research, half of America’s pastors earn less than \$50,000 per year and work 50 to 70 hours per week—with 90 percent admitting they feel financial stress.

Last year, thousands of churches received free grant-funded materials to help them participate in the national Bless Your Pastor campaign. The goal this year is to “create an even bigger wave of sharing and caring for pastors, church staff, and their families.” Funded by a multimillion-dollar grant from a well-known endowment, Bless Your Pastor aims to ignite generosity and equip

congregations to “show and share God’s love” for their pastors in creative and practical ways. Churches participating in this year’s Bless Your Pastor campaign will share a list of “50 Creative Ways to Bless Your Pastor” with their congregation, take up an appreciation offering for their pastor, and receive a free \$250 Amazon gift card from the NAE for their senior pastor.

The “50 Creative Ways to Bless Your Pastor” list inspires people to bless their pastor and church staff with their time, talents, and treasures. Examples include doing car repairs, sharing a vacation home, giving gift cards, or even providing free professional services, such as dental care.



Church Around  
the **WORLD**

Nepalese Officials Halt Church Construction, continued from page 2

worship, he leased land on which to build a temporary structure for worship.

“I received a phone call from officials at Galkot Municipality warning us not to construct a church, and that they had received a petition from the local residents opposing Christian activities in the area,” Pastor Bohra said. “When we tried to reason with the officials, they told us that we have gone against the Nepalese laws, and that we must stop all activities and vacate the premises with immediate effect.”

In Nepal, all religious groups except Buddhist monasteries must register as nonprofit organizations to own land or other property, but Pastor Bohra was only leasing the land. Nepalese law does not provide for registration of religious organizations as religious institutions with the exception of Buddhist monasteries, but all religious groups must register as nonprofit organizations or nongovernmental organizations to operate legally as institutions.

## China Fines Christian for Holding Online Bible Study <sup>(4)</sup>

A Chinese government agency fined a Christian man \$2,870 for holding an online Bible study it says violated a new antireligion law. The man was contacted

by the Ethnic and Religious Affairs Bureau and accused of hosting “illegal religious education training” online. The letter quoted a new law, the 2018 Regulations on Religious Affairs, which states that “non-religious groups, non-religious schools, non-religious activity sites, and temporary activity sites not appropriately designated as religious ones cannot conduct religious activities, accept religious donations, or carry out religious training.”

Christians in China are allowed to join government-sanctioned churches that are part of the Three-Self movement. Because such congregations face heavy regulations and even persecution, millions of Chinese Christians worship in illegal house churches, and it becomes more and more dangerous to conduct online activities.

Three-Self congregations that were forced to close due to the pandemic are being allowed to reopen only if their pastors use their sermons for “patriotic education” and to support the Communist Party.

## Bible Translator Killed in Cameroon <sup>(5)</sup>

Pastor Christopher Tanjoh, a Bible translator and literacy teacher with the Moghamo Bible translation and literacy project in Cameroon, was murdered in an attack in his village, according to Wycliffe Bible Translators. The