



# Open*Doors*

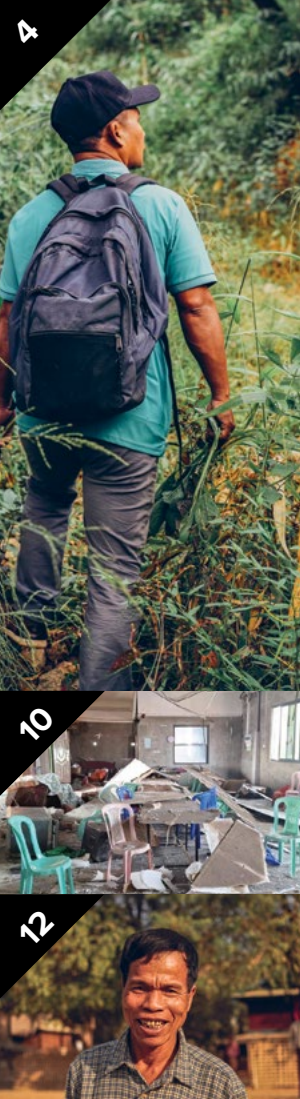
**MAGAZINE**

MAY | JUNE 2025

**NO SAFE  
PLACE  
PERSECUTED AND  
DISPLACED IN  
MYANMAR**

STRENGTHENING CHRISTIANS WHERE FAITH COSTS THE MOST

[www.opendoorscanada.org](http://www.opendoorscanada.org)



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*Cover image: Since the coup in 2021, life has become more deadly for persecuted Christians in Myanmar. They have to move from place to place to find safe shelter. It's difficult and exhausting. Their brothers and sisters across the world need to let them know they are not alone. Read more on page 4.*



OPEN DOORS MAGAZINE is published 6 times a year to provide concerned Christians with information about events affecting persecuted Christians worldwide. ODC is a member of Canadian Centre for Christian Charities and the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada. The material contained in this publication cannot be reproduced in any form, including on the internet, without written permission. © 2025 Open Doors Canada.

## GARY'S TAKE



**Pastor Gary Stagg**  
Executive Director  
Open Doors Canada

Dear Friend,

In times of great turmoil and uncertainty, the resilience of faith shines brightest. Across history, the narratives of displaced Christians serve as testament to unwavering belief and the unyielding spread of the Gospel. This edition highlights the stories of individuals who, despite facing displacement, persist in practicing and sharing their faith.

Today, hundreds of thousands of Christians reside in Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camps worldwide, with many others fleeing for their safety while enduring ongoing hostility and challenges. Each displaced Christian's experience is distinct, shaped by factors such as age, gender, religious background, socioeconomics, location, and ethnicity.

The recent earthquake in Myanmar is an example of how natural disasters can also force people into displacement. Even before the earthquake, many thousands of Burmese people were living in displacement – ever since the military coup in 2021. Christians are among those displaced, both by conflict and persecution, and Christian communities have been particularly targeted by both the military government and opposing rebel groups. “For Christians in Myanmar, those who have already been affected by the war, and those who have been displaced, this may have a compounding effect.” explains Daisy Htun\*, an Open Doors local partner. “They have already experienced the coup, there is economic hardship, and now, a natural disaster has befallen them.”

As you read these pages, may you be stirred to pray for our family members in Myanmar and for the millions of Christians around the globe who are displaced. Also, may the experiences of displaced Christians to inspire steadfastness in your journey, acknowledging that despite challenges, Christ's message of hope and love endures.

Grace & Peace,

  
Pastor Gary Stagg



# NOWHERE SAFE

Pastor Yang must keep moving to keep his family safe from bullets and bombs. He urgently needs your help.



Civil war in Myanmar is being used as a tool of persecution. Christian communities have been destroyed and believers driven from their homes. Nowhere is safe – and displaced Christians urgently need help.

Branches tear at Pastor Yang's clothes and arms as he runs through the forest, clutching the hand of his young child. His wife dashes ahead, stumbling over roots. But they can't stop...

"We are running and sometimes we are crawling, because they are shooting. Sometimes we run the whole week searching for safety and survival. Behind, there is bombing still going on."

Deep within the trees, Pastor Yang\* stretches out a tarpaulin and the family hides under it. "If they see where we stay, they will bomb it again," he says. "But there's no water or food, and the children are crying. There's nothing."



It's a terrifying, desperate struggle to stay alive. But for Pastor Yang, it's not a one-off.

Since 2021, as Myanmar's civil war intensified, this family has been repeatedly forced to flee every time they tried to settle in a new location. Their money stolen, their belongings looted, their churches targeted. For followers of Jesus in Myanmar, nowhere is safe.

"I feel helpless that I cannot make my own family safe," Pastor Yang admits. "You know, sometimes we feel God is not with us."

## BRUTAL WAR

Believers have long been persecuted in Myanmar, but the 2021 coup intensified their suffering. Military airstrikes destroyed Christian communities and churches, killing thousands of people. We estimate that around 40,000 Christians have been displaced or forced into hiding.

When believers flee, they are left without food, shelter or security – and their faith is tested like never before. The church is weakened as people disperse, and its very existence is threatened. With conflict dragging on, there's a risk Myanmar's displaced Christians become forgotten...

"We feel very lonely because we are away from people," says Pastor Yang sadly. "My church members are scattering everywhere. It's very difficult to visit them because if we go outside, at any time, at any place, bombing and shooting can happen."

### RELENTLESS PERSECUTION

Pastor Yang remembers all too clearly the first time he was forced from home. Back then, he was a youth pastor, newly married and shopping in the market, when police officers questioned him about a protest.

Following Jesus in Myanmar has never been easy. But for the young pastor and his wife, this interrogation felt different. "We felt unsafe and decided to leave," said Pastor Yang.

They haven't stopped moving since. Yang became a pastor of a small church, but members of his congregation were blindfolded, held at gunpoint, and the community scattered. Another



*Faith of displaced believers is tested like never before. You can provide support and training today.*

time, Pastor Yang's motorbike and emergency fund, nearly two months' wages, were stolen. The family couldn't stay.

Today, Pastor Yang is exhausted and depleted by years of upheaval, poverty and stress. "The burden of moving with young children weighs heavily on me and my wife," said Pastor Yang. "We live amid the sounds of gunfire and bomb explosions. We feel we can be killed at any moment. Even when I step out to buy groceries, I pray, 'God help me come back safely.'"

### 180,000 DISPLACED

Around the world, more than 180,000 Christians are displaced or in hiding because of violent persecution, according to Open Doors estimates. This is a crisis which rarely makes the headlines.

Our vision is that Christians forced from their homes remain strong in faith, resilient to persecution, and

empowered to shine as a light in their communities. With your gifts and prayers, Open Doors can provide urgent relief, leadership training, and practical support like medical aid and legal help.

Above all, your support shows Christians like Pastor Yang they are not forgotten.

"We know the prayers of believers all around the world protect us," says Pastor Yang. "Despite feeling desperate and hopeless at times, we know God is with us. Our family prays together every night, asking God to give us strength."

He added, "There is a God that can do everything. He is sustaining us. Sometimes we want to give up, but we are encouraged to keep on moving and serving the Lord."

\*Name changed to keep him safe



## Will you help faith survive among displaced Christians?

### PLEASE GIVE

**Every \$42** could provide training for a Christian displaced by violence, so they will persevere amid persecution.

**Every \$64** could provide one month's vital support to three believers forced to flee their homes.

**Every \$129** could provide a safe place to stay, medicine and legal aid for displaced believers.

### PLEASE PRAY

- Give thanks for Pastor Yang and his incredible resilience. Pray for perseverance and safety for him and his family.
- For the estimated 40,000 displaced believers in Myanmar, that they will be reached with food, shelter and practical help.
- For Christians all over the world who've been forced from their homes by violence and persecution. Pray they will know they are not alone.



# PRAY FOR MYANMAR'S DISPLACED CHRISTIANS

War in Myanmar is being used as a tool for persecution – with churches under attack and Christians driven from their homes. Violent conflict is in its fifth year and shows no sign of ending. Displaced believers are exhausted and vulnerable.

You can stand with your persecuted brothers and sisters in prayer. Together, we can strengthen a Christian community at risk.

Right now, both the military and extremist Buddhist groups are using the crisis in Myanmar to target Christian communities. Last year, 400 houses and five churches in Chin State were destroyed. In Kayah State, 16 young people were burned alive.

When believers flee to camps or the jungle, they are in a perilous position. Women have died giving birth in Myanmar's forests. Pastors face imprisonment. And Christians are often last in line for government aid.

This desperate situation needs your urgent prayers...

## Pray for people\* like...

**PASTOR MUN**, who's been forced to leave his hometown in Chin State. "We can no longer go to our churches," he said.

**MOE MOE**, from Kayah State, who has been displaced several times. "It is challenging to be on the run. Every day we must strive for survival," she said.

**DAN**, a young Christian man, who's been called up for military service – and is now in hiding. "I am praying for my safety and living a quiet life," he said.

**MEI MEI**, a former Buddhist, who lost her job and home when people discovered she'd become a Christian. Pray she will remain strong in faith.



## A PRAYER FOR MYANMAR

Dear Father,

We uphold the country of Myanmar in prayer. We long for restoration. We long for your peace to reign in this nation. We long for the day our brothers and sisters there can gather freely to worship and praise you. We celebrate their strength and bravery in persevering in faith today.

Father, heal the broken hearts of Christians in Myanmar. Restore wounded spirits. Renew in them your Holy Spirit.

Father, help displaced believers trust you and have faith in you.

Father, give daily bread to our persecuted family, and protect them from evil. Help them to lead lives according to your will and in joy. Father, be with them.

Amen



When every day is a struggle to survive, faith is tested like never before. Displaced believers are holding on – but they need to know we are with them.



# FIVE WAYS TO PRAY FOR MYANMAR

*In the wake of two earthquakes in Myanmar on Friday, March 28, Christians in Myanmar are calling on their global Church family to join them in prayer.*

Open Doors partners are already sharing how vital your prayers are in helping believers in Myanmar know they aren't alone. "I share to believers when I meet them that, even though things are terrible and it's easy to be isolated, we are not alone, and that there are people around the world praying for us," says Daisy Htun\*, a local Open Doors partner.

**Here are five ways you can pray:**

## 1. Pray for protection and comfort for the people of Myanmar

More than 2,000 people have died as a result of the earthquake, which also affected neighbouring countries Thailand and China. Thousands more have been injured, and even more have seen their homes, businesses, hospitals, churches and other buildings destroyed. "There is no electricity, and the water supply is not functioning. It's becoming a challenge to even go to the toilet," shares a local Christian.

Please pray for all who are mourning their loved ones, for

those who are displaced from their homes and for those who are fearful. Pray that there would be no further casualties, and that water, electricity and WiFi would be restored, so people can communicate and have safe sanitation.

## 2. Pray for Open Doors partners and their work

There haven't been any reports so far of Open Doors partners or their families being harmed in the earthquakes. Thank God for their safety. Please pray for partners' projects in the region, and for protection over those they have supported and encouraged over many years. Ask God that their programs would be restored when safe to do so.

## 3. Pray for Christians who already faced displacement and persecution

Even before the earthquake, many thousands of Burmese people were living in displacement – ever since the military coup in 2021. Christians are among those displaced, both

by conflict and persecution, and Christian communities have been particularly targeted by both the military government and opposing rebel groups. "For the Christians in Myanmar, those who have already been affected by the war, and those who have been displaced, this may have a compounding effect," explains Daisy Htun. "They have already experienced the coup, there is economic hardship, and now, a natural disaster has befallen them." Please pray for them to receive resilience and strength from God, and to know His kindness and presence.

## 4. Pray for the church in Myanmar to be salt and light

Daisy Htun asks: "Pray for the churches in Myanmar in areas that have not been affected – that they will have compassion and be able to extend a helping hand to their brothers and sisters affected by this earthquake." As the country recovers from this trauma, ask that God would use His children

to be salt and light in the face of darkness. May people see their kindness and hope, and recognize that they demonstrate the truth of the gospel. Pray that the Burmese church will be Jesus's hands and feet in response to this disaster.

## 5. Pray for wisdom and resources as the country rebuilds

Even in the wake of the earthquakes, there have reports of the military junta continuing to bomb their own people. Ask for peace in Myanmar and for an end to all violence. Pray that the nation's leaders would have wisdom and fairness in their response to the devastation, and that they would use their resources and any foreign aid justly to rebuild the country for all its citizens.

Thank you for your ongoing prayers. They are much-needed by our brothers and sisters in Myanmar and the wider region.

\*Name changed to protect identity





# STILL SERVING, THANKS TO YOU

Myanmar's military coup put Christians like Pastor Myint\* in immediate danger. Your support arrived just when it was needed most.

Drunk young men burst into Pastor Myint's home. They'd heard about a Christian leader who belonged to a 'foreign' religion and had been sharing his faith around the village.

Their mission? To kill him.

It didn't matter that for years Pastor

Myint and his family had lived peacefully in this Buddhist-majority area. They were respected and liked. But since the military coup on 1 February 2021, new village leaders were in charge – and Christians were in danger. Tears roll down Pastor Myint's face as he remembers that terrible day...

"One of the leaders instigated the richest man in the village against me. He gathered some young men, offered them alcohol and instructed them to kill me and my sons," said Pastor Myint.

"Thankfully some villagers notified me so I took my sons and hurried away. But my wife and daughter were home when the men barged into the house. They were very scared. When I did not return home, the attackers killed two Burmese villagers who had shown interest in the Christian faith."

It was too risky for Pastor Myint to return, so his wife May\* and their daughter escaped – and the whole family fled to safety.

"When the attackers learned all of us had left the village, they looted our house and took our possessions. Then they burned down our home."

The family had nothing. No income, no home, no hope. But then you stepped in – with support, compassion and care for your persecuted brothers and sisters. Your gifts helped to provide emergency food and encouragement to Pastor Myint.

May said, "After we were displaced, no one else even bothered to ask us about our welfare. We are so thankful to you for listening to our story and helping us."

Because of your support, Pastor Myint continues to serve Christians in Myanmar – but he needs your prayers. "I still worry about the spiritual wellbeing of believers who are displaced because of conflict and oppression," he said.

"We have been in ministry for years and have seen many come to Christ. But we have lost connection with people because of war and persecution. Please pray God will be with them and they will remain faithful to Jesus."

\*Names changed to protect them from harm



## PLEASE PRAY

- Pray for Pastor Myint and his wife May, who both suffer from poor health,
- Ask God to be with Pastor Myint's children, who feel the pain of persecution.
- Pray for Christians in Myanmar who are displaced and who feel alone.

## GOOD NEWS

### THANKS TO YOUR FAITHFUL PRAYERS, A CHRISTIAN PRISONER IS FREED!



representative image

*Thank you for praying for Christian prisoners worldwide! Because of your intercession, a brother was recently released from prison in the Arabian peninsula.*

We rejoice in the Lord's faithfulness as we share that Christian prisoner Hamza\* has been released from prison in the Arabian peninsula! Praise God for answered prayer. While he is no longer in prison, he remains under monitored house arrest. He can leave his home but must regularly check in with authorities. Despite these restrictions, Hamza continues to grow in his faith and engages in discipleship, though it must remain underground. Let us continue to pray for him as he walks this challenging path. Please continue to pray for his healing and protection from further harm.

### YOUR SUPPORT HELPS PERSECUTED YOUTH IN TRAUMATIC SITUATIONS



*Godwin lost his father at the age of 13, but thanks to your support, he was able to find comfort, healing and forgiveness.*

Godwin\* was only 13 when his father was killed by extremists in Nigeria. For a young child, dealing with such loss can be overwhelming. "When we realized he was really dead, we cried." For months the grief was too much to handle.

Now 15, Godwin was invited last year to an Open Doors supported trauma centre where he finally found healing. He shares: "When my siblings and I came here, I was strengthened...I have been able to forgive those that killed my dad, that is why I am thankful because I have received healing." Thank you for giving the gift of help to children like Godwin.

## ONE WITH THEM

*Continue to remember those in prison as if you were together with them in prison, and those who are mistreated as if you yourselves were suffering.*

Every June, we set aside a day to remember and pray for Christians who are held captive for their faith. *One With Them: A Day for Christian Captives* is a time to stand in solidarity with our brothers and sisters who suffer in silence.

On **June 22**, churches across Canada will take time in their services to pray and you can too. A free **church toolkit** is available at [www.onewiththem.ca](http://www.onewiththem.ca) to help you lead your congregation in meaningful prayer and reflection.

Plus, join us online for a special **livestream event** as we share stories, updates, and prayers for those in captivity.

Learn more at [www.onewiththem.ca](http://www.onewiththem.ca).

## TRAVEL WITH OPEN DOORS CANADA

When our founder, Brother Andrew, traveled behind the Iron Curtain, he was told his presence alone was worth more than his best sermons. This powerful approach of solidarity continues to guide us, as we stand with those enduring persecution. Join an Open Doors team to be present with those whose faith costs the most.

**Travel to the Middle East this fall. Only a few seats left!**

**Apply at:** [www.opendoorscanada.org/travel-application](http://www.opendoorscanada.org/travel-application)

**Application deadline is July 15th**





# THERE'S NO PLACE ~~LIKE~~ ~~HOME~~ THAT'S SAFE



Pastor Yang\* and his family must keep moving. It's exhausting and stressful. Sometimes it feels like God has abandoned them. But for Christians in Myanmar, nowhere is safe.

Even before civil war broke out, Christians were persecuted. Now, they are displaced too.

Believers like Pastor Yang need help. Without support, the church is at risk.

Your next move is vital. Please help faith survive in places like Myanmar.

**Every \$64** could provide one month's vital support to three believers forced to flee their homes.

Will you move fast to help him and other displaced Christians?

Visit [www.opendoorscanada.org](http://www.opendoorscanada.org) to give now, call (905) 636-0944 or scan the QR code. Thank you!

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