

## August 2021 Afghanistan, Australia, Lithuania, UK

We strongly recommend you download the "*Bible Companion*" app, from where you can access *Carelinks* messages, daily Bible readings, *Bible Basics*, commentary on every verse of the Bible and audio exhortations on every chapter of the Bible. For Android / Google Play at <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.carelinks.bc> and on the App Store for Apple / iOS at

<https://apps.apple.com/us/app/bible-companion/id1475914490>

You can break bread live online as follows:

Sunday mornings 08:00 a.m. GMT on the Facebook "Carelinks Ministries" page; and on Zoom <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/6697401754?pwd=K0VWNDlScGwzaThPM2tiU0didmNyUT09>

Meeting ID: 669 740 1754 Passcode: XPb9Sz

Sundays at 3:00 PM New Zealand time. That's 1 PM in Sydney Australia; 10 PM in New York, USA on Saturday evening [run by Br John Aldersley in New Zealand] on

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81015280780?pwd=LzAwNDRTTzhNcFpiRGlmaGx6YUvpvZz09>

Sundays at 10am North American Eastern Time [3 PM UK GMT time, 11 PM Sydney Australia time]. Run by Br Jim Barton in Canada.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/9123758179>

Meeting ID: 912 375 8179

Also, Bible class on Wednesdays at 7 PM North American Eastern Time

### AFGHANISTAN

With the Taliban now in control of Afghanistan, it is impossible to openly be a Christian. And they are searching house to house, checking phones and computers, to see who has had contact with Western people or Christianity. The situation has forced those considering baptism to make a now or never decision, and we were able to online baptize brother D, a relative of existing brethren who have already fled Afghanistan. After the service, we asked him about the situation. He confirmed that the Taliban are indeed going house to house, checking phones and phone history. He deletes all messages from his phone, and installs the *Bible Companion* app whenever he wants to read the Bible, and then deletes it and reinstalls it next time.

We are in touch on and off with some others we've baptized there. They are all very frightened. There is no realistic chance of getting any of them on the evacuation flights, and the situation around the airport is highly dangerous. All our dear ones are resigned to having to live under the Taliban, although possibly in the longer term we may be able to assist them to get out overland through the mountains into one of the neighbouring [also Islamic] countries. We have also given some details to the relevant authorities, and a UK brother is working with his local MP to get their names on whatever relevant lists for asylum. How that will ever be achieved- we leave to faith. We are telling them all the time that we are praying for them, and are forced to trust in God's saving hand and the promise of 1 Cor. 10:13 that we will not be tested more than we are able to bear. But please- let us come good on this and actually pray hard for them all and the entire situation.

There seems so little we can do. However, we have stepped up advertising the *Bible Companion* app in Afghanistan, whilst there is opportunity to do so. It would seem that window of opportunity may close soon, but it remains to be seen how effectively the Taliban can limit internet access. We are open to your donations towards these adverts. And there is lots of response- despite the reported danger of the Taliban killing those who have Bibles on their

phones, people are eagerly downloading Bibles onto their phones. They likely delete the app after reading a bit, and then download it again when they want to read more, just as our new brother says he does. It is amazing that right under the noses of the Taliban, even in their traditional stronghold of Kandahar, people are downloading our app- around 160 people downloading the app there for the first time every day, and many re-downloading it regularly. Truly persecution does lead to more intense interest- "The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church". You can see the evidence in these statistics from just one day [Google calls downloads "conversions"]:



## AUSTRALIA

We've enjoyed some wonderful correspondence with a *Bible Companion* app user in Melbourne, DANMUI. Originally from Samoa, our sister was involved with many churches including JWs, but felt they were all not really focused on Jesus. She wanted to be baptized, but not into any denomination or club, just solely into Jesus. On her journey she figured many truths, like the humanity of the Lord Jesus and the error of the Trinity, and the big issue that we helped her get clear was Satan not being as commonly understood. She joined all the dots and saw the larger, beautiful picture of the real Lord Jesus, and naturally wanted to be baptized into Him. So accompanied by some of her children she went to the ocean very near to her home and did so, with around 15 of us from worldwide watching and praying with her online. It was a wonderful triumph for God's truth, and let's pray God blesses her desire to spread this truth to her large family. The video is uncut and therefore rather long, but on the other hand this means that you can enter into the spirit of it all-

see [https://youtu.be/VtsE8MQ\\_EtU](https://youtu.be/VtsE8MQ_EtU)

You can probably meet her at our online breaking of breads on Sunday, either the European one or the New Zealand one.



Later our sister wrote: "My heart is overflowing with gratitude and feeling so blessed by our Heavenly Father because I wanted this for so long. It's like a wedding commitment to show that this is who you belong to".

## LITHUANIA

You may have noticed on the media the tensions between Lithuania [an EU member] and Belarus, under heavy sanctions from the West and one of the few remaining Communist style dictatorships in the world. In response to sanctions, Belarus pushed many of their asylum seekers over the border into Lithuania. As explained in news reports such as

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-58255448>

the asylum seekers were literally pushed over the border through holes in the border fence, with the Belarussian guards barring their return with guns and shields; and the Lithuanian border guards in turn try to push them back through the holes in the fence. These people are literally treated as ping pong balls in a bigger game. Lithuania has responded by planning to erect a major wall system along the Belarussian - Lithuanian border, and treats the asylum seekers very

harshly. One of them, ALL, was a user of the Farsi "*Bible Companion*" app. He is now in a camp and housed along with a group of other asylum seekers whom he perceives as actually being radical Islamists. He fears they will beat him if they know of his baptism, as they are kept in harsh conditions in a dormitory and not allowed to leave the camp, nor have visitors, although they are allowed their phones and internet access. He felt the only safe time was around 6 AM - which is 4 AM UK time. So, we set the alarm early [whilst in the midst of great activities at Edd Steph's place in South Wales] and along with online presence and prayers from USA and Australia, were able to witness our brother's baptism. Do pray for him as he really is in a most unpleasant situation, although one can only marvel at the hand of providence in getting him out of a hopeless, dead end situation in Belarus and into the European Union.

Here's our brother, and here are the photos of the migrants at the border fence in a forest, released by the Belarussian and Lithuanian authorities:



## UK

Pleased to hear of the baptism of our friend MICHAEL at the Plymouth ecclesia. The true Gospel continues to spread in South London, with the baptism of BETH and another meet up with our folks in the Clapham-Brixton area to distribute New Testaments and chat with folks outside Brixton underground station; the corner of Railton Road and the High Street, by the railway bridge, is a wonderful spot. All kinds of people from all over the world pass there, and not only folks from all nations, but all types of people of all sizes and backgrounds. Even the tallest bloke in South London got a New Testament from Evia:



You can see a brief video of the children out there on those streets

at <https://youtu.be/583C9K4vH7g>

fulfilling our simple desire to get God's word into the hands of ordinary men and women "from all nations".



And as we go to press, we appreciate your prayers for our work in South Wales which is ongoing.

## PRAYER POINTS

- For our dear ones in Afghanistan and their families
- For those recently baptized
- For our contacts working towards accepting the Lord Jesus everywhere
- For the situation in the camps in Lithuania

**With love from your brothers and sisters of Carelinks**

