

Believers to Rally in Global Prayer Vigil for Kidnapped Christian Leah Sharibu

Save the Persecuted Christians (STPC), which advocates on behalf of hundreds of millions of persecuted Christians worldwide, is participating in a prayer vigil spearheaded by Pray for Leah, the Leah Foundation, other concerned believers and religious freedom advocates to call on Christians to join a Global Prayer Vigil for kidnapped Nigerian Christian schoolgirl Leah Sharibu.

Leah was kidnapped Feb. 19, 2018, along with 109 other girls. Five girls died during the first month. In March 2018, the Nigerian federal government interceded and all the girls remaining in captivity were released—except Leah, who refused to deny Christ and convert to Islam.

The organizer of the prayer rally, the Leah Foundation, was founded by Leah's family to advocate for Leah's release and to raise awareness of at least 1,000 Nigerian schoolchildren kidnapped and held by Boko Haram.

Who: Save the Persecuted Christians, the Leah Foundation, religious persecution survivor Mariam Ibraheem and other concerned believers.

What: Global Prayer Vigil for Leah Sharibu.

Where: U.S. Capitol, First Street SE, Washington, D.C., Reflecting Pool (west side).

When: Saturday, Oct. 26, 1 p.m. EST.

Why: To pray for Leah Sharibu, a schoolgirl kidnapped and kept as a “slave for life” by Boko Haram for refusing to renounce her Christianity.

How: For information, visit [or](#) ; media may contact [Media@](#).

In August 2018, Boko Haram released a video of Leah as she pleaded for her release. The Nigerian federal government has assured Leah's mother, Rebecca, who will also attend the vigil, it was negotiating for her release. Then in October, after threatening to execute her, Boko Haram instead announced plans to keep Leah and another captive, as "slaves for life" for refusing to renounce Christianity. In July 2019, a kidnapped ministry worker named Grace claimed Leah had been killed. At that time, STPC, the International Committee on Nigeria (ICON) and the Leah Foundation called for a measured response to the rumors. Then in late August, the Nigerian government announced Leah was alive.

Mariam Ibraheem is a Sudanese woman sentenced to death for abandoning Islam for Christianity. According to an interview with CBN, the young, then-pregnant wife and mother spent five months chained to a prison floor with her 1-year-old son by her side. Ibraheem even gave birth to a daughter inside her jail cell a month before her release in 2014. Her sentence called for her to be flogged and hanged for being a Christian in the largely Muslim country and for marrying a Christian. Due to international pressure, Ibraheem was released and now lives in the United States.

For the Oct. 26 vigil, churches from all over the world will join the worldwide prayer movement for Leah as well as for the persecuted church at large. Churches that wish to plan their own events on Oct. 26 or additional days through the month may do so at [. Worldwide vigils are also planned for Idaho, Wyoming, Nigeria, Australia, Russia, Switzerland, South Korea, Turkey and Iran.](#)

"Religious persecution has reached genocidal levels around the world, and religious freedom rights were a significant portion of the agenda at the recent United Nations General Assembly, as President Trump strongly declared America's support for

those persecuted for their beliefs,” said Save the Persecuted Christians Executive Director Dede Laugesen. “We join the human rights community and faith leaders from around the world in praying and advocating for Leah and all the other schoolchildren held captive by Boko Haram.”

Boko Haram, which means “Western education is forbidden,” has sworn allegiance to the Islamic State and has kidnapped more than 1,000 schoolchildren since 2013. As a consequence, 1 in 5 of the world’s out-of-school children live in Nigeria. A 2019 UNICEF report says 10.5 million children in Nigeria refuse to go to school for fear of kidnapping or harm. Former President Olusegun Obasanjo, on a recent visit to the U.S., told Save the Persecuted Christians the numbers are closer to 14 million.

The mission of Save the Persecuted Christians is to save lives and save souls by disseminating actionable information about the magnitude of the persecution taking place globally and by mobilizing concerned Americans for the purpose of disincentivizing further attacks on those who follow Jesus.

According to Aid to the Church in Need’s biannual report on Religious Freedom in the World, over 300 million Christians experience persecution. According to Open Doors USA World Watch List, 245 million Christians are victims of high to extreme levels of persecution (torture, rape, sex-slavery, expulsion, murder and genocide), an increase of 14% over 2018. Open Doors also estimates 1 in 9 of the world’s Christians experience persecution and that every month, 345 Christians are killed, often in public and without regard to gender or age; 219 Christians are abducted and imprisoned indefinitely without trial; and 106 churches are demolished.

Save the Persecuted Christians has developed a dedicated news aggregator—to capture current instances of persecution and to provide readers with an easy way to share these heartbreaking stories with others. Stories are categorized and resource

reports are easily accessible.

With so much of the world's Christian population being attacked, imprisoned and/or exiled for their beliefs, such as Christian schoolchildren like Leah in Nigeria, the need has never been greater for the sort of grassroots campaign STPC's SaveUs Movement is working to foster. Its efforts are modeled after a miraculously successful one that helped free another population suffering from heavy persecution—Soviet Jews—by penalizing those in the Kremlin responsible for such repression. Through this movement, Save the Persecuted Christians endeavors to provide American policymakers with the popular support they need to effect real change worldwide and alleviate systemically the suffering being experienced by so many of those following Christ. {eoa}

For more about global persecution of Christians, check out Faces of the Persecuted Church, a Charisma e-book available at [this link](#) for just \$.