

Prayer Diary: China

23 February-1 March 2025

This week we are praying for a few of the many individuals who have been imprisoned in China. Without exception, these are brave people that have been detained on trumped-up charges ranging from fraud to terrorism. Among them are religious leaders, human rights defenders and journalists.

Find out more at csw.org.uk/china

Sunday 23 February

Citizen journalist Zhang Zhan was released after completing a four-year sentence last May, only to be forcibly disappeared again just months later. She appears to have been targeted for continuing to advocate for human rights. The depressingly predictable re-detention of Zhang Zhan is the culmination of the government's ongoing campaign of harassment against her. Pray for more information about her whereabouts and that she is released unharmed.

Monday 24 February

Li Jie and Han Xiaodong are two preachers of Covenant Home Church in Shanxi Province. They were arrested on accusations of 'fraud' in September 2022. Pray that the Chinese authorities would release Li Jie and Han Xiaodong and withdraw all trumped-up charges against them.

Tuesday 25 February

Please pray for Ikram Nurmehmet, a Uyghur filmmaker who was sentenced to over six years in prison in January 2024. The case reflects ongoing arrests of Uyghurs who have studied or travelled abroad, and who have been falsely accused of engaging in terrorist or separatist activities. Pray that the Chinese authorities will release him and all other Uyghur Muslims who are persecuted for their beliefs.

Wednesday 26 February

Zhang Chunlei, an elder of the Love (Ren'ai) Reformed Church in Guizhou Province, has been detained for nearly four years on charges that have changed multiple times. He was eventually sentenced to five years in prison on false charges of 'fraud' and 'inciting subversion'. Pray for Elder Zhang's unconditional release and for physical healing from his serious medical conditions.

Thursday 27 February

Ma Yanhu, a Chinese-Han Muslim, has been arrested and tried on fabricated charges of fraudulently obtaining entry/exit documents for the purpose of smuggling people across the border. As a tour operator, he arranged flight tickets and visa documents for Hajj pilgrims. The Chinese authorities are making it increasingly difficult for ethnic Muslims to travel abroad, particularly to Mecca. Pray that Ma Yanhu's case would be dropped and that the authorities would respect the rights of China's Muslim communities.

Friday 28 February

On 29 October 2024, courts sentenced Yu Wensheng to three years in prison and Xu Yan (his wife) to one year and nine months in prison for allegedly 'inciting subversion of state power'. Pray that sustained pressure from the international stage would bring about the release of these courageous human rights defenders.

Saturday 1 March

Father God, we commit to you the lives of those unjustly imprisoned in China. We ask for their release, for justice to prevail, and for a change in heart in the Chinese government so that all may be free to practise a religion or belief of their choice. Amen.