

Pray for the Persecuted Church: China

Imprisoned Chinese Pastor is "Barely Alive" Sources: China Aid, Christian Solidarity Worldwide

Pastor Zhang Shaojie of the Nanle Country Christian Church, in the Henan Province, is "barely alive" after suffering various forms of torture in prison, according to reports from his daughter. He is currently serving a 12-year prison sentence which officially began in 2014.

His daughter Esther expresses concern that Pastor Zhang is suffering both mentally and physically as a result of meagre food rations and sleep deprivation. When his sister, Zhang Cuixia, visited on July 7th, she testified that her brother appeared fragile and was not allowed to discuss events outside of the prison. According to his sister, he looks "like a bag of bones," with dark discoloration encircling his eyes.

During the sister's visit, government agents monitored her conversation with Pastor Zhang, limiting it to only talk about family members and praise of new policies under Communist Party leader, Xi Jinping. The siblings decided to subvert these restrictions, speaking highly of life inside and outside the prison, using their facial expressions to communicate the opposite.

In December 2013, church members, lawyers and Christians visiting the family of detained Pastor Zhang were beaten, harassed and detained themselves by "hired thugs" who work for police and government agencies.

In the face of such injustice and abuse, may Pastor Zhang be greatly strengthened and renewed -- spiritually, emotionally and physically -- as he awaits release (2 Corinthians 4:7-9). Pray additionally for his family, that they would receive ongoing strength and encouragement from above, despite having witnessed the long-suffering of their loved one, knowing that God is able to accomplish the impossible. Ask the Lord to also help the many other Christians in China who are in the midst of their own fiery battles, that they may stand firm and testify of His greatness so many more in their country will experience eternal salvation.

Sioux Falls and Lennox Christian Women's Connection

The Sioux Falls meeting is on Tuesday, August 8th at 9:30am at the VFW on South Minnesota Avenue. The speaker is Laurie Kimball from Minneapolis, MN (a friend of Judy Preston). Reservations are necessary call Bonnie Herzig 332-7054. The Lennox meeting is on Monday, August 7th at 7pm, Laurie Kimball is the speaker and they meet at the Presbyterian Social Hall, 305 West 1st Ave, Lennox (the west end of the building). Reservations can be made by calling Lois at 605-647-0023 (leave a message) More details about each meeting will be posted on the bulletin board.

BRANDON VALLEY BAPTIST CHURCH

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Sunday, July 30, 2017

Accompanist: Jan Questad and Pam Osmandson

Greeters: Gene & Judy Preston Usher: Dave James

Scripture Reader: Pat Lacey Nursery: Justin & Sara Tiffany

Children's Church: Doris Conradson & Hailey Skogen

9:30 am

Worship Service

Welcome, Announcements, and Christian Greetings

Praise Songs.....Bluegrass Singers

Prayer of Praise

Offering

Offertory

Doxology (*Hymn #625*) – please stand

Scripture Reading.....I Thessalonians 5:9-24

Children's Moments

Ministry of Music.....Bluegrass Singers

Children may be excused for Children's Church (3 yrs-2nd grade)

Sermon...“The Fantastic Power of Affirmation”.....Pastor Merv Kramer

Prayer Response

Closing Hymn #102.....“There's Something About That Name”

Benediction

Postlude

*****Nursery care is available for children infant thru 3 years old**

(Please contact an usher for information and/or direction)

*****Hearing Amplifier Available** – Please contact an usher

Please join us after the worship service for coffee and treats in the fellowship room.

Sunday School for All Ages

Combined Preschool-3rd Grade in Cubbies Room
 Combined 4th-8th Grade in Youth room (TREK)
 Adult & High School Class in Sanctuary: this week's topic is "The Influence of the Bible on America" – part 3

For Your Information and Prayer

-Please use the **UPDATED Communication Chain** (revised 7-16-2017). Please go to Barbara or the church office for a copy. *The chain is only as strong as its weakest link.* – The Care Team
 -No Thursday Women's Bible Study until fall

Next Sunday: August 6, 2017

-Greeters: Justin & Sara Tiffany
 -Usher: Paul Osmandson
 -Nursery: Aaron Skogen
 -Scripture Reader: Trevor Skogen
 -Children's Church: Dee Olson and Garret James

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**NEEDED: Awana** has a new program for grades 3-5. Contact Joan about training. We also need volunteers to be a grades K-2 story person and a special events coordinator. We're also seeking a volunteer for Commander.

| <b>OUR GIVING:</b>               | Sunday, July 23, 2016 |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------|
| General Giving                   | \$ 1,255.00           |
| VBS Offering - Royal Family Kids | \$ 100.00             |
| Building Fund                    | \$ 25.00              |
| Total                            | \$ 1,380.00           |

(Approximately \$2,500 is needed each week to meet expenses)

### Our Prayer Partnership

- Valley Springs Reformed Church  
 - Youth Director, Valley Baptist Church, Milbank, SD

### \*\*\* Praise & Prayer\*\*\*

**Carol Kline**, mother of Theresa Friesen, recovering from a stroke  
**Daphne Dunger**, (retired missionary) healing from surgery on broken leg, now in rehabilitation at Bethany Lutheran Home in Sioux Falls  
**Lajeane Wright**, wife of Jim Wright, has been moved from the hospital to Garretson Palisades Nursing Home (room 301), continue to pray for increasing mental clarity, and also encouragement for Jim  
**Ron Benson**, brother of Mike Benson, for heart health issues  
**Amanda Benson**, as her sending church, Amanda has asked that we lift her up in prayer as she is in the mission field.  
**Serving Our Country:** Josh Onnen, Air Guard; Chad Carlson, Air Guard (Son-in-law of Carl & Lindy Johnson); Kristina Lee, Air Force (Grandchild of Ray & Dee Olson)

### A Word of Thanks

Thank You to the following workers in the kitchen for Elmer's funeral service: Lindy J., Pat L., Erica S., Doris C., Pam O., Judy & Gene P., Lisa H., Jolene B. A check will be given to the church for their loving service. Thanks also to the teens for waiting tables and babysitting.

- The Gerdes Family