



***"In prayer you align yourselves to
the purpose and power of God....
For God has left certain things open
to prayer – things which will never
be done except as we pray."***

~ E. Stanley Jones

INDONESIA: Christians Blocked from Worshipping

Source: International Christian Concern

For two consecutive Sundays, approximately 20 opposing Muslim residents in the village of Gerendeng Pulo have prevented a church congregation from gathering for worship. The opposition stems from concerns that the believers began meeting in a new location without the approval of local Muslim leaders.

The GBI Gerendeng congregation had been operating for 18 years before deciding to relocate to the second floor of a commercial building. The church leaders insist that their activities at the new venue do not interfere with the daily lives of nearby residents. Nevertheless, the believers' worship services were disrupted by protests on September 14th, and again the following Sunday, with demonstrators expressing frustration that local religious leaders had not been consulted.

The church's pastor, Karundeng Gerung, admits to being shocked by the opposition. The congregation is now requesting the government to uphold its responsibility to protect the religious freedoms of all citizens. While the Indonesian government does not typically engage in the direct persecution of Christians, it has been criticized for inconsistently enforcing religious protections. For more reports about the persecution of believers in this Southeast Asian country, go to our [country report](#).



A church in Indonesia.

Photo: VOMC

- ***Pray for wisdom and guidance on behalf of Pastor Karundeng as he and his congregants seek to amicably resolve this dispute with their opposing Muslim community members.***
- ***Pray that followers of Jesus in Indonesia will reflect His love and grace to those around them, even in the face of opposition.***
- ***Intercede for the country's local and national authorities, praying that they would justly defend the rights of all citizens – thus enabling followers of Christ to worship freely and without fear of retribution.***

AZERBAIJAN: Churches Continue to Await Registration

Sources: Forum18, Christian Daily

In April, the leadership representing Peace Church in Sumgait, Azerbaijan, submitted a formal application for registration with the government, a legal requirement for conducting worship and other religious activities within the country. However, more than five months later, the church remains in legal limbo. The state committee responsible for processing such registrations is refusing to process the application. Instead, the church has been warned that any unregistered religious activity is forbidden and will consequently result in punishment.

The congregation belonging to Peace Church is not alone in facing this dilemma. At least four other Protestant churches are currently encountering similar delays, and some have already been waiting for more than two years. The issue of governmental registration extends beyond Christian communities, for many other religious groups in Azerbaijan are experiencing the same bureaucratic obstacles. In fact, only one non-Muslim community has successfully registered during the past five years.

This challenging registration process is not a new problem. In 2020, for instance, a Baptist church in Aliabad had been waiting 25 years for legal status. Its congregation members finally received a letter granting them permission to meet for two hours each Saturday morning. Despite that permission, these believers have never received official registration. ([Read more details](#) on this case.) Additional reports addressing persecution in this Central Asian nation are available at our [country profile](#).

- ***Pray for the members of Peace Church and other congregations in Azerbaijan as they seek peaceful interactions with governing officials in the midst of opposition.***
- ***Pray that the officials will respond justly and promptly to the outstanding registration requests, granting our long-suffering Christian brothers and sisters legal permission to meet for worship and fellowship.***
- ***May God grant wisdom, strength and courage to all Azerbaijani believers as they faithfully reach out to others in their communities with the Gospel message of peace.***



Sumgait, Azerbaijan.
Photo: Pexels / Smart World

CHINA: Suspended Sentences Revoked for Two Believers

Source: ChinaAid

In 2023, Elder Xue Shaoqiang and Sister Wan Chunqin of the Bengbu Living Stone Reformed Church were arrested on accusations of "fraud" – a charge frequently used by Chinese authorities to target members of unapproved churches. The believers were sentenced to 30 months in prison, followed by a four-year suspended sentence. After their release on January 8th, 2025, both Christians were subjected to strict conditions. However, upon allegedly failing to comply with what they described as "excessively harsh and unreasonable" measures, their suspended sentences were revoked.

As part of their conditional release, the accused church members were required to carry cell phones with the 'tracking of their locations' enabled at all times. Additionally, they were ordered to complete facial-recognition check-ins three times each day. However, the two Christians viewed these measures as violations of their fundamental rights.



Elder Xue Shaoqiang and Sister Wan Chunqin with some friends.
Photo: ChinaAid

As a result, the court extended Elder Xue's sentence by ten months and Sister Wan's by four months. Both of these believers were subsequently ordered to return to prison on September 5th so they could serve the remainder of their sentences.

The ruling Chinese Communist Party continues to exert strict controls over religious expression in China, even within state-approved churches. Not only are the congregations subjected to video monitoring, but their leaders must also preach sermons that align with the government's socialistic ideologies. Unregistered church communities that refuse to submit to the enforced requirements often face fabricated charges, such as fraud and "illegal business operations," as a means of intimidation and punishment. To view previously published reports and/or online video interviews concerning the oppression of our Christian brothers and sisters in China, visit our [country profile](#).

- ***As they resume their sentences in the ensuing months, pray that Elder Xue and Sister Wan will receive divine strength from the Lord, as well as open doors of opportunity to provide meaningful ministry to their prison wardens and fellow prisoners.***
- ***Please also prayerfully uphold other followers of Jesus throughout China who are encountering similar threats and restrictions, asking our Heavenly Father to sustain them with renewed faith and courage.***
- ***May God grant church leaders wisdom and discernment as they navigate the increasing pressures imposed upon them by Chinese authorities, so they can continue ministering in their communities with His grace and empowerment.***

The Persecution & Prayer Alert is a ministry of:
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