



Voice^{of the}
Martyrs

PERSECUTION
& PRAYER
ALERT

Persecution & Prayer Alert

Voice of the Martyrs Canada
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*"For the sake of Christ, then,
I am content with weaknesses,
insults, hardships, persecutions,
and calamities. For when I am
weak, then I am strong."
~ 2 Corinthians 12:10 ESV*

IRAN: Potential Seizure of Historic Church Complex

Sources: Article18, Hengaw, Iran International, Israel365 News

A historic Christian compound in Tehran, which was established in 1876 and home to Iran's oldest Protestant church, is facing possible confiscation by the country's government. The recent threat marks the culmination of a long-standing legal battle that started over 25 years ago.

St. Peter Evangelical Church was built by American missionaries on 10 hectares of land granted by the Persian monarch. The complex now consists of a church building, two schools and dozens of residential homes. For nearly 150 years, it has served Tehran's Assyrian and Armenian Christian communities.

In 1998, authorities ordered that the land be transferred to the Islamic government, along with several other church properties across the country. However, the ruling was not enforced at that time. In 2008, the Council of Evangelical Churches learned of the decision and protested, but all appeals were ultimately rejected. Given the substantial size and location of the complex in central Tehran, the property has significant value.

Recently, governing authorities ordered 20 families living within the compound to vacate their homes within two weeks. Members of the congregation have also been informed that they must find another church to attend. (In order to identify members of the congregation, security personnel also reportedly attended a recent worship service.)

St. Peter Evangelical Church is one of the last remaining Protestant congregations in the city. Its potential closure is viewed as another indication of the shrinking space afforded to minority religious communities within the country. More information concerning the persecution of Iranian Christians may be reviewed at www.vomcanada.com/iran.htm.

- *Pray that this historic church facility will be allowed to remain open to Christians in the community, and that the families residing on the property would be permitted to stay in their homes.*
- *In the event that the relocation orders are enforced by Iranian authorities, please pray that the affected families and church leaders will receive God's divine peace, provision, clear direction, as well as the ongoing reassurance that He will meet their every need.*
- *Intercede on behalf of other congregations throughout Iran that are facing similar forms of intimidation, pressure and oppression, asking the Lord to strengthen their faith and sustain them in their witness to others who need hope and eternal salvation – including those who oppose them.*
- *Continue to remember the many ministries and outreach initiatives that are faithfully shining the light of Jesus amid the darkness of this war-torn, oppressive nation.*

REPORT UPDATES

CHINA: Pastor Jin Freed from Prison

Sources: ChinaAid, The New York Times, BBC

In a sudden and unexpected turn of events, Pastor Ezra Jin Mingri from the Beijing Zion Church was released from prison on July 3rd and allowed to reunite with his family in the United States. Arriving in Los Angeles the next day, the pastor has since been warmly welcomed by his family – including a newborn grandson.

Pastor Jin was arrested following a raid on his church in October 2024. As a result of the incident, along with the government's ensuing crackdown on the congregation, 18 church leaders were charged. Less than a month ago, it was announced that nine of those believers were released, while charges against the remaining detainees – including Pastor Jin – were increased to include fraud and "illegal business operations." (To review a previously posted *Persecution & Prayer Alert* regarding the situation, see www.vomcanada.com/cn-2026-06-25.htm.)

According to reports, Pastor Jin's release is the result of direct discussions between the presidents of the United States and China. The decision was presented as a goodwill gesture coinciding with American Independence Day celebrations. In a statement issued by Pastor Jin's family, gratitude was expressed to both President Trump and President Xi. Rejoicing over the news, they stated, "We truly witnessed a miracle, and we are feeling so overwhelmed with joy!"

While Dr. Bob Fu of ChinaAid also welcomed this encouraging development, he urges that there be continued advocacy for the many believers remaining imprisoned today, including Pastor Jin's eight coworkers. "Freedom for Pastor Jin is a tremendous victory," Dr. Fu added. "But our work

is not finished until every prisoner of faith is free." For other reports addressing the persecution of Christians in China, visit www.vomcanada.com/china.htm.

- *Let's join with Pastor Jin, his family, church congregants and other Christians around the world in thanking the Lord for this joyous answer to prayer!*
- *At the same time, please be mindful to prayerfully uphold the many other Chinese believers who remain imprisoned because of their faith in Christ, asking Him to not only strengthen, encourage and sustain each of them, but to also provide such needed ministry to their concerned loved ones.*
- *Pray that God will continue working on their behalf through international efforts and diplomatic discussions to bring about greater religious freedom in China, and thus enable all of our Christian brothers and sisters to worship openly and without the fear of governmental interference.*

IRAN: Appeals Denied for Sentenced Christians

Sources: Article18, HRANA

In December 2025, it was announced that five Iranian Christians had received lengthy prison sentences. Although the charges against them officially involved "collusion" and "propaganda," they were imprisoned merely for engaging in typical Christian activities, such as gathering for worship, prayer, and the observance of communion and baptismal ceremonies. (Further details on the believers' convictions are available at www.vomcanada.com/ir-2025-12-18.htm. For security reasons, one of the accused believers' names was withheld from that initial report.)

Although the convicted Christians appealed their sentences, the court announced on June 22nd that the original verdicts would continue to stand. This decision was made without any hearings or opportunities for the accused believers to present their cases.

- *As these believers presently face the possibility of lengthy prison sentences, pray that they will deeply sense God's comforting presence each day, giving them renewed strength, peace and unwavering hope through the indwelling work of His Holy Spirit.*
- *May the Lord continue to comfort, encourage and sustain the family members and friends of these imprisoned Christians, reminding them of His great faithfulness and attentive loving care as well.*
- *In general, please prayerfully uphold all followers of Christ throughout Iran who are encountering some form of persecution for their faith. May they too receive the strength, encouragement and empowerment to faithfully share the love of Jesus with those around them, so that many more hearts will readily experience His salvation and the resulting spiritual transformation only He can provide.*