

Week 1: Pray for Deacon Jang (North Korea)



Chinese Christian Jang Moon Seok is an ethnic Korean who ministered to North Koreans in China until November 2014, when he was abducted, brought across the border into North Korea and sentenced to 15 years in prison. He is in his late fifties.

Also known by his Chinese name Zhang Wen Shi, Deacon Jang lived in Changbai, a Chinese town in Jilin province, and worked as a deacon alongside Pastor Han Chung-Ryeol (also an ethnic Korean Chinese citizen) among North Koreans who crossed the border into China.

Changbai Korean Autonomous County faces North Korea's Hyesan city across the Tumen River, which is a key point for cross-border movement by traders and defectors. While it is illegal to cross into China without permission, North Koreans often visit Chinese border towns for business reasons such as buying goods for resale in North Korea or to seek medicine. They also gather herbs to sell at market in Changbai and bring the money home.

Deacon Jang regularly hosted these visiting North Koreans and provided them with food and warm clothing, seeing it as his Christian duty to welcome the stranger, clothe the naked and care for the sick. He also shared the gospel with the North Koreans and some became Christians and attended Bible training at his home. He and Pastor Han refused to help them defect but insisted they return home to their families in North Korea and not abandon them.

On 1 November 2014, Deacon Jang was abducted in China and brought across the border into North Korea. He was sentenced to 15 years in prison for "*defaming the regime, attempting to incite subversion of state power and providing aid and gospel to North Koreans*".

Dr Hyun Sook Foley of Voice of the Martyrs Korea commented, "*We believe the reason for his kidnapping was to gather information about the North Korean ministry work we were doing with Pastor Han.*"

In April 2016, Pastor Han was stabbed to death in Changbai, reportedly by North Korean assassins who returned to North Korea after the murder.

Family

For security reasons, no information is available about Deacon Jang's family.

Latest News

Several other prisoners in North Korea have reportedly encountered Deacon Jang in prison or heard news of him, but very little information about Christian prisoners in North Korea can be published because of the high risk to family members or contacts.

Prayer Diary

- Sunday** Ask God to protect Deacon Jang in prison.
- Monday** Pray that he would be released soon.
- Tuesday** Ask for hope, encouragement and spiritual strength.
- Wednesday** Ask God to comfort and bless Deacon Jang's family.
- Thursday** Pray that his witness might bless other prisoners.
- Friday** Pray for all Christians who are imprisoned in North Korea for their faith.
- Saturday** Pray that the message of the Gospel will continue to bear fruit in North Korea.

