



JUNIOR CHURCH IN CHAINS

SPRING 2023



Hey Kids,

Easter is coming and it's time to start praying for prisoners again! Every year Church in Chains asks readers to pray for six prisoners during the six weeks of Lent – one prisoner per week. The first day of Lent is known as Ash Wednesday and this year it falls on 22 February. Ash Wednesday follows Pancake Tuesday, when Church in Chains staff will be getting out the frying pans!

Lent is a period of forty days when Christians prepare for Easter, remembering the forty days Jesus spent in the desert before he began his public ministry. Christians spend this time preparing their hearts and homes for Easter. We hope you'll spend a few minutes each week praying for the prisoners pictured in the middle pages of Junior Church in Chains.

Do you remember praying for Iranian Christian prisoner Naser Gol-Tapeh during last year's Lent Prayer Project? He was released in October – thank God for this good news!

David, Virginia and Susanne



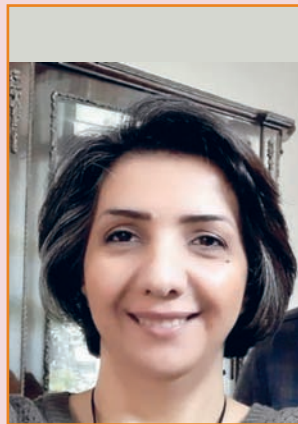
Week 1

Sara Ahmadi (Iran)

Sara Ahmadi (44) is serving an eight-year prison sentence for leading a house church. Her husband Homayoun Zhaveh is serving a two-year sentence for being a member of the house church. They're in separate sections of Evin prison in Iran's capital, Tehran. Sara and Homayoun were arrested in 2019 while they were on holiday with friends near the Caspian Sea in northern Iran. They were accused of belonging to an "illegal organisation" because house churches aren't allowed in Iran.

PRAY

Dear God, please comfort and bless Sara in prison and give her peace and good health. We pray that she would be released early. Amen



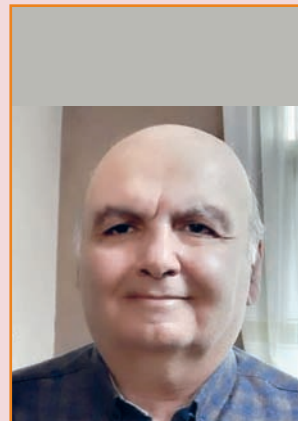
Week 2

Homayoun Zhaveh (Iran)

Homayoun Zhaveh (64) is serving a two-year prison sentence for membership of a house church. He has Parkinson's disease and his wife Sara Ahmadi was his carer, but she's in prison too because she was the leader of the house church. Sara's in a different section of the prison. Homayoun and Sara were arrested in 2019 for belonging to an "illegal organisation" because house churches aren't allowed in Iran. They were sentenced in November 2020 and imprisoned in August 2022.

PRAY

Dear God, please look after Homayoun in prison. We pray for him to get the medical care he needs and ask that he would be released soon. Amen



Week 3

Gebremedhin Gebregiorsis (Eritrea)

Rev Gebremedhin Gebregiorsis is a priest in the Eritrean Orthodox church who was arrested and imprisoned in November 2004. He had organised Bible studies that were very popular with thousands of young Eritreans but were forbidden by the government. He's in a maximum-security prison with some other Christian leaders. The government banned their churches and nobody is allowed to visit them. Rev Gebremedhin has three grown-up children but his wife Tsgeweyni died last June.

PRAY

Dear God, please bless and encourage Rev Gebremedhin in prison and keep him safe and well. We pray for his release. Amen



PRAYER PROJECT

Week 4

Asif Pervaiz (Pakistan)

Asif Pervaiz (39) is a Christian from Lahore who's been in prison since 2013. His boss kept pressurising him to become a Muslim but Asif refused, so his boss falsely accused him of blasphemy (insulting Islam). Asif was put in prison and in 2020 he was sentenced to death. His lawyer said there's no evidence against him and filed an appeal. Asif and his wife Marilyn have three sons and a daughter who are bullied at school because their father's in prison.



Dear God, we pray for Asif's appeal to be heard and for his release. Please put a stop to his children being bullied at school. Amen



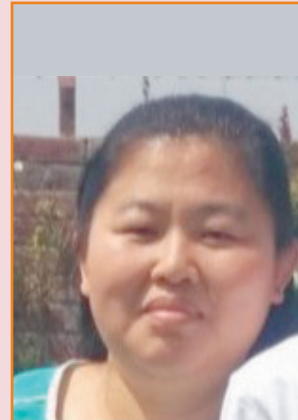
Week 5

Hao Zhiwei (China)

Hao Zhiwei (52) is the pastor of a house church that was banned in 2016. Its members continued to meet and in 2019 the pastor was arrested and the church building was demolished. In February 2022 Pastor Hao was sentenced to eight years in prison, where her health hasn't been good. Her husband died in 2018 and their two sons (Paul aged 19 and Moses aged 15) are struggling to cope without parents. They receive some support from church members but Moses is suffering from depression.



Dear God, please bless Pastor Hao in prison. We pray for an early release and we ask you to look after Paul and Moses. Amen



Week 6

Y Pum Bya (Vietnam)

Y Pum Bya (58) is a pastor who leads a banned house church in Vietnam. In April 2018 police arrested him at a worship meeting and in January 2019 he was sentenced to 14 years in prison for promoting religious freedom and human rights. He'd already served an eight-year sentence for the same thing! Y Pum Bya and his wife H'Bleng Nie have seven children but his wife had to flee to Thailand in December 2020 because police kept watching and questioning her.



Dear God, please bless and protect Y Pum Bya in prison. We pray for early release and we ask you to care for his family. Amen



MATCH THE FLAG

Can you match each prisoner with the flag of their country? You could ask an adult to help you find a flag website or you might have a book with flags in your home (for example, the new Church in Chains Global Guide includes flags of sixty countries).



Church in Chains is an Irish voice for persecuted Christians worldwide. We encourage prayer for them, talk about them to politicians and ambassadors in Ireland and send aid to help Christian victims of conflict and prisoners' families abroad. Our charity number is CHY 15443.