

PRAY FOR PRISONERS

Sunday 25th May

Chinese **Pastor Zhang Shaojie** has been serving a twelve-year sentence since 2013 (he is due for release in November). We pray that he continues to be at peace and that God uses him to bring other prisoners to faith in Christ.

Monday 26th May

Pastors Xing Wenxiang and **Bao Guohua** (pictured) have been in prison in China since 2015 serving twelve and fourteen-year prison sentences respectively. We ask the Lord to protect their mental, spiritual and physical health.



Tuesday 27th May

Elder Zhang Chunlei has serving a five-year sentence in China since 2021. We pray for better health for Elder Zhang (who has been suffering from liver cirrhosis) and encouragement for him and his wife **Yang Aiqing**.

Wednesday 28th May

Christian convert **Laleh Saati** has been serving a two-year prison sentence in Iran since February 2024. She has recently been denied access to medical care following a fall in the prison yard that left two fingers on her left hand bent. Pray that she will be allowed to receive the treatment that she needs.

Thursday 29th May

Eritrean pastor and anaesthetist **Meron Gebreselasie** has been in prison since 2004. We pray that the Holy Spirit would fill him with hope, joy and peace.*

Friday 30th May

Rev Dr Futsum Gebrenegus is an Eritrean Orthodox priest and psychiatrist who has also been in prison since 2004. We pray that Futsum would be treated well in prison and released soon!*

Saturday 31st May

Mussie Ezaz was an evangelist and youth leader in Asmara before his arrest in 2008. We pray that the Lord would provide for Mussie's needs and also for his wife **Frewini** and their three sons, **Yoel**, **Hananuel** and **Basaliel**.*

* All Eritrean prisoners have remained in prison since arrest, held incommunicado and with no release date set.

Thank you for praying with us!



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Church in Chains Prayer Diary

May 2025

And what does the Lord require of you?

To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God. (Micah 6:8)

PRAY FOR NEWS AND EVENTS

Thursday 1st May

Naser Navard Gol-Tapeh, who had been on hunger strike in Tehran's Evin Prison for 35 days to protest against the continued systematic persecution of Christians in Iran, suffered a stroke in March. Pray for healing and a full recovery for Naser and that he will be released from detention as soon as possible.

Friday 2nd May

Two Iranian brothers **Mansour** and **Mahmoud Mardani-Kharaji** were recently sentenced to four years in prison for being part of a house church. We pray for hope and blessing for them and the extended Mardani-Kharaji family.

Saturday 3rd May

We pray for wisdom and guidance for our board of trustees as it meets later this month to decide on matters of finance, strategy and governance.

Sunday 4th May

Bob Fu, founder and president of our partner organisation **ChinaAid**, recently wrote about a continuing campaign of threats and intimidation against him, his family and ChinaAid aimed at stopping their work in highlighting the persecution of Christians in China. We pray for safety for everyone connected to ChinaAid.

Monday 5th May

Thank God that fourteen-year-old **Ariha Gulzar** was reunited with her family in Pakistan in early April, eleven weeks after being abducted by her Muslim neighbour. We pray for a good recovery for Ariha from her ordeal as she receives specialised after-care and also for strength for the Gulzar family.

Tuesday 6th May

We hope to present our China petition (to end repression of Christians) to the Chinese Embassy in Dublin later this month. Pray for ongoing preparations for this.

Wednesday 7th May

Pastor Wan Changchun of Cornerstone Reformed Church in Bengbu, Anhui province in China has been sentenced to five years in prison. We pray for faith, hope and peace for Pastor Wan, his wife **You Xiulin** and their three young sons.

PRAY FOR TÜRKİYE (TURKEY)

Thursday 8th May

The detention of Istanbul's mayor **Ekmek İmamoğlu** in March sparked the largest anti-government protests in many years during which hundreds of people were arrested. We pray for the chaos to end, and that peace will reign in Türkiye.

Friday 9th May

Today we pray for Christians in Turkey facing various pressures including legal obstacles. We pray for hope and courage for members of all churches including the Armenian Apostolic Church, the Greek Orthodox Church, the Catholic Church and the Association of Protestant Churches.



Saturday 10th May

We pray for wisdom for Turkish Christians as they share Jesus with friends and family as there is a high level of distrust towards Christians (often based on ignorance and misinformation).

Sunday 11th May

There has been an increase in hate speech directed at Christian content on social media. We pray against discrimination and targeting of Christians online.

Monday 12th May

We thank God for our partner **SAT-7** which broadcasts Christian programming through its dedicated **SAT-7 TÜRK** channel. Pray that the SAT-7 TÜRK team will know wisdom from God to guide the people who reach out to them in the right way, with love, truth and clarity.

Tuesday 13th May

Christian asylum seekers and refugees in Turkey, including converts from Islam from Iran, Afghanistan, Syria and other countries, are facing very high levels of discrimination and abuse, especially those who are held in "removal centres". We pray for protection over them and for better conditions in these centres.

Wednesday 14th May

We thank God for our partner **Middle East Concern** which works with churches to monitor persecution, assist victims of persecution and challenge unjust laws. We pray for provision for them and for protection of their work!

Thursday 15th May

Many expatriate Christians continue to be deported from Turkey because of their faith. Pray that those who have a heart for the country will be able to stay, live in peace and minister freely working with Turkish Christians.

PRAY FOR ERITREA

Friday 16th May

The UN Human Rights Council recently described the situation in Eritrea as follows: *"Eritrea continues to face a grave and long-standing human rights crisis characterised by the repression of fundamental rights, impunity and complete lack of access to justice for victims"*. We pray for an end to this unjust situation!

Saturday 17th May

We pray for protection and wisdom for the Eritrean underground church. Thank God that – in spite of hardship – the church has shown good growth in numbers and in spiritual maturity.



Sunday 18th May

President Isaias Afewerki has been in power for 34 years without ever calling an election or implementing the country's constitution. We pray for a change in his heart – to govern the country for the good of his people.

Monday 19th May

Last December, 27 secondary school students were arrested while attending a prayer and worship meeting in a private house. Please pray for release for the teenagers, who are still being held in Mai Serwa prison.

Tuesday 20th May

Mai Serwa is also where fifty members of the **Mahalians praise group** have been held since their arrest in April 2023. We pray that they would be treated well, receive enough food and medicine and be released soon.

Wednesday 21st May

Most ex-prisoners are not allowed to resume their former jobs. Prisoners who owned private businesses had them confiscated. Pray for God's provision and for emotional healing for these Christians who continue to suffer outside prison.

Thursday 22nd May

Thank God for our partnership with **Release Eritrea**. We pray for provision and blessing for **Dr Berhane Asmelash** and everyone who works for this organisation.

Friday 23rd May

Church in Chains will take part in the annual Prayer and Protest Vigil at the Eritrean Embassy in London next Thursday. We pray that the event will send a clear message of continued united concern for Eritrea's persecuted Christians.

Saturday 24th May

Today - Eritrean Independence Day - we pray for the many Eritreans who are not free but who are trapped in prisons, labour camps or indefinite military service. We pray for their mental and physical health and for their freedom!