



**CCSM**  
Chinese Church  
Support Ministries  
中国教会支援使团

# China Prayer Letter

NOVEMBER 2022

## UNHRC Vote for Silence

The hopes of human rights advocates and China's Uyghur people have been dashed again. The U.N. Human Rights Council voted 19 - 17 on the 6th October, 2022, against a proposal to debate China's alleged abuses in Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region. This follows the tabling in August of the very long-awaited report from the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Michelle Bachelet.

After her six-day visit to China, the final stage in Bachelet's investigation into the alleged atrocities, her report concluded that "serious human rights violations" had been committed and that China's treatment of Xinjiang's Muslims "may constitute



international crimes, in particular crimes against humanity."

The proposal for the UN debate was put forward by the US.

Indonesia explained the reason for their vote against a debate by saying, "we don't want the politicization of the Human Rights Council". Other Muslim nations rejecting the proposal included Kazakhstan, Pakistan, Qatar, United Arab

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Emirates and Uzbekistan. The Gambia, Libya and Malaysia were among 11 countries abstaining.

China, continues to vehemently defend its extra-judicial detentions, forced labour and re-education camps in Xinjiang Province as necessary counter-terrorism and counter-extremism strategies. Estimates range between 1-3 million Turkic Muslims in Xinjiang that have been subjected to the program.

Dolkun Isa, president of the World Uyghur Congress, told Radio Free Asia (RFA) his opinion:

"China has carried out its genocide against Uyghurs largely because of Uyghurs' belief in Islam... Basically, China has declared war on Islam and

has been attacking Islamic beliefs and values."

China is ruled by the Chinese Communist Party which has close to 100 million members, all of whom are required to be atheist. Unfortunately atheism is not synonymous with tolerance.

Christians around the world have been slow to pay attention to the events that have played out in Xinjiang since 2017. The general attitude, among the few who have noticed, has been, "that is China, that sort of thing would not happen here." The great majority of Western Christians do not have any understanding even of who the Uyghur are, or of the magnitude of this assault on this sizeable religious group.

Those that have observed are shocked by the speed at which this cruel subjugation took place, and by the fact that, while mass pseudolegal detentions and coerced labour were being implemented, China was nonetheless chosen by the Asia-Pacific nations, in 2020, to the Human Rights Council Consultative Group! This 5-member group selects, shortlists and recommends applicants who will be the special rapporteurs, independent experts or working groups investigating human rights abuse.

With this apparent nod of approval from the UN, should we be surprised that the condemnation from the global community has been muffled to say the least.

#### A little about CCSM...

"Be a reporter for us," said a house church leader to Ross Paterson (CCSM Founder) on his first trip to China in 1983. Ross took that as his initial mandate from the Lord – to raise in the West awareness of China's needs and to prompt intercessory prayer. At this time very little was known about the church in China.

A further plea came on that same first visit to China. "We desperately need books and sound foundational teaching."

Today CCSM is adapting to the times to meet this call and continues to work closely with Chinese believers to meet the needs of such a rapidly growing Church. There are still millions of people in China who have never heard about Jesus.

# A Life for the Word

Brother Andrew 1928-2022

*Andrew van der Bijl, better known as Brother Andrew, was wounded in the 1940's serving in the colonial army of the Dutch East Indies. It was during the uprising that led to the establishment of Indonesia.*

Confronted by mortality, he began to search the scriptures, and in them he found the Lord and subsequently utterly surrendered his life. And that's when the adventures began!

The young Dutchman headed to missionary college. Yet, it was not at missionary college, but at the Communist Youth League's World Congress

in Poland, where God gave Brother Andrew the scripture that was going to direct, encourage and motivate him for the rest of his life. In 1955, he had gone to hand out tracts, titled 'The Way of Salvation', and as he watched thousands of communists parading with their red banners, an organisation that had 96 million members at the time, he heard them chanting, "We are ragged and we are poor, but we will conquer the world and we will change the world."

This show of determination and strength could only be viewed in contrast with a luke warm church in the West, and the struggling, underground church of the communist block. It



was then, that through the scriptures, God spoke, "Wake Up! Strengthen what remains and is at the point of death" [Revelation 3:2]. Instantly, he knew he was being sent to the persecuted church. And because of his great faith in the promises of the Word, God removed all his fear. Brother Andrew would rush in to closed nations while most Christians were trying to get out!

That year, he founded Open Doors, a ministry to the suffering church. It has since expanded to have a presence in over 60 countries.

His book, God's Smuggler, recounts many of his trips

**His extraordinary courage was never based on his own capacity but on his great faith in God.**



behind the 'Iron Curtain' to deliver Bibles. Time and again, he managed to miraculously pass through checkpoint searches while his trusty VW vehicle was laden with contraband Bibles. He found the underground believers desperate for copies of the Word and needing to know they had not been forgotten.

China was no different. After nearly thirty years of communist rule, and the terrible decade-long Cultural Revolution, Chairman Mao Zedong had all but expunged Bibles from the land.

When Mao passed on and China's doors inched open, God had already prepared the hearts of men to help the Chinese Church. One such was former marine, Douglas Sutphen, who sought out Brother Andrew, joined Open Doors and headed up Project Rainbow to take in the Gospel, smuggled in suitcases. Their teams successfully delivered over 30,000 New Testaments, but the house churches were growing exponentially

and they were told, "We need one million, and we want full Bibles!"

Following much prayer, Project Pearl was conceived. A team of 20 was put together led by Brother David. Brother Andrew's Open Doors began to raise the millions required for the two tugboats, the barge, the printing of the Bibles and all the other costs involved. But they could not reveal the purpose! On the 18th June 1981, they delivered one million Bibles by night to a beach near the city of Shantou. 10,000 Chinese Christians met the delivery and whisked them away. This outpouring of the Word catalysed a major revival in that generation.

Furthermore, the event drew worldwide publicity which prompted the Chinese authorities to allow the printing of Bibles at Amity Press.

The founder of Chinese Church Support Ministries (CCSM) was privileged to have worked with Brother Andrew in serving the persecuted church



in Communist Eastern Europe, and can also attest to his great love for the Chinese people.

Later, Brother Andrew turned his focus to the Muslim world where he boldly visited Hamas and PLO leaders, such as Ahmed Yassin and Yasser Arafat, giving them Bibles. He is known to have said, "I.S.L.A.M. stands for 'I sincerely love all Muslims.'" Brother Andrew managed to gain access to Muslim leaders that no one else could reach, and maintained long-term friendships with some.

Brother Andrew passed away this year at the age of 94.



## FROM THE FIELD

### News and feedback from China...



#### *Childrens Ministries Scrutinized*

"What has been sown is sealed by the Spirit and will not be lost" [refer Ephesians 1:13-14 ]

Over the past 30 years, CCSM has assisted various childrens ministries in China through prayer and in practical ways (sending medical and special needs experts, helpers and support). So it is with great sorrow that we hear childrens ministries across the country are facing yet another religious purge with investigations of staff members and closures.

We have heard of children being taken from "family" units and returned to orphanages. This is clearly devastating for the little ones, who have already lost their family once before. Staff are said to be left empty and lost.

#### *Pastor Support Feedback*

CCSM has been privileged to be able to assist a small number of carefully selected pastors in China. One of these is Pastor Matthew (real name changed for security reasons). We recently received the following very encouraging feedback:

"Our family is very grateful for your support. May God bless every family in Christ for your support and intercessory prayer. We are more confident to follow Jesus in the ministry. We are grateful to all who support us. In March this year, we established a new meeting place. In May this year, we contacted several other churches to set up a mission committee, jointly engaged in promoting outreach to ethnic minorities. The original

student fellowship has now transformed into a church."

Thank you to all who joined us in prayer and support for these ministers.

#### *Fieldworker Comment*

A worker in China during the harsh lockdowns, made this comment:

"As I look around me, I see so many people 'beaten down' but not defeated, uncertain of what the future holds for them. I recognise that this is happening globally - but here people are afraid to communicate their fears to anyone outside their immediate family. Please pray for this nation"

#### *Stage Names Added to the Banned List*

The banned list has

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just been extended to include Chinese celebrities English stage names. Artists and performers who have chosen a Western name for their fans to follow them by are being Sinicized. They are now to use only their Chinese name. So far no reports have been received of English major students being prevented from giving themselves a

Western pseudonym. But give it time....

### *Mayflower Update*

It has now been three years since Pastor Pan Yongguang and Shenzhen Reformed Holy Church left China, unable to bear the harrassment they were experiencing. They fled to South Korea's Jeju Island in an attempt to gain refugee status

there. Sadly, they were turned down. The 62 members of the church have now arrived in Thailand but they are still far from safe. Some have visas that have expired, and with such they are at heightened risk of deportation by the Thai police.

[source: *ChinaAid.com*]

## One Chinese Certainty and One Chinese Uncertainty

*It is a certainty that President Xi Jinping is still in absolute control in China. Xi visited an exhibition in Beijing on Tuesday September 27th.*

Normally that would not have attracted much international attention, but it did, because Xi had been absent from the public eye since he returned to China from the SCO Summit in Uzbekistan the previous weekend. The appearance dispelled unverified rumours that he was under house arrest

after a military coup in Beijing.

It is certain that Xi will continue in his third term in power to pursue his grand vision for the "rejuvenation of the Chinese nation" for years to come.

Xi's control has been recently strengthened by detentions of leading officials that amounted to China's biggest political purge in years. These detentions are crackdowns on corruption within the party – although observers have said they served to take

down political rivals. Former vice minister of public security Sun Lijun, former justice minister Fu Zhenghua, and former police chiefs of Shanghai, Chongqing and Shanxi were arrested on corruption charges. "Fu and the police chiefs had been accused of being part of a political clique surrounding Sun, and being disloyal to Xi."

What is not a certainty is whether Xi will change any of his policies. Every indicator from the recent 20th Party Congress would suggest more of the same....

## i) Economic policies.

China's economy is stagnant. Xi's return to Marxist-Lennonist ideology in his economic policy has caused fixed capital investment to dive. Retail sales and industrial output this year have declined, falling far short of analysts' forecasts. According to Reuters, a top European industry group had said China ought to refrain from "erratic policy shifts", deepen cooperation with the European Union and increase international flights.

ii) **Covid.** It is unlikely that Xi will backdown from his zero-covid policies. They are not popular inside China. "Anger flared across Chinese social media recently following the deadly crash in Guizhou of a passenger bus transferring positive Covid cases." Gao Yu (高昱), a journalist, urged an end to China's zero Covid policy, which he argued was unscientific, pursued out of unnecessary fear, and out of step with the rest of the world. "We must wake up! We must return to normalcy!" he wrote. "For someone to be afraid of Covid is completely normal and understandable. But what is not normal, and what is not under-standable, is to hold 1.3 billion Chinese



# Shanghai Co-operation Organisation

*On September 15th, 2022 Iran signed a memorandum of obligations to formalize their full membership in the Shanghai Co-operation Organisation (SCO).*

Their addition brings the SCO to nine permanent members spanning one third of the world's land mass and earning a quarter of the world's Gross Domestic Product.

Although the transition from observer status to full membership may not take effect until April 2023, they are now able to attend members-

only meetings. Afghanistan, Belarus, Mongolia, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and Egypt have been granted the status of SCO 'dialogue partners', and this year, Bahrain, the Maldives, the UAE, Kuwait, and Myanmar have begun the process to also become dialogue partners. The SCO provides these nations with an important platform to confer and assist each other to resolve their challenges and their differences.

Iran's ascendance to full membership of the Shanghai Co-operation Organisation creates a powerful block, with all the regional

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players necessary for cooperation in transport, resources, energy, security, connectivity, humanitarian efforts, and economic development.

Iran is viewed as a potential transit hub whose ports are components of the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC) and the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI).

China, Iran and Russia have become particularly close in recent years. Iran is looking to expand a pre-existing cooperation agreement with Russia, and in March 2021 China and Iran signed a 25-year \$400 billion Joint Comprehensive Strategic Partnership, dubbed a 'marriage of convenience'.

It goes well beyond a trade deal. Its 20 articles are a roadmap encompassing political, executive, human, cultural, judiciary,

security, transportation, and defense, covering both regional and international domains with a "special focus on the private sectors of the two sides" according to Iran's Ministry of Foreign Affairs. However the deal was not welcomed by all – furious protests erupted in Iran, calling the deal "selling Iran".

Further social unrest rocked Iran again in mid September this year. Anti-regime demonstrations spread across the country after the death of a woman while in custody of the 'morality police'. There is also deep dissatisfaction with the harsh economic conditions and the overreaching clerical leadership.

China's billion dollar investment into Iran (in return for securing cheap oil), is something Xi Jinping will be keen to protect. Likewise, a stable and prosperous Afghanistan, which

is located at the heart of the SCO block, is pivotable to Eurasia's development. Maintaining stability will be a key focus of the SCO.

In the current climate, where East and West are increasingly at loggerheads, it should be expected that the Shanghai Co-operation Organisation will work together strategically to balance the powers of the West.

Currently Russia, China, Belarus, and Iran are all under Western sanctions.

In comparison to NATO and the EU, the SCO is not an alliance and does not have a common currency. Its co-operation is governed by consensus.

Unfortunately, the one thing all these nations could agree on is they are averse to freedom of religion.



## INTERNATIONAL SHORT-TERM TEAMS

Email CCSM at [teams@ccsmglobal.org](mailto:teams@ccsmglobal.org) to find out what we have on offer.



# Prayer Points

NOVEMBER 2022

Join us in prayer for the church of China.  
Cut out this month's prayer points and  
keep them in your Bible.



## PRAYER POINTS #1

### UNHRC VOTE FOR SILENCE

Lord forgive us for relying on our own knowledge and strength. Strengthen us in your Word by your Spirit.

Help us to lean on you in the hour of trial and not to be distracted by fear or worry. [Song of Solomon 8:5]

Pray for the safety and needs of all who work to share the gospel in China that it may spread swiftly.

*[2 Thessalonians 3]*

## PRAYER POINTS #2

### A LIFE FOR THE WORD

Thank God for the life of Brother Andrew and his service to the Christians of China.

Pray that God's Word will continue to be distributed far and wide in China.

Pray that the Chinese Church will boldly take the Gospel out to other nations.

## PRAYER POINTS #3

### FROM THE FIELD

Pray for Chinese staff of childrens ministries where children have been 'reclaimed' and taken back to orphanages.

Pray for Pastors to receive the funds they need to grow and nurture their flocks.

Pray for the people of China who are unable to share their fears and worries. Pray they will encounter hope in the Lord.

Pray for Christian teachers to have opportunity to safely share with those that are seeking.

Pray for the Mayflower church members seeking a safe place to live.

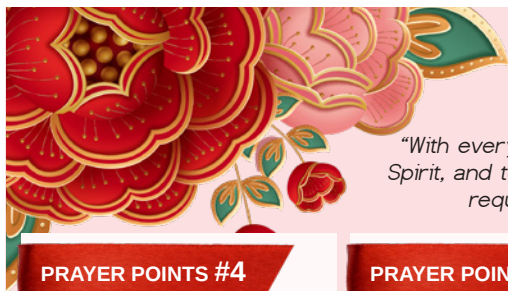




# Prayer Points

NOVEMBER 2022

*"With every prayer and petition, pray at all times in the Spirit, and to this end be alert, with all perseverance and requests for all the saints." [Eph 6:18, NET]*



## PRAYER POINTS #4

### ONE CHINESE CERTAINTY & ONE CHINESE UNCERTAINTY

Pray for the government of China as they seek to navigate China through uncertain times.

Pray for those who were elected to senior positions alongside President Xi.

Pray for the church in China during these difficult times.

## PRAYER POINTS #5

### SHANGHAI CO-OPERATION ORGANISATION

Pray for the rulers of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation that they will allow their people the freedom to search out truth.

Pray that God will open the way for many Chinese Christians to work in the SCO nations. Pray for their protection.

Pray that the SCO will be able to lift their nations out of poverty. Give praise to the coming King who rules over the nations and all rulers of the earth. [Psalm 47]

## PRAYER POINTS #6

### YOUNG PASTORS LEAVING

Pray that senior pastors will be sensitive to the needs of the younger pastors and staff in their churches.

Pray that the Lord will give senior pastors the heart, the time and the energy to mentor well the next generation who will succeed them.

Pray that young pastors will not be "muzzled as they tread out the grain" and that all their needs will be met.

Serving, Supporting & Strengthening the Church and People of China



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people in bondage because an extremely small number of people could contract Covid and die.”

iii) **Treatment of minorities in China.** It is not certain if China will modify “its treatment of minorities within its borders, including its resolute rejection of the harsh human rights criticism from the United Nations and the international community for repressive policies in the northwestern Xinjiang region, which have seen an estimated 1-3 million Uyghurs and other Muslim minorities detained in

a sweeping crackdown ostensibly targeting ‘terrorism’.”

iv) **Foreign policy.** Nor is it certain if China’s “wolf warrior” aggressive foreign policies will change as it grows in international stature during Xi’s next five - or ten - year term. Strong statements were made at the October Party Congress. President Xi Jinping stated, “We insist on striving for the prospect of peaceful reunification with the greatest sincerity and best efforts, but we will never promise to give up the use of force and reserve the option to take all necessary measures.”

And “we have resolutely waged a major struggle against separatism and interference, demonstrating our strong determination and ability to safeguard state sovereignty and territorial integrity and oppose Taiwan independence”.

v) **Religion & Education.** Xi spoke of the Party’s goal to “deepen patriotic education” and to “actively guide religion to be compatible with a socialist society and maintain the principle of developing culture with socialist characteristics.” It is not certain how Xi Jinping plans to “adapt” religion.

## YOUNG PASTORS LEAVING

If there is one thing sure in life, it is that everyone will be one day older tomorrow. Senior pastors need to have a succession plan if they are diligent about the care of their congregation into the future.

Among churches in China, there are reports of an alarming deficit in young pastors ready to take the reins. When we consider some of the reasons for

this trend, three key areas stand out.

### 1. The patriarchal model of church organisation.

Pastors’ seniority and their time in service take precedence over professional ability. So, younger pastors, irrespective of their skills or their workload, are not paid as much as older staff who might be less qualified or

less gifted in their role. Younger pastors lose heart when they feel their giftings are being wasted, or they must remain in an unchallenging role for many years before stepping into the role they are passionate about. Young pastors feel their



voice and their ideas are not likely to be received by senior staff. They feel they are not permitted to contribute meaningfully.

## 2. Pastoral care for junior pastors is overlooked.

Church work is rewarding, but it is also emotionally challenging, and at times draining. Without mentoring and pastoral care young pastors cannot last the distance.

## 3. Salaries are unworkable for married couples.

Raising a family on a junior pastor's salary is extremely difficult and does not leave anything for emergency situations or contingencies. Illnesses and accidents can place the young pastor and his wife in difficult straits.

CCSM has played a part in providing some practical assistance to a small number of dedicated pastors, whose service might otherwise have been lost or greatly diminished. One had this to say:

"First of all, I thank you very

much in the Lord for helping me. When I had needs in service, I was favoured by your help, which thrilled me. I am grateful to God and you! May your generous offering be regarded as a delicious fragrance, a sacrifice acceptable and pleasing to God. May God bless and strengthen the work of your hands! I would like to express our gratitude to you and explain some of our current needs. We have been thinking of ways to handle tuition fees for our two children, (the youngest has to go to a private kindergarten, and the older one to the first year of junior high). Your help is a blessing to us, and we hope it will be able to continue. What you have done is truly valuable, as it inspires us to serve better. It can also inspire us to keep going and be strong in grace. Nowadays, rural churches are in great need of people to do serving. Especially in small and remote counties, newly established churches need young people to rise to serve."



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