

IN LIFE AND IN DEATH

Remembering the Persecuted Church in China



Image by Yiran Ding/Unsplash

“That I am not my own but belong—body and soul,
in life and in death—to my faithful Savior, Jesus Christ.”

—Heidelberg Catechism, read in 2018 by Chinese worshipers
gathered outside when their church was locked by police

INTERNATIONAL
DAY OF PRAYER
FOR THE
PERSECUTED
CHURCH
2020

OSJ
Office of Social Justice

A Litany to Remember the Persecuted Church

Loving God, we take such comfort in these old words from the Heidelberg Catechism. And we know that we are not alone — these words are a comfort to believers around the world. Today we remember Christians in China, who have used these words as comfort as a declaration of their unwavering faith in the face of oppression and persecution.

Remembering those brothers and sisters across the globe, we ask together:

What is your only comfort in life and in death?

God of comfort, we pray for Chinese families who have faced difficulties in life, and the threat of death, because of their faith. We pray for comfort for those who grieve a lost loved one. We pray for comfort for those who are imprisoned. We pray for comfort for those who are afraid of what tomorrow will bring. We pray for comfort for pastors who aren't sure what the next right decision will be for the churches they lead. God, in life and in death, we pray that your comfort will be close at hand for these faithful Chinese followers.

Remembering the declaration of Chinese Christians in a time of fear, we also declare:

That I am not my own but belong — body and soul, in life and in death — to my faithful Savior, Jesus Christ.

Believers are not promised deliverance from persecution and suffering in Scripture, but we are promised belonging.

We pray for a true sense of belonging for these Christians — for a sense that the global body of Christ remembers their suffering, prays for their strength, and remembers their faithfulness.

We pray for protection for bodily pain, for safety from physical harm, and for provision for the material needs that these communities have.

And we pray for protection from evil as well — guard their spirits from despondency, fear, or isolation. Give a strong sense of their belonging in you — a peace that passes understanding, a perfect love that casts out fear, a beloved community of hope and faith that overcomes the darkness.

And we pray for our church — as we remember these, our brothers and sisters in China, gift us, too, with a deeper and more fervent faith that gives us courage to live as your followers in this world.

Amen.