

Church Leaders Allegedly Beaten and Tortured Before Being Jailed for Christ

Three leaders of an unregistered Christian house church in Xi'an, China have been arrested again on fraud charges by Chinese communist authorities, raising renewed alarm about religious freedom in the country.

Pastor Lian Xuliang, Pastor Lian Changnian and church member Fu Juan were taken into custody last Sunday "by the First Branch of the Xi'an Municipal Public Security Bureau," according to ChinaAid. The group says the three are currently held at the Weiyang District Detention Center.

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This development is a repeat of their previous arrests, as reported by The Christian Post. The same three were detained on similar charges on Aug. 17, 2022, and held for nearly three years before being released on bail in April 2025.

Their church, known as the Church of Abundance or Fengsheng Church, said the case was already tried this summer. "What is shocking is that while awaiting the verdict, the authorities took the three individuals away again and detained them," the church said in a statement.

ChinaAid reports that authorities have used standard tithes and offerings from house church members as the basis for fraud

accusations. One witness identified by prosecutors as a victim has publicly said she was forced to testify and is now seeking to clear their names.

The 2022 closure of the church was tied to a broader national strategy to force Protestant congregations to join the state-run Three-Self Patriotic Movement. At the time, the church was labeled an “illegal social organization” and accused of “endangering national security.”

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Relatives have reported violence throughout the case. The wife of Pastor Lian said her husband showed visible injuries after being beaten. “His eyes were bloodshot and there was dried blood in the corner of his eyes,” she said. “His arms and hands were bruised and swollen.”

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U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio condemned the move, saying the actions show how the Chinese Communist Party “exercises hostility towards Christians who reject Party interference in their faith and choose to worship at unregistered house churches.”

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