

Elders Allegedly Bilked Church out of \$7 Million

A grand jury indicted a church elder and his wife for scheming to defraud a church and donor of more than \$7 million.

Jonathan Chang, 60, and his wife, Grace Chang, 57, engaged in a scheme to defraud a wealthy donor of money intended to support the Home of Christ 4 Christian Church (HOC4), located in Saratoga, California, according to the U.S. Attorney's Office.

Chang was an elder at the church and responsible for managing the finances. He also had a charitable organization by a similar name.

The U.S. Attorney's Office says Chang directed a wealthy donor's monthly donations to be wired to his own organization rather than to the HOC4.

"Jonathan Chang is also alleged to have solicited funds from the same donor for the stated purpose of acquiring a new HOC4 building. In response to Chang's requests, the donor provided a \$2 million donation and a \$3 million loan to acquire the new building. Jonathan Chang and Grace Chang did not disclose the existence of the funds to HOC4. Instead, the Changs directed the \$5 million to accounts under their control," according to the indictment.

But that's not all.

"While the donor believed the foundation was associated with the church, the church believed the foundation was controlled by the donor for the benefit of the church, and the couple convinced the church to transfer more than \$892,000 to the foundation," the *San Jose Mercury News* reports.

SJMN reports that if convicted, the Changs could face a

maximum of 20 years in prison.