

China: Jailed Pastor Gravely Ill

A pastor who has been in prison for the past 16 months was admitted to the hospital last month with a serious medical condition.

When Wang Hongwu arrived at the prison on March 20 to visit her husband, Yang Hua, she was alarmed to see him being carried out of a vehicle, writhing and shrieking in pain. He had just returned from the hospital, where he had been taken three days earlier when dark, painful lesions appeared on his legs and continued to spread. Prison doctors had given him painkillers but offered no treatment.

On March 23, a government prosecutor advised Yang Hua's lawyers to apply for permission to have Yang Hua treated at a different hospital. He was transferred to another hospital on March 24, where he was diagnosed with anaphylactoid purpura, a condition that causes inflammation of blood vessels and can affect the kidneys, intestines, joints and skin; leg lesions are a classic symptom. Treatment may involve steroids and, in some cases, surgery.





Yang Hua's lawyers have filed a request for medical bail so that he can be released from prison during treatment and recovery.

While serving as co-pastor of a large unregistered church in Guiyang, Yang Hua was detained on Dec. 9, 2015, and charged with divulging state secrets. Instead of receiving the typical 10-day administrative detention, he was held for more than a year without trial. On Dec. 26, 2016, he was convicted of the charges and sentenced to two and a half years in prison.

Yang Hua's Living Stone Church in Guiyang has worshiped openly since 2009, growing to a regular attendance of more than 700 members. The Chinese government has harassed the church since its founding, but the purchase of a new office space for meetings seemed to bring tensions with the government to a new high.

The church's other co-pastor, Su Tianfu, previously reported that 99 percent of the church's members have received calls from government officials, pressuring them to leave the church. In addition, church leaders have been continually pressured to join the government-sanctioned Three-Self Church.

Source: VOM Sources

Yang Hua and the Living Stone Church were featured in VOM's May 2016 newsletter. You can sign up for a free subscription [here](#).

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