

Who's watching Ming? Digital surveillance in China.



Imagine that someone knows that you're reading this article. They know where you're sitting, and who you're with. They know the last thing you looked at on your phone, the last thing you searched for online, the last time you went to meet people. Your moves are watched – not just by cameras in the street, but online too.

That's a little like what life is like for Ming (not his real name) in China. Digital technology is increasingly being used to target Christians, and surveillance systems are being used to track people's movements and what they do online. It makes following Jesus and sharing the gospel really hard – but Ming's determined to do it, no matter the cost.

The greatest risk Ming has taken is delivering secret Bibles. In parts of China, it's relatively easy to get a physical Bible – but where Ming is from it's much harder, particularly if the Bible is translated into the language of his ethnic group. "I could be arrested, interrogated and even imprisoned," he says. "But I knew that God called me to share the gospel by distributing Bibles."

And one day his fears came true. Ming and his friends were arrested. Miraculously, he was set free – but his friends weren't. To make matters worse, they could no longer use the company that Ming and his fellow believers had worked so hard to set up as a cover for their smuggling.

The arrest put him firmly on the radar of the authorities, and they remain determined to restrict his Christian activities. "I knew it would be harder to dodge the police and I'd have to live even more cautiously. I'm [officially] not allowed to attend church or even own a Bible anymore," he says. "At first, every one or two months, the police searched my house." They come less often now, but they still regularly search Ming's home.

Ming heard the Lord softly speak to him: "Go back to your hometown. Tell people about Me there." Like so many people in the Bible – from Moses to Gideon, Mary to the first disciples – Ming was scared but obedient. He gave up everything to move home – including being with his wife and daughter, which Ming's father-in-law forbade because of his faith. He chose to go back to a place where his every move was observed, catalogued and filed away, to be used against him if necessary. And that's where he started smuggling Bibles.

Ming has sacrificed a lot for his faith. In China, persecution and level of restriction can look very different from province to province – where Ming lives is among the most restrictive places. Even hearing the gospel can be difficult because the surrounding community has a different faith.

PLEASE PRAY

- ✚ For Ming to be reconciled with his wife and children and wider family
- ✚ For God's protection for courageous believers defying surveillance to smuggle Bibles and share the gospel

Source: Open Doors <https://www.opendoorsuk.org>

Ringstone in Aveland

3 September 2023
Thirteenth Sunday after Trinity



We welcome Revd. Sylvia Rice Oxley,
and thank her for leading the Eucharist service today

Psalm 138 Plea for Justice and Declaration of Righteousness

Vindicate me, O Lord,
for I have walked in my integrity,
and I have trusted in the Lord without wavering.

**Prove me, O Lord, and try me;
test my heart and mind.**

For your steadfast love is before my eyes,
and I walk in faithfulness to you.

**I do not sit with the worthless,
nor do I consort with hypocrites;**
I hate the company of evildoers,
and will not sit with the wicked.

**I wash my hands in innocence,
and go around your altar, O Lord,**
singing aloud a song of thanksgiving,
and telling all your wondrous deeds.

**O Lord, I love the house in which you dwell,
and the place where your glory abides.**

**Glory be to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit...**

Collect for this Sunday

Almighty God, who called your Church to bear witness that you were in Christ reconciling the world to yourself: help us to proclaim the good news of your love, that all who hear it may be drawn to you; through him who was lifted up on the cross, and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen**

Readings for this Sunday

Jeremiah 15.15-2

Romans 12.9-21

Matthew 16.21-28



Post Communion Prayer for this Sunday

God our creator, you feed your children with the true manna, the living bread from heaven: let this holy food sustain us through our earthly pilgrimage until we come to that place where hunger and thirst are no more; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

Sunday and regular weekday Services in the Group

3 September	11am	Eucharist	Morton
	6pm	Evening Prayer	Haconby
10 September	9am	Eucharist	Haconby
	6pm	Evening Prayer	Morton
17 September	11am	Eucharist	Morton
	6pm	Evening Prayer	Kirkby Underwood
24 September	11am	Eucharist	Kirkby Underwood
	6pm	Evening Prayer	Morton
Wednesday	10 am	Morning Prayer	Morton

Do you know anyone who is unable to get to church but who would like to receive Holy Communion? Just contact Revd Neil on 01778 219626 or revdneil@yahoo.com



Can you help?

Now schools are shut for summer, there are children who will have to go without their midday meal

There is a collection box in St. John the Baptist Church, on the left at the back of the church

Tinned meat	Tinned custard	Tinned rice pudding
Tinned vegetables	Jars of pasta sauce	Packets of plain rice
Squash or fruit juice	Tinned potatoes	Household goods
Shaving gel	Toothbrushes	Toiletries

Safeguarding & Contact Information

Safeguarding:

We take your welfare and safety very seriously!

Revd Neil (Rector): revdneil@yahoo.com,
01778 219626 or

Janice Hill (Group Safeguarding Officer):
janicethreetuns@hotmail.co.uk
01778 440733 and 07972 211936

Group Administrator and for entries to news sheet (by Tuesday please)

Sue O'Riordan: ringstoneoffice@gmail.com

Please pray for...

Anthony Andrews, Eben Atkinson, Sheila Bates, Margaret Brumby, Marie Rose Cubacub, Christine Evans, Dennis Gentleman, Sue Grainge, Clive Hall, Marion Heygate, Jane Knight, Judy Long, Imogen Matthews, John Rowntree, Maggie Sharman, Jose Stokes, Amanda Thomson, Clive Walker, Denise Warcup, John Weatherspoon, Kevin Whitfield, and for any others whom we name in the silence of our hearts.

We give thanks for those on the road to recovery.

We also remember the souls of John Cottingham, Fred Hall, Rosemary Anne Hooper, and all the faithful departed may they rest in peace and rise in glory; and we also pray for those who mourn their loss.

Rachel Wright and Andrew Hartley who will be married this month; Theodora Sismore who will be baptised this month

Wedding Anniversaries: Sophie and Lloyd Wright (1 year); Rachel and Raymond Cooper (2 years)

Baptism Anniversaries: Milo Allard (1 year)

Funeral anniversaries: Ivor Roberts (6 months); Sadie Hall (1 year); Hermia Slator, John Street (2 years)

From today's Gospel reading

Jesus said to the disciples, "Whoever wishes to come after me must deny themselves, take up their cross and follow me."

Reflection:

The disciples didn't realize what they were getting into when they said "Yes" to Jesus' invitation to follow him? They discovered that serving God by responding to Jesus' call, even though a good thing to do, does not guarantee smooth sailing. But they also learned to trust that God was with them as they tried to respond to Jesus' call, "Come follow me."

So we ask ourselves:

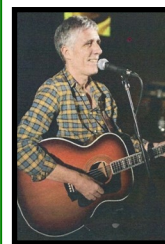
- ✚ Do we hear Jesus' call now, "Come follow me?" How shall we respond?
- ✚ Can we trust that God will be with us in that response?

Songs From Movies & Musicals
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28th October at 7.30pm
www.peterborough-cathedral.org.uk
contact@classicalreflection.co.uk



Dave Bilbrough Live

St Botolph's Church, Longthorpe, Peterborough, PE3 6LU

Friday 29 September from 7pm

Dave has composed many Christian songs including 'Abba Father', 'I am a new creation' and 'Let there be Love'. Tickets cost £10 and include light refreshments. Please contact Jackie Last to obtain tickets

Jackie@apsleyway.co.uk or 07532 457007