

## PROVIDENCE CHURCH Prayer for the Nations

**NORTH KOREA**

## General Information

- The country has an area of 46,500 square miles and a population of 22.7 million.
- Capital: Pyongyang, [p yuhng-yahng].

## Challenges

- Recent refugee, defector, missionary, and nongovernmental organizations (NGO) reports indicated religious persons engaging in proselytizing in the country and those who have been in contact with foreigners or missionaries have been arrested and subjected to harsh penalties.
- 23 Christians were arrested in May 2010 for belonging to an underground church in Kuwol-dong, Pyongsong City, South Pyongan Province. Reportedly three were executed, and the others were sent to Yoduk political prison camp.
- An estimated 150,000 to 200,000 persons are believed to be held in political prison camps in remote areas, some for religious reasons. Prison conditions are harsh, and prisoners held on the basis of their religious beliefs are generally treated worse than other inmates.
- The 2010 KINU White Paper and the 2007 U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom report "A Prison Without Bars" included defector testimonies referencing the existence of many underground worshippers.
- Persons engaged in proselytizing or who had ties to overseas evangelical groups operating across the border in China, have been arrested and subjected to harsh punishment.
- "Juche," often translated as extreme self-reliance, and the cult of personality of Kim Jong-il and his late father Kim Il-sung, is the most prominent ideological belief.



## Pray For

- Members of underground churches are arrested, beaten, tortured, or killed because of their religious beliefs.
- According to [Open Doors](http://www.opendoors.org/), an organization that supports persecuted Christians, North Korea has been No. 1 as the worst persecutor of Christians for eight years in a row.

## Reference

- [http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/irf/2010\\_5/168360.htm](http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/irf/2010_5/168360.htm)
- <http://www.opendoors.org/>
- <http://www.worldwatchlist.us/>