

Linchuan

临川

Linchuan ("Facing the River") City is a major agricultural and commercial center located in north-central Jiangxi Province in central China. Nanchang City, the provincial capital, is situated about 100 km (62 miles) northwest of Linchuan. The two cities are well connected by road.

Linchuan has a history reaching back at least 1,900 years. In 1951 the government changed the city's name to Fuzhou, but the name was changed back to Linchuan in 1987, partly because of confusion created by having the same name as Fuzhou City, the capital of Fujian Province.

Although Linchuan today is fast becoming a modern city in appearance with approximately one million inhabitants, glimpses of the city's long past can be seen, such as in the protective moat that surrounds the old section of Linchuan.

On the south side of the city there is a statue in honor of Wang Anshi, a famous revolutionist from the 11th century. During the Song Dynasty (960-1279 AD) Linchuan was a major porcelain center. Today many porcelain artifacts are still being dug up in a two-kilometer long area that appears to have formerly housed all the porcelain factories.

Perhaps the most famous resident of Linchuan throughout Chinese history was Tang Xianzu

Population:
872,657 (1990)
970,305 (2000)
1,078,900 (2010)

Province:
Jiangxi

Major Ethnic Groups:
Han 99.7%
Mongol 0.1%
Manchu 0.1%
Zhuang 0.1%

Christians:
24,000 (2.4%)

(1550-1616). The Chinese refer to Tang as 'the original Shakespeare.' He was a skilled writer and dramatist during the Ming Dynasty. His poems and plays had a great influence on the history of Chinese literature and arts. Tang's masterpiece 'The Peony Pavilion' has proved popular the literary circles to this day. In 1995 the Tang Xianzu Memorial Hall was built in his honor.

Today Linchuan depends greatly on agriculture for its economic viability. Almost 80% of the work force have jobs in the agricultural sector, especially rice, vegetable oil and sweet potatoes. Deposits of barite are located near the city, while Linchuan is famously known as 'The hometown of seedless watermelons'.

Outside Linchuan there are some pretty scenic spots. Waterfalls, hot springs, and a world-class array of flora and fauna are found within the hills near Linchuan.

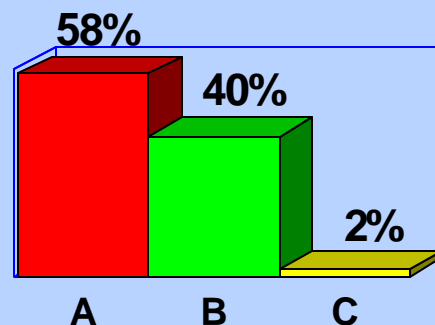
Although Linchuan is home to few Three-Self and Protestant house churches, central Jiangxi Province is regarded as one of the strongest Catholic areas in the whole of China. As a result, there are many Catholic churches in the city today.

Catholic believers in China face a similar struggle to their Protestant counterparts. There are those who choose to join the government-controlled Catholic

churches in the city today.



Status of Evangelization
(Awareness of Christ and the Gospel)



A = have never heard the Gospel or the Name of Christ
B = were evangelized but have not yet become Christians
C = Adherants to any form of Christianity



Patriotic Association, while others worship in illegal house churches. In recent years the Linchuan unregistered Catholics have experienced much persecution. In 1995 Father Liao Haiqing was arrested and thrown into the Linchuan Detention Center; despite suffering from a heart condition and high blood pressure. It was the sixth time Liao had been arrested for his faith. Also during 1995, 17 Catholics were detained and beaten during an Easter prayer service. Their injuries were so severe that they could not feed themselves and had to be hand fed.

The persecution continued the following year when approximately 80 underground Catholics in Linchuan were arrested, beaten and imprisoned in November 1996. Between August 13-20, 1997, security forces blocked roads leading to the site of a mass celebration. They arrested 17 Catholics, including six nuns.

On September 14, 2000, Bishop Thomas Zeng Jingmu, aged 80, was arrested and placed in Linchuan prison. He had already suffered 30 years of his life in prison from 1958-1976; 1981-1989; and 1994-1998. The severe persecution of the underground Catholics in Linchuan appears only to have strengthened the Catholic Church in the city.

Pray for Linchuan

- 1** Pray God would bless all who call on His Name in Linchuan City, making them new creatures in Christ.
- 2** Ask God to build His Church in a powerful way in Linchuan City.
- 3** Pray Catholics in China would truly know and obey God's Word.

Overview of Linchuan (based on 1990 census)

Pronunciation	: "Lin-chwan"	Employed People	: 484,136 (55.5% of total population)
Old Names	: Fuchow, Fuzhou, Linchuan	Main Industries	: Agriculture 79.3%, Industrial 8.8%
Location	: central Jiangxi Province, central China	Education	: University: 2.2%
Population	: 872,657 (1990 census)	(highest level attended):	: High School: 31.0%
Males	: 452,213 (51.82%)		: Primary school: 50.1%
Females	: 420,444 (48.18%)		: Never attended any school: 16.7%
Households	: 200,301	Population under 15:	: 272,755 (31.3%)
Average Household	: 4.4 people	Adult Illiteracy	: 18.3% (men 10.0%; women 26.9%)
Divorced People	: 3,564	Major Nationalities	: Han 872,205
% divorced of Population:	: 0.41		: Mongol 95
Centurions (1990)	: 2 people aged 100 or more		: Manchu 90
Immigrants to City	: 16,940		: Zhuang 72
From same province:	: 12,347 (72.9%)		: Others 195 (18 groups)
From other provinces:	: 4,575 (27.1%)	Christians	: 24,000 (2.4%)