

Dallas minister hopes to continue food deliveries to North Korea

August 15, 2017

DALLAS—In spite of mounting international tension, a Korean Texas Baptist minister refuses to believe his latest food delivery to North Korea could be his final one.



Yoo Yoon of Dallas ensured delivery of 60 tons of soybeans to schools for orphans and a hospital in Wonsan and Moonchun, both in North Korea's Kangwon Province. In spite of travel restrictions, Yoon plans to apply for a special passport validation that would allow him to continue his longstanding relief ministry in North Korea. (Photo courtesy of Yoo Yoon) Last month, Yoo Yoon, director of the Korean-American Sharing Movement of Dallas, delivered 60 tons of soybeans and more than 30 musical instruments to schools for orphans and a hospital in Wonsan and Moonchun, both in North Korea's Kangwon Province.

Escalating rhetoric

In recent weeks, Kim Jong-un, North Korea's ruler, has accelerated intercontinental ballistic missile tests and threatened to launch four missiles off near the U.S. territory of Guam.

President Donald Trump responded by saying the U.S. military is "locked and loaded," and he asserted North Korean aggression "will be met with fire and fury like the world has never seen."

While Yoon was in North Korea, U.S. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson authorized a travel restriction on Americans seeking to enter North Korea, effective Sept. 1.

A travel warning on the State Department's [website](#) notes the restriction is "due to the serious and mounting risk of arrest and long-term detention of U.S. citizens." However, the State Department said Americans who travel to North Korea for humanitarian purposes may apply for special travel documents.

Once the State Department publishes information on how to make application, Yoon plans to apply for the special validation "to continue to feed and educate the orphans," he wrote in a July 29 email.

Committed to caring for orphans and the vulnerable

Yoon has traveled to North Korea about 30 times since 1996, typically to supervise the delivery of food, medical supplies and other resources provided by Texas Baptist Men and other donors. The supplies are directed to orphanages, schools for orphans and hospitals.

Yoon remains committed to what he calls "our Lord's mandate" to care for orphans and the vulnerable in North Korea, in spite of increasingly heated rhetoric by political leaders.

"I love the saying, 'I would plant an apple tree today if I knew that

tomorrow was the end of the world,” Yoon said. “If that question is given to me, I would say that I would witness for our Lord Jesus Christ. We Christians need to be engaging in his work while the world does theirs. The world destroys, but we rescue them.”

Yoon noted he is praying “for our president, Donald Trump, to be given wisdom and knowledge as he is leading our blessed country, as well as for the safety and daily life of North Korean people.”

“We need to pray for peace and work for peace,” Yoon said.