# 【學主 道成內身 來到客家之中】-雅威信 牧師 化身為「愛」的使者

您 翩然降臨 融入 客-庄-本-色

巧-然-問-您 手中 播撒的 信息種子 是--愛——乎 將自己 一-併-獻-上 全然落入 您 深-情-摯-愛的 客-家-人 心田 不-禁-輕-問 是-否 已蔚為滿園的 璀燦 美麗 繽紛 啊 但見 來時的路徑 踏過的足跡 處處留下 慈愛的 細-膩 恩典的 芬-芳

9-9-7 是您在戰場上 揮毫的 旗幟 也是 心之-所-緊 榮譽勳章 您 將自己化作一個禮物 賜下 釋放 於我們 卻是奇妙 寶貴 無比 揭開禮物 之時 不禁 驚-喜-讚-嘆 連連 就想念 賜禮物的 您 向我們展露 深-情-的 微笑

啊 愛是您 愛是我 愛是 客-家 差遣奉派的 國王 無法親臨 化作您 翩-然-來-到 帶著王子的 尊榮 体認貼近 客家子民 難以言喻的 悲-情-過-往 一同 圈在 萬王之王 愛的統治裡

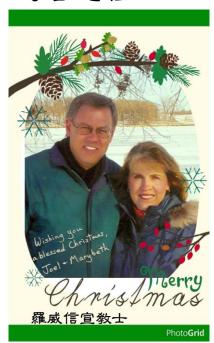
在那日 於永遠的家鄉 放眼 各方 各國 各族 各民 齊來聚集 敬拜頌讚 大君王的 榮耀 尊貴 權柄 聖哉 聖哉 聖哉

但見 您心上的子民 客-家-族-人身著 藍-衫-泛-白 亦-在-其-中當 主點名 的時候您-我-他她 一-個-個 亦-圈-在-其-中

# [Our Mission to the Flakka People of Taiwan]

# 【我們對台灣客家人的宣教情】

#### ● 呼召&空位



「我以宣教士身分,投入向台灣客家族群的宣教,有二十年之久。之後,我於 2001 年,偕同家人返回美國,原本計劃完成述職之後,孩子們適應了美國的生活並做些調整之際,擬打算於 2004 年再返回台灣;然而,2002 年,主差派我至明尼蘇達州,我們教派所屬的神學院擔任院長。經過些許轉折後,如今我找到自己事奉的崗位,就是「北美宣教部執行總裁」之職,聚焦落實於我們教派在美國與加拿大境內之所有教會的拓展以及其健全發展上。

# ● 「硬頚?」的省思

吾妻<u>瑪麗斑絲</u>和我,於 1981 年首次到台灣,隨身攜帶著使命與目標而來,是為要在福音尚未觸及的客家,展開宣教事工。我們宣教士們與其服事配搭的同工們,他們所屬教會之所在地,大部分都位於客家地區,特別是在新竹以及苗栗縣市,然而,我們前期的宣教事工幾乎都是透

過國語來完成,在那同時,仍然只有少數教會與宣教事工是著重在客家宣教。有一位台灣作家兼學者,名叫<u>廖大衛</u>,於 1972 年寫了一本書,是有關於台灣的客家族人,這本書對我們影響深遽;在其書裡其中一章寫著:「冷淡遲鈍的一群:硬頸?或被忽視?」廖大衛下結論說到,客家是個被忽略的族群,以致於我們不能驟下斷語,定論他們是硬頸的,除非給予他們一個公平的機會,能用他們自己的語言和文化來聽聞福音。

於 1981 年,當吾妻<u>瑪麗斑絲</u>和我帶著我們兩歲的兒子,安頓好住在<u>湖口</u>時,我們的目標是學習客家的語言與文化,是為了盡可能以上帝所賜予我們的具體化行動~親臨客家,將耶穌的好消息帶給客家人,我們著實驚訝於許多基督徒們的回應,他們告訴我們說,學習客家話簡直是在浪費時間,除此以外,他們還說:「客家人實在是硬頸、頑固,他們是不會信主的。」這真使我憤怒,而我卻因此更認同我們正開始去瞭解、深愛的這群客家鄉親。

# ● 化身為爱

接續的後兩年期間,我們的家庭從三位增長至五人,在這同時,我們準備投入在<u>梅</u>的富岡,屬於我們創建的第一個教會的拓植事工上,我們家有三個小小孩可幫助我們,進入並參與多年來成為我們家鄉的社區,經過八年多後,我們又多花時間學習國語,它成為我們的第二個華語,於此時期,我們與居住所在地的本地人聯結互動;當身處台灣的非客家地區時,像是在渡假般,有著似外國觀光客的不舒適之感,而重新返回客家庄之後的感覺,實在真是奇妙美好無比啊!在<u>富岡</u>,我們已可以與人自由的溝通交談,也找到了被擁有的歸屬感。」~註

註/: 從英翻中~羅威信牧師 2007 年的來信「Our Mssion to the Hakka People of Taiwan」

#### ● 爱如風吹

「身為外國人的我們,擁有著「外國的」宗教,並以此信仰在<u>富岡</u>,向新的客家朋友見證主時,我們感到灰心受挫了。我們反問自己:「有這麼多的障礙!他們怎麼會相信耶穌呢?」但是,就在我們尚未到達之前,上帝其實已經在預備人心了,而我們要義不容辭地為主作見證,在頭三年中,聖靈祂自己親自引領超過25個成人(還有更多的孩童)歸向主耶穌,透過神、人的關係陣線,令人無法抵擋地看見,上帝是如何排山倒海地在其中運行動工;有才剛初信者的當中一位,常常邀請我跟著一起去向他的朋友或親戚作見證,那是我人生中最快樂的歲月,我們與李牧師與曾牧師緊密同工,也向他們學習甚多,從台北而來之潘牧師的支援,對於我們來說,也是神來之助力哩。

當我明白是聖靈啟開這些客家初信者的心扉時,我開始意識到上帝正在使用著我們,因為我們正在做「對的、正確的」事,但當事情進展地亨通順利時,卻易於對自己的所作所為,確信滿滿,實是在所難免吧。

#### ● 恩召的幼絮

直到十年之後,這個真理在我眼前更清楚明晰。於 1997 年,我們在同一地區「富岡」想嚐試拓植、再建立另一個教會,在那之前,在這一區已有我們許多的朋友了,我們已有一位全職客家同工,我們可以雙聲帶說海陸客家話與國語,我也才剛完成我的博士學位,「這時候」我思忖「我們已真地預備妥當,要開始啟動一個教會了?!」然而,卻很快地發現所有人為的努力,都沒有帶領人來歸向主,我們奮戰了四年之久,只有少數人得救,卻為著這些寶貴的人們,每一位靈魂的得救,向主獻上深深地感恩!

然而,我因此學習到上帝以恩召邀請我們參與祂神國的事工,祂卻是沒有應許我們任何所謂的「成功」,拯救人們的不是我們,也不是我們的聰明才智打開了人們的心門,上帝應允我們與祂聯結同工,能參與祂救贖人類的大計劃,這已使我心滿意足了,我們將結果交託給上帝;在那些艱難困苦的年間,在跟隨主耶穌的道路上,我因而學習到這一個重要的功課。

#### ● 天命勢望

停留在台灣期間,我熱切的盼望之一,是以學主道成肉身來到我們當中的方式,來跟隨耶穌。我相信要一直等到我們除去蒙敝客家人來相信主之不必要的障礙之後,才敢斗膽控訴他們是頑固或硬頸與否?因為只有耶穌的十字架才是令人蹣跚躊躅、使人絆倒的「障礙物」如果他們能用自己清楚明白的方式,真實聽聞知曉這好消息,領受耶穌為他們死在十字架上之救恩,是為要除去他們的罪惡過犯,使他們能成為天父上帝的真實兒女,而如果他們仍拒絕這福音,那麼,他們就要為他們的拒絕負責了;至於我,如果我沒有親自來到他們當中,如主的道成肉身,且在他們自己的文化中,與之清楚交談溝通,他們就真地不明瞭福音,那麼這時,我也要為他們的「硬心」背負上些許責任了。」~註之

註2: 從英翻中~羅威信牧師 2007 年的來信「Our Mssion to the Hakka People of Taiwan」

「在客家人當中,為何基督徒的比例只佔 0.3%呢?我不認為該責備客家人他們自己,我也不認為他們已真正地聽見福音;我記得有一個基督徒是客家人,也是同工,告訴我們說她好幾次跟她的客家媽媽傳福音,都沒有什麼果效,直到有一天,她使用客家話分享福音之時,僅僅只是使用客家話呦,福音在她媽媽的身上就產生深遠影響!「哇!這個基督教的上帝會講我說的話呢?」這不是她的媽媽不懂得國語所傳送使致,而是當她聽到是以她自己的心靈語言說出時,這個信息似乎是從她的「頭腦」傳達出,又觸及到她的「心」了。

# ● 化隱憂為「實體」

我知道有許多的客家基督徒(甚至是牧師)不能、也(不打算)以客家話向未信主的家人傳福音、為主作見證,這事仍使我的心隱隱作痛,我也明白它的確不容易,因我所有的客家弟兄姐妹是以國語背景接受教育的,包括他們的神學教育,但我不得不真心地相信,當客家式的神學教育來到,並觸及到本土基層客家鄉親時,它就會帶來不一樣的意義。

在 2000 年,我們聯手打造開創了【客家宣教神學院】,這是為了客家事工,訓練領袖人才的起步,我們已發現到當一些最優秀的客家領袖,若是選擇就讀於其他神學院之後,他們似乎就常失去了接觸自己鄉親族群的熱誠,甚且因為他們的神學教育是以國語裝備的,自然而然從神學院畢業後,就不能舒坦自在地用自己的母語傳福音、講道,甚至禱告了,這是想當然耳。

為了客家人的緣故,我們創辦了「客家宣教神學院」,從原本初衷,我們就期盼能吸引客家人和非客家人領受呼召,將耶穌的好消息帶入基層客家人的客廳,使他們在客家的宣教與門徒訓練上,有機會接受裝備。我為此禱告~祈求「客家宣教神學院」能繼續預備各個男男女女的心田,超越層層社會語言的障礙,有形有體地將耶穌介紹給數百萬無數個未曾聽聞祂的客家族人,惟願上帝多而又多、豐豐富富地,大大祝福此宣教事工。

#### ● 與惩有约

自從我離開台灣,七年有餘,如今文化更迭,而我瞭解目前的事物進展,我也已縮



— InstaMag —

手未觸及,請原諒我膽敢提及論述有關於 「客家實教神學院, 之事,甘寒我們外來的

「客家宜教神學院」之事,其實我們外來的 宣教士,也不總是完全理解所有事務的,但 是因為我是被邀請來與您們分享我的心,那 麼我就盡其所能、自由地來完成了。我會繼 續為客家人祈求,還有也為那些正帶著耶穌 得救的信息給他們的人禱告;將來有一天, 我們的主若許可,應允我們有機會,於此宣 教事工上,再一次地加入且參與,並與您們 一起同工,我的心將多麼地歡喜快樂啊!」

~註3

註3:從英翻中~羅威信牧師 2007 年的來信「Our Mssion to the Hakka People of Taiwan」

#### ● 後記

「羅威信牧師(Rev. Joel Nordtvedt)在日本出生成長,直到八歲時,才回美國故鄉明尼蘇達州接受教育,父親是一位在日本宣揚福音的宣教士,長大後,他本想效法父親去日本宣教。一九九七年,大學畢業後,選擇作心理醫師,預備回到日本貢獻所學,他甚至採取行動到日本短宣一年,但就在他從日本返回美國時,經過台灣住了四天,聽到在苗栗宣教的薄牧師(Rev. Ernie Boerh)提到客家人信主的情形與比例。羅牧師當時就很有感動,回到美國後,這個感動就在他心裏不斷激盪縈繞,他願意遵行上帝心意而行,促使他接著報考神學院,接受裝備,從一位心理醫師,轉而成為宣教士與牧師,並於一九八一年攜家帶眷來到台灣客庄,向客家人宣教、佈道、傳福音。」~註★

#### 一、爱的標記

「羅牧師真是剖心掏肺地將自己全然給了客家;在車子的駕駛盤上,寫著「九九七」 三個數字,以便隨時提醒自己,每一千位客家人中就有九九七位是失落的,他念茲在茲 的就是「九九七」,「九九七」三字凝聚了羅威信牧師一生的使命。主耶穌有一百隻羊 失去一隻,尚且去找那失去的羊;但羅牧師失落的並非百分之一,而是百分之九九・七。 可見他心中之焦急與迫切,對客家人之宣教情懷的熱切。~註.5

## 二、爱的负擔與服事

細數他宣教的足跡,在這廿年期間,創辦過楊梅信義會、富岡福音中心、中華信義神學院基層宣教部以及客家宣教學院(擔任第一任院長),並獲頒美國三一神學院宣教學博士學位,又擔任中華信義會差會主席,受到客家人的尊敬,又被上帝大大重用。

「羅牧師的宣教對象是客家基層,那彷彿是人以為的「硬土中之頑石」,羅牧師卻認為要得客家基層的心只有說客家話,並且大力推廣客家話,他自己也是戰戰兢兢地學客語,他在一次的信神畢業典禮上,是用客家話講道的!他不忍心說客家人是硬頸的,卻願學像耶穌道成肉身的方式,親自來到客家人當中,給他們一個機會,堅持要以他們熟悉的語言、文化來傳揚福音,使之可以聽見且相信主,並把此使命視作自己的責任。由此看出他愛客家人的心,以及做為一位宣教士的柔情細膩與貼心。~註6

#### 二、爱的健康

「由於羅牧師對客家的一往情深,啟發了一些宣教士與牧師的奉獻。如~感動了兩位美國牧師~<u>陳義聖與邱福生</u>宣教士,先後加入「中華信義會差會」,跟他走上一模一樣的客家宣教道路;他的客家熱也連帶影響了本地客家同工~竹東信義會厚賜堂的<u>曾政忠</u>牧師,原是以國語服事的客家傳道人,因去了楊梅信義會,而受到羅牧師影響,遂改用客家話服事;曾牧師後來當過中華信義會監督,又曾擔任客家福音協會主任委員,其影響力不問可知;而「厚賜堂」也因此從國語教會轉變為客語教會,如今已發展成客家福音重鎮,可謂影響深遠。」~註7

註4,5,6,7:【羅威信牧師將返美述職 客家福音協會離情依依】/吳瑞誠著/論壇報/教會新聞/1914 期/2001.6.29/客福簡訊 2001.11 「中華基督教信義會【福恩堂】也是由羅威信牧師所開創。他於 1981 年來台,先定居於新竹縣湖口鄉,為宣教而開始學客家話,因而認識了本堂現任之黎萬豐牧師(那時他還是未清楚重生得救之二代信徒),因為羅牧師的帶領,使黎牧師不但重生,進而奉獻自己,為主所用。【福恩堂】教會建立到現在,都本著羅牧師來台向客家人宣教之精神,堅持講台一定用客語,富岡的小組也以客家福音山歌會友,之後,因其他因素,經過教會執事會考量評估,遂於 2004 年 10 月取消客語講道,等客家信徒增多以後,再以分堂來作客語崇拜啦。」~註&

# 四、阎於客家福春事工的歷史及角度與策略之看法

「<u>羅威信</u>牧師在 1999 年客家諮詢會議中,提及他的看法~有關客家宣教歷史及客家福音事工的宣教角度與策略~如下列

- 台灣的客家宣教歷史中,沒有一種有系統的記載,只是些許片斷與傳說而已,讓以後要工作的人,不知道要怎樣工作。
- 2. 客家宣教是完全被遺忘與忽略的。此項所造成的原因有~
  - A.客家宣教工作中,没有宣教歷史。
  - B.天然的因素: 因客家人靠山務農生活,外面的人包括宣教士,與之接觸往來不容易。
  - C.政治因素: 1949 從中國大陸退守台灣之時,來台的信徒很多是講國語,即使是在客家庄。
  - D.宣教策略的忽略:早期的客家工作,是沒有異象、目標與策略的工作。
- 3. 羅牧師認為福音就是把上帝的道帶到世界中,世界就是代表文化。在不改變福音本質的前提下,去適應當地的文化特色;如果要作到道成肉身的方式,我們必須要把福音本色化,要把上帝的道跨越到這個世界裡面來,然後用他們能夠明白的方式,將上帝的道帶給客家人。」~註9

# 五、服事近况

「在明尼蘇達州,於路德信義宗母會,服事長達 12 年之後,羅威信牧師於 2015 夏天,舉家搬遷到亞利桑那州,在此州立大學成為校園同工,服事國際學生們。亞利桑那州立大學是美國最大的大學之一,擁有從世界各地而來約 10,000 的國際學生,他們的事工集中在畢業生及學者們的探訪(許多學者均來自中國大陸)伴隨著聖經研讀後,每週五晚在家中有晚宴,大部分的學生們與學者們都不是基督徒,但都對耶穌感到好奇,也願與他們敞開心一起研讀聖經。他們在校園遇見學生(通常是一對一)並在人際、文化及靈性上鼓勵他們,羅牧師的渴盼是當他們還在亞利桑那州立大學就讀時,能成為主的跟隨者,以致於返回到家鄉前,能接受訓練,並在學生們返鄉後,仍設法繼續追蹤,透過當地家鄉基督徒以及親自探訪,保持聯繫。也因伴隨著國際學生與學者們的事工,他與妻瑪麗斑絲每年約有八週旅行到亞洲、非洲及歐洲,為兩個宣教機構進行「成員關顧」,並在靈性上及跨文化的調適上,支持他們。」~註10

註8:【中華基督教信義會福恩堂~建堂史】從網站上瀏覽

註 9:【客家宣教歷史】&【從宣教的角度評估客家福音事工】羅威信牧師所發表/余瑞美姊妹錄音整理

註 IO:從英翻中~來自於 2016.4.15 羅威信牧師所傳寄之電郵

## 六、缘起



2007 十月底,羅威信牧師回來台灣,也進來竹東【客神】看我們,我以前是在照片上遇見他,這次是與他面對面相見,以海陸客家話談笑風生之際,體會到他的關切之愛,如春風之吹拂,羅師母<u>瑪麗斑絲(美雲)</u>也偕他同來,一樣用熟悉的海陸客語與我們交談,彼此距離拉近很多,兩人對此地的關心,溢於言表;他她們此次親自來到,將真心放入我們的手心,而大家也用心接收到了,那是從天父上帝而來之愛的禮物,心深感動的感恩。

事隔九年之後,今年2016年7月,<u>羅威信</u>牧師再返台,計畫參加以前所服事的楊梅教會之25週年慶,也抽空拜訪了我們學院,又再有機會與羅牧師談聊一番,當讚美著<u>美雲</u>師母的海陸客家話,仍然是一級棒的標準,十分道地之時,就聽到她很流利地再以海陸客家話脫口而出:「半桶水啦」。啊!渴盼再與您們食茶打嘴鼓,鬥敘一下哩,相約再聚主愛裡啦!

# 七、参考资料:

- 1. 【Our Mssion to the Hakka People of Taiwan】/2007 羅威信牧師所著之英文原稿
- 2. 2016.4.15 羅威信牧師所傳寄之英文電郵
- 3.【羅威信牧師將返美述職 客家福音協會離情依依】/吳瑞誠著/論壇報/教會新聞/1914 期/2001.6.29
- 4.【客福簡訊 2001.11】轉載論壇報 1914 期
- 5.【中華基督教信義會福恩堂~建堂史】從網站上瀏覽
- 6.【新馬可波羅遊記~羅威信先生與「鹽菜豬肚」的情懷】余瑞美姊妹採訪
- 7.【客家宣教歷史】&【從宣教的角度評估客家福音事工】此 2 篇爲羅威信牧師, 在 1999 年客家諮詢會議中,所發表的專題内容,由余瑞美姊妹錄音整理。
- 8. 蘇文安牧師已看過、審閱、修改。

# [Our Mission to the Hakka People of Taiwan]

# Joel Nordtvedt (Loh Wei-syin)~ 雅威信 牧師

After spending twenty years as a missionary to the Hakka people of Taiwan, I returned to America with my family in 2001. We had originally expected to possibly return to Taiwan in 2004 after an extended home assignment during which time our children would make their adjustments to life in America. In 2002, however, I was called to serve as the president of our denominational seminary in Minnesota where I served for one term. Through some twists and turns, I now find myself in the position of Executive Director of North American Mission, our synodical department that focuses on health and outreach of our churches within the United States and Canada.

My wife Marybeth and I first went to Taiwan in 1981 with the goal of doing mission work among the unreached Hakkas. Many churches that our missionaries had been working with were located in Hakka regions, especially in Hsinchu and Miaoli Counties. Yet almost all of our former mission work was done through the Mandarin language. At that time there were still very few churches and missions working to focus on Hakka evangelism. Taiwanese author and scholar, David Liao, had written a book in 1972 about the Hakka people of Taiwan, a book that impacted us deeply. In "The Unresponsive: Resistant or Neglected," Liao concluded that the Hakkas were a neglected people group and that we cannot determine if they were resistant unless they are given a fair opportunity to hear the gospel in their own language and culture.

As Marybeth and I settled in Hukou in 1981 with our 2-year-old son, our goal was to learn the Hakka language and culture in order to bring the good news of Jesus to them as incarnationally as God enabled us. We were surprised by the reaction of many Christians who told us that we were wasting our time learning the Hakka language. "Besides," they told us, "the Hakka people are very stubborn and will not believe." That made me angry and I identified even more with the people we were beginning to understand and love.

During the next two years our family grew to five. By the time we were ready to enter our first church planting work in Fugang, Yangmei, we had three small children to help us engage the community that would be our home for many years. It would be eight more years before we took time to learn Mandarin, our second Chinese language. During that time we bonded to the people we lived among. It was always a wonderful feeling to return to our

Hakka village after being on a "vacation" in a non-Hakka area of Taiwan where we felt the discomfort of being "foreign tourists." In Fugang we could communicate freely and we felt like we belonged.

As foreigners with a "foreign" religion we were overwhelmed as we began to witness to our new Hakka friends in Fugang. "How will they ever believe Jesus when there are so many barriers?" we asked ourselves. But God had been preparing people even before we had arrived. And we were privileged to see the Holy Spirit lead more than twenty-five adults (and many more children) to Jesus in our first three years. It was overwhelming to see how God worked through relationship lines. I would often be asked by one of the new believers to go along to witness to their friend or relative. Those were some of the happiest years of my life. We worked closely with Pastor Li and Pastor Tseng and learned much from them. Pastor Peng from the Taipei Hakka Church was also a wonderful support for us.

While I knew that it was the Holy Spirit that was opening the hearts of these new Hakka believers, I suppose I felt some sense that He used us because we were doing things "right." When things go well it is easy to take the credit for ourselves.

It was not until ten years later when the truth became clearer to me. In 1997 we tried again to plant a church in the same area. By then we had many friends in the area. We had a full-time Hakka co-worker. We could speak both Hakka and Mandarin. I had just finished my Ph.D. "This time," I thought, "we were very well-prepared to start a church." However, I soon discovered that all of these human efforts were not what brought people to Jesus. We struggled for four years and only a handful of people were saved. We are very grateful for each of these precious people.

I learned, however, that God graciously invites us to participate in His kingdom work but does not promise what we consider "success." It is not we who save people. Neither is it our clever ideas that open peoples' hearts. It is enough that we are allowed to join Him in His work. We will leave the results to God. While those were difficult years, I learned an important lesson about following Jesus.

One of my passions while in Taiwan was to follow Jesus in the way he came to us incarnationally. I am convinced that until we remove all the unnecessary barriers that hinder Hakka people from believing, we dare not accuse them of being stubborn or resistant! It is only the cross of Jesus that should be the "stumbling block." If they clearly hear in ways that they can <u>truly</u>

<u>understand</u>, the good news that Jesus died to take away their sin and make them a true son or daughter of the Heavenly Father, and if they still reject this gospel, only then are they responsible in their rejection. If I do not go to them incarnationally and communicate clearly within their own culture and they do not really understand the gospel, then I hold some responsibility for their "hardness."

Why are there still only 0.3% Christians among the Hakka people? I am not convinced that we can blame the Hakka people themselves. I am not convinced that they have really <a href="heard">heard</a> the gospel. I remember a Hakka Christian co-worker who told of witnessing many times to her Hakka mother with no effect until one day when she used the Hakka language to share the gospel. Just by using Hakka, the gospel had a profound effect on her mother. "This Christian God speaks my language." It is not that her mother could not understand the words spoken in Mandarin, but the message seemed to reach through her head and into her heart when she heard it in her own heart language.

It still pains me to know that many Hakka Christians (even pastors) cannot (or will not) witness of Jesus to their unsaved Hakka family in the Hakka language. I know it is not easy. All of my Hakka brothers and sisters received all of their education in Mandarin – including their theological education. But cannot help but believe that it would make a difference when it comes to reaching the grassroots Hakka people.

In the year 2000 we joined hands to open the Hakka Seminary. This was an attempt to train leaders for Hakka ministry. We had found that when some of our best Hakka leaders attended other seminaries, they often seemed to lose some of their zeal to reach their own people. Furthermore since their theological education was all in Mandarin they often graduated from seminary unable to comfortably use their own language to preach or even pray. This is very natural.

For the sake of the Hakka people we started the Hakka Seminary. Our desire from the beginning was to attract Hakka and non-Hakka people who had a calling to bring the good news of Jesus into the living rooms of the grass-roots Hakka people. They would have a chance to be trained in a context focused on Hakka evangelism and discipleship. My prayer is that the Hakka Seminary will continue to prepare men and women to cross the socio-linguistic barriers to incarnationally bring Jesus to the millions of Hakkas who have not heard. May God richly bless this ministry!

It has been more than seven years since we left Taiwan. Cultures change and I realize that I may be out of touch with how things are today. Please forgive me for my bold statements about Hakka ministry. We foreign missionaries do not always understand all of the issues. But since I was asked to share my heart with you, I have done so freely. I will continue to pray for the Hakka people and for those who are bringing the saving message of Jesus to them. And if our Lord grants us opportunity to join you in this work again some day, I will rejoice.