

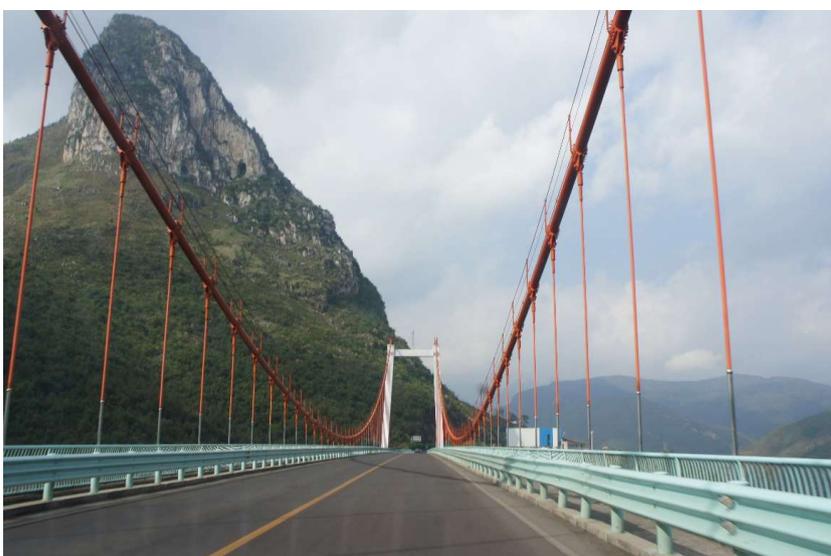
“ Since mainland churches and the society have developed most swiftly in recent times, and a “partner”—not a “savior”—is needed. ”

**The Pathfinder**

**Otto Lui**

**Assistant General Secretary (Training)**

We saw deterioration in the relationship between mainland China and Hong Kong in 2015. Following the Umbrella Movement in 2014, mainland authorities have imposed harsher restrictions on the development of Christianity. Meanwhile, Hong Kong people (particularly the young) have harbored more negative sentiment towards the mainland.



It is therefore getting more difficult to encourage Hong Kong churches to take part in China ministries.

In addition to this unfavorable environment, there is also fewer chances for Hong Kong churches to participate in China ministries. Mainland churches are now basically self-sufficient in terms of their daily operations, offerings for building churches, and training for church workers. Apart from government funding, more affluent churches in Eastern China can even join in poverty alleviation work. Hence, there are not many ministries that Hong Kong churches can take part in.

However, in light of the close geographical and cultural affiliations between the two places, Hong Kong churches still play an indispensable role in the development of Chinese churches. Hong Kong remains a center for theology studies, attracting tens of thousands of mainland church workers to come to for training and various gatherings every year. Hong Kong also boasts rich resources on studies and researches on various theological subjects, and theological subjects will be where resources will be dedicated to in the future.

In addition to theological training, Hong Kong, an international city, has its unique experience in running city churches, which can serve as a reference for mainland city churches. While mainland churches have grown by leaps and bounds in the past four decades, many problems have also surfaced, leaving much room for assistance from overseas believers. Apart from going north, Hong Kong people should also grasp the opportunity to get in contact with the many mainland travelers coming to Hong Kong under the individual visitor scheme, and the one million new immigrants from China who have settled in Hong Kong after the reunification.

In the 18<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, Western mission organizations which came to China might have a sense of superiority. The top priority was of course evangelism and the saving of souls. Yet, they would also hope to “westernize” China. Their attitude was one of “I am here to help you”. We should not inherit such attitudes in our ministries for China, since mainland churches and the society have developed most swiftly in recent times, and a “partner”—not a “savior”—is needed.

The essence of a partnership is joint participation, sharing what you are good at and learning from others’ strengths as well. This should cover experience, talents, networks or even money. Hong Kong churches have a wealth of experience and can be a pathfinder for mainland churches in terms of cross-cultural mission and international networks. Young Christians serving in mainland churches can also widen their experience of faith.



### **Walk Along with Churches!**

We plan to conduct 26 training programs for mainland church leaders from March 2016 to February 2017 (which will be held in both the mainland and Hong Kong), and are raising a sum of US\$190,000 for this purpose.

If you are touched by the Lord to show support through your offerings, walk hand in hand with mainland churches, assist in promoting their leadership training, in order to let our co-workers have enough resources to serve at the front line, please contact us for details, thank you.

## Equipping Teachers From “Knowing About” to “Knowing Why”! Teacher Wu (Christian Education Teacher)

In recent years, mainland churches try hard to find and conduct programs that help develop people in Christian education in the hopes of better equipping current teachers. In the training process, most trainees only hope to learn some more practical teaching techniques in order to meet the demands of the current education. Nevertheless, a recent



phenomenon is that some teachers with years of experience are hesitant to come forward because they lack self-confidence, and so they join session after session of teaching technique training. We, in line with the Apostle Paul, say, “And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable people who will also be qualified to teach others.” (2 Timothy 2:2) We want to discover and encourage these experienced teachers, asking them to step forward and **equipping them to be “reliable people who will also be qualified to teach others.”**

**If we are to foster teachers who are “reliable people who will be qualified to teach others”, the horizon for learning should not be limited to “knowing about”, because then the teachers would have only the teaching techniques and stop at the surface. To help our teachers reach a higher level, the guiding principle of training these teachers will be to take them from “knowing about” to “knowing why”. Our future direction for training will be concentrated on veteran teachers with rich experience. We will help them to grasp the principles and theories behind teaching practice. This will enable them to express their creativity in facing different circumstances in their churches, and in designing teaching content. Along with proper techniques, these things combined will have the greatest effect possible on the church.**

Teaching techniques remain very important as they are the basics of education, but to help teachers become better at what they do, there has to be a deeper understanding and

further study in personal spiritual growth and education theory. On one hand, this will improve teaching techniques. On the other hand, it will also help teachers boost their confidence to foster people to take their place. To help people become trainers is our ultimate goal.

## **Our Commitment – Your Support is Needed! Professional Diploma in Christian Education**

We provide the equivalent of an undergraduate level of Christian education theory and practicum, with an emphasis on training to train up others.

### **Goal**

1. We plan to execute an intensive course in Mandarin in the middle of the year. (twice annually, 5 days intensive courses; credits depending on actual course)
2. To train and equip 15-20 teachers, pastors and lay leaders who are committed to establishing the work of Christian education within 2 years.



## **The Estimated Expenditures for 2016: US\$51,000**

If you feel moved to support us in training more local and mainland talents for promoting Christian education so that the church can grow and develop on a solid foundation, please contact us for details, thank you.

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## **Prayers**

### **1. In the Wake of the Forced Removal of Crosses**

Some of the pastors who had openly protested against the forced demolition of crosses of mainland churches have been detained or under surveillance lately.

**May the Lord's comfort be with the church leaders who have lost their freedom for protecting their churches. May they keep rejoicing in the midst of a fiery ordeal and wait upon the presence of God's glory (1 Peter 4:12-13). May God's peace be with their family and justice be restored. May the Lord's name be exalted!**



## **2. Equipping Bible Teachers**

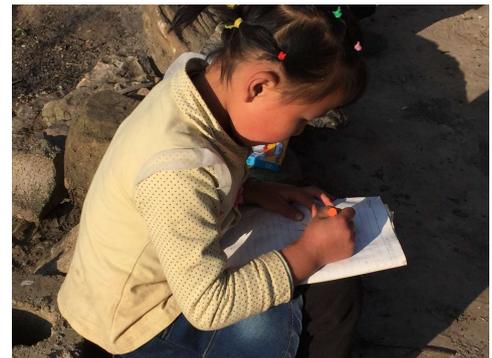
While mainland churches are faced with political pressure and the influence of secularization, Bible teaching is urgently needed to help develop a faithful Christian community.



**May the Lord guide the Bible teaching ministries in the mainland, provide systematic training to group leaders and Sunday school teachers to help them become “reliable people who will also be qualified to teach others”, be able to teach with creativity, educational insight, and design appropriate, tailor-made teaching materials.**

## **3. The Spiritual Needs of Urban Families**

Migrant workers in large mainland cities have benefited from the economic growth there. Some have bought houses but their children would have to return to their hometowns when they are in junior secondary school, since only children with household permits can study in senior secondary school. Some children return to their hometowns prior to junior secondary years to get used to a different curriculum.



**May the Lord protect these families, and keep them from feeling isolated. May mainland churches reach out to them, listen to their needs and walk with them by providing them with the support they need.**

**~ THE END ~**