

Mandarin-speaking Community Ministry  
Working Report 2024 – Summary

Signs in Our Ministry

Theme article

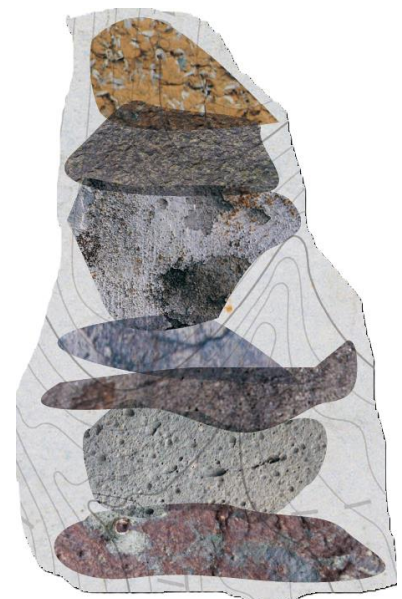
Signs of Our Times

© Otto Lui  
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How should we describe this age? Very often, we would say that these are hard times, as we see the spread of the gospel being constrained, the economy going downhill, the church being beset by personnel problems, the size of the church congregation shrinking after the pandemic, etc. These are all problems hitting the current generation of church leaders.

Last November, we visited a city church in the Eastern region of China. This is not a church relocated from the rural areas to the city; rather, the city has expanded into the rural areas where the church is now located. In six years, the size of the congregation increased from 200 to 800 and the church is one of the very few that have continued to grow in quality and quantity during a time of great adversities.

This is one of the works of God we witnessed in the past year, which we consider as a “sign” – a footprint of God’s works in the church, pointing to a way out of difficulties or upcoming opportunities.



In the past year, churches in many regions had to face the loss of churchgoers after the pandemic as well as stringent government policies. Some pastors were forced to leave their posts, while many seminary graduates were compelled to be “volunteer pastors” amid the economic downturn. Our publication and re-printing work in China have also run into grave difficulties, directly affecting our book gifting arrangement.

We have seen church leaders, in coping with the difficulties, placing their focus once again on Bible teaching, persisting in using Biblical truths as the basis for building the foundation of the church before developing other ministries that are considered critical. Comparatively speaking, church building, the size of the congregation, and the amount of offerings are less important to them. The decrease in the number of churchgoers after the pandemic has also set church workers reflecting on this: in the past, the church might have lost its focus. As a result, although the size of the congregation size may be big, there are very few true disciples.

Outside the church, believers in the workplace have also directly or indirectly made creative use of the online world to bear witness to the Lord. Online activities include probing into the Christian culture using cultural forums, reading clubs, or even a historical approach. Many forums also discuss how to practise Christian ethics. In terms of teaching the truth to the family and children, online courses are strong resources: as frontline teachers learn online from teachers overseas, they immediately apply what they have learned in offline family ministries in the church, transforming the lives of many families.

Today, there are more opportunities for believers to come to Hong Kong to have exchanges and broaden their horizons. How can we grasp these opportunities to better equip spiritual leaders in the Chinese church and at the same time let local pastors and believers learn more about them? How can we promote exchanges? The church mentioned above is in need of sharing on how to promote small groups in a city church. On the other hand, we can learn from them how to stay strong amidst adversities.

This is what we believe should be the way ahead and we sincerely invite you to pray together with us so that **we can identify God’s signs in a rapidly changing time, follow God closely, and fulfil our mission.**



# Mission Education in Hong Kong Connects Hearts that Echo the Same Call

Local churches have always wanted to nurture a yearning heart for mission among their congregations. After the pandemic, our team has been thinking: how can we facilitate local congregations to have a stronger desire for mission involvement? We prefer collaboration and adaptation instead of framed modeling. We observe, listen to, and share with pastors to gain a more thorough understanding of the current situation of their congregations. Based on the characteristics of different target groups, we use different ways to sow the seeds of mission in their hearts.

## Discovery 1: Churches in Hong Kong Eagerly Await and Participate in the “Great Work in Minorities”

In the past year, whenever we hosted the “Great Work in Minorities”, the pastor of the congregation would always ask, *“When can we hear the next topic? Please let me know as soon as possible whenever there is one available so that I can make arrangement for it.”* These pastors' eagerness is indeed a great motivation for the team to press forward even harder!

On another occasion, a pastor suggested to the team, *“The content of the ‘Great Work in Minorities’ is just too abundant for those who are hearing about the needs of the ethnic minorities in China for the first time. Would you consider splitting the content into small units?”* Later on, when we again hosted the “Great Work in Minorities” in other churches, we restructured its content to focus on only a single topic. We found that it was easier for the audience to understand and know how to get involved. More participants indicated their willingness to receive further updates and support the ministry with action.



Respondents often express wonder and amazement at the Lord's graciousness and miraculous works among the ethnic minorities in China!

Therefore, in the coming year, we will restructure “Great Work in Minorities” into a series (comprising 3 sessions). We hope to build a yearning heart for mission among our audience that lasts.

## Discovery 2: Churches in Hong Kong Make Efforts to Serve the Mandarin-speaking Community

In recent years, under the impetus of government policy, more and more Mandarin-speaking people are coming to Hong Kong. The proportion of university students that come from China is rising. Large numbers of professionals and individuals with specific talents are moving to Hong Kong to start their own businesses or find employment, and their family

members usually come along. Some local churches have expressed their wish to serve these Mandarin-speaking groups, but they do not know where to start.

In view of this, in the second half of 2024, we collaborated with six organizations to conduct “The Study of Spiritual Needs of the Mandarin-Speaking Community in Hong Kong”. The objective is to identify the target groups and their respective spiritual needs. The study report was released at the end of 2024<sup>1</sup>. It is also our objective to bring together organizations and churches that have the desire and/or the experience and establish a platform for communications and sharing.



The press conference of “The Study of Spiritual Needs of the Mandarin-Speaking Community in Hong Kong” brought together nearly 100 pastors and leaders from local churches, organizations and seminaries, they have the desire to serve the Mandarin-speaking community in Hong Kong!

We noted that the next five years would be a golden opportunity for the ministry. Hong Kong is still the freest city in the eyes of China residents. We have even heard of churches in China planning to set up branch churches in Hong Kong. Can Hong Kong churches collaborate with churches in China to serve the Mandarin-speaking community in Hong Kong? Can Hong Kong churches maximize the use of space available to them and respond astutely to the opportunities for evangelism seen in this group?

Every possibility is in the hands of the Lord. We pray for His guidance for us to work in line with the Holy Spirit and support local churches to accomplish the required tasks.

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<sup>1</sup> “The Study of Spiritual Needs of the Mandarin-Speaking Community in Hong Kong” has been published in *Pray for China* Issue 381; if you would like to have a copy, please contact CCL Mandarin-speaking Community Ministry team.

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**Mission Education 2024**

*A total of 10 sessions were held, with a total attendance of 304*

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# Follow God's Lead Closely in Leadership Development!

We sincerely invite you to support...

## Mandarin-speaking Community Ministry — Key Programs and Budget in 2025

### 1. Supporting 3,000 novice pastors

Provide a package consisting of 12 pastoral literature resources (around USD 167 per package) to graduates of 50 seminaries in China.

Funding required: USD 500,000

### 2. Supporting 40 pastors from Southwestern, Northwestern, Northern, Central-southern regions etc.

Provide monthly living subsidy (about USD 615 per month per pastor).

Funding required: USD 295,200

### 3. Supporting 100 experienced pastors

Provide comprehensive training, including the following:

**Resources:** Publish one title of the “Living Word Bible Teaching Series” and produce 12 teaching videos.

**Online and offline sessions:** Conduct about 300 “Living Word” Bible teaching training sessions, about 120 workplace, family, and church leadership training sessions.

Funding required: USD 205,128

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*Please take action to support the ministry's needs. Thank you!*

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~The above is part of the content of PFC issue382, if you would like to read the full newsletter, please contact us at pfc@ccl.org.hk, thank you!~

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