

Baptist Union of Great Britain

Hong Kong Response Project

Newsletter 10 – March 2023



Sharon Shek writes a reflection on the journey of heading to the promised land:

The tradition of having Passover dinner reminds us about the salvation of the Lord. Recently I read from Exodus Chapter 13, which is about the Lord's guiding with the pillar of cloud and fire. *God said, "If they face war, they might change their minds and return to Egypt." So God led the people around by the desert road toward the Red Sea.* The road is longer but it's better for his people to be kept in his sight.



The first thought of this verse is that our way to integration is very long. The journey of adapting to a new environment, carrying with us our trauma, reminds me of a person with agoraphobia going on a rollercoaster. Scary, nervous, stressful, frustration in not knowing when it will end. I'm sure that the uncontrolled emotion of migrants is like the bewildered people of Israel walking in the desert. We need some guides.

God is so good that he guided the people of Israel on their way with the pillar of cloud and fire. The Hong Kongers, and all migrants, need a guide. They need God's guiding as well as people's understanding. Hong Kongers are introverted in expressing emotion. They wear a smile or are silent - even when their emotion is complex, sometimes until they cannot stand it any more. Many families face serious situations suddenly, without any warning. How can we help a family in need when we don't have any warning? Prevention is always important so that we can do something before a serious situation happens. Please be aware of the emotional wellbeing of Hong Kongers and migrants.

The second thought in this Bible verse is that God is the salvation and guardian of humans when we are facing trauma and an 'emotional rollercoaster'. The Lord helps us and cares about us in his way. The pillar of cloud and fire was the way of leading. What is the way of God's leading today? It urges me to pray for guidance for Hong Kongers and migrants. We hope and pray that Hong Kongers and migrants can seek help from God.

A webinar on mental health in immigration will be held in April and May – good news! Look out for emails with details.

Recently we opened a WhatsApp Group to connect Hong Kongers who have already joined our local Baptist churches. There are Hong Kongers in the group from more than 10 Baptist churches in different areas of England, who have been regularly going to Baptist churches for Sunday services, and some of them will apply for membership in these churches. It means that they have chosen their home of faith and will stay and serve in those churches. We are so thankful that our Baptist churches have done a good job in welcoming and offering hospitality to strangers, like Hong Kongers. It is a part of the way of leading them to God, helping them integrate to the local society and have healing in their heart.



Some churches have held a Welcome Course to connect Hong Kongers. UKHK told us that there are 12 Baptist churches registered for the Welcome Course and there are more than 200 Hong Kongers participating in the Welcome Course. It's a great resource to connect Hong Kongers. We held a chat recently where Jill Bird from Abbey Baptist Church shared about being a HK-welcoming church. It was so helpful to listen and ask about the course and the follow-up after it. We also shared about the situation of serving Hong Kongers in our own churches. We are always happy to chat with the ministers who welcome Hong Kongers. We hope we have more time to have a chat with churches and share each experience.

Please pray!

1. Pray for the wellbeing of Hong Kongers when they face daily pressures, home sickness and trauma.
2. Pray for wisdom and grace for churches to help the congregation from different countries.

Next Step

1. To know more about the WhatsApp group 'Hong Kongers in Local Baptist', please contact me at sshek@baptist.org.uk
2. Invite Sharon Shek to preach or hold a bilingual service in your church. Please send me an email.
3. Hold a Welcome Course to help Hong Kongers know more about this country.
4. Share your experience and stories of welcoming Hong Kongers. Please send me an email!

