

# Baptist Union of Great Britain Hong Kong Response Project Newsletter 12 – September 2023



Sharon Shek writes **Drawing closer between nationalities:**

The United Kingdom is a multi-cultural country with many different nationalities living together in one city. As a church, we serve different people from different countries. Different stories, different reasons for living in one area, different thoughts about any topic, different method of communication, different practices of faith. 'Unity in Diversity' is an important issue to deal with.

In June this year and last year, I have joined events in Nottingham and Reading. One of them was an event held by Hong Kongers, introducing life in Hong Kong, the traffic, the building, lifestyle and sharing Hong Kong food. Another one was an international Christmas celebration at which every nationality served their country's food and Hong Kongers led games. I found that the events were good to draw the different nationalities closer through knowing more about the cultures and sharing the food of other countries. Also, it's a good opportunity to open a platform for communication. These events provided a chance for future connections.

Another experience was that I joined a Sunday service at Abbey Baptist Church in Reading where Hong Kongers sang Cantonese songs in the Sunday Service, with the pronunciation shown on the screen. I know that there they often have different countries' brothers and sisters sing in their languages in the Sunday Service. Some churches, like Haven Green Baptist Church, have Cantonese Bible studies. Other churches, like Holland Road Baptist Church, asked Hong Kongers to cook Chinese food for events. They all bring a new culture and new experience into the church and teach the congregation about being inclusive.



It's good to see that churches have opened their doors for different nationalities and tried to make them feel at home in the church. During times of connection, we will find differences. Teaching acceptance of difference is also important. Creating platforms to share stories, sharing the culture of faith and providing some possible thoughts are drawing nationalities together. Recently, we have written some suggestions for churches to reduce conflict between differences. Read our new ['Five tips for building relationship'](#): We suggest churches, leaders and congregation read the principles and discuss what they can do further in the church to be more inclusive.

I would say that by drawing closer as nationalities we are accepting differences, creating platforms to know the culture and stories more, and praying for nationalities. I hope our Baptist churches can be more inclusive and inter-cultural. God bless our Baptist family.

## Story of Tammy and Chi (Watnall Road Baptist Church)

My husband Chi and I are not good at English. After deciding to move to the UK, I literally started to read the English Bible every day for the preparation of my future UK life. I have never thought I should go to a Chinese church. On the contrary, it went straight to my mind that I must find a local church so that I can integrate into this new country. Since then, I have always prayed for this.

We started our adventure in January last year. We spent more than half a year exploring England and during that period, both of us had some improvements in English, and at the same time, we had online Sunday services with my church in Hong Kong although my husband was not a Christian.



The Bible, hymns and things related to church that first came to his mind were chasing back to his childhood. He studied in a Catholic primary school in Hong Kong. He knew about Jesus and the Bible at that time, and he joined activities of a church with his cousin. Sadly he stopped all these once he went to secondary school. After graduating, no one talked about faith in his life. Later, he somehow met a few friends who were Christians. They shared truth with him which he regarded as some principles about life. He thought he has known well already. In Hong Kong, he was also invited to Sunday services a few times, and he was struck by the preaching. But it was not the time for him to commit to Christ when the pastor was calling him.

In Hong Kong, he worked day and night, and there was some change one day. His understanding of the Bible has been enhanced and consolidated after we met. We would occasionally discuss Christianity. I would tell him more about Bible. Also, he likes watching Christian films. I, of course, explained and elaborated for him.

At first, we settled in a town in Nottingham. At the beginning, we had online Sunday service of Hong Kong's church for a long time. But in my mind, I was eager to go to a local church and had a strong feeling of this in prayer. One day, we went to Watnall Road Baptist Church. At the first time, we both worried about language. Thank God, it has gone soon by their warm hospitality and patience. The preaching is clear and concise - at least we could understand most.

After a couple of months, Chi gained more and more knowledge about Christ, and another perspective about being a Christian. It turned out that Christianity is not as constrained as he thought. Besides, Christians are not faultless, but with imperfections. He realized that as a sinner, he has been saved and redeemed by Christ Jesus. Now he has committed to Christ Jesus and taken the bread and wine in the Communion. He was baptized and we both are the members of our holy family.

Thank you God for always guiding us. We also express our heartfelt thanks to our brothers and sisters. Glory and praise be to our almighty God. Amen.

**Please pray!**

- Pray for wisdom and grace for churches to help the congregations from different countries.