

A reflection of my mission in London Taiwanese Mission UK/ Rev. Yufen Chen

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We do programs because they are a chance to show, tell and be good news (Gospel) in authentic relationships; in the hope that others may seek to be followers (Disciples); so that we can be part of God's mission to the world; which is to bring in the Kingdom of God. The programs are the vehicle for the goal not the end goal, said David J. Bosch

As a Partner in Mission, I am so thankful to this precious historical connection, to work within three mission boards, to continue a project founded by Rev. John McNeil Scott, succeeded by Manchester's PIM Rev. Shou Hui Chung over 10 years, eventually this project developed into a ministry both with the Taiwanese Fellowship in London and with the wider Taiwanese and Mandarin speaking community and is/was encouraged to continue to develop both aspects. It was until I started to be missionary, I understand that 'Mission is the Mother of Theology', I need to converse with the working practice. I continue my partnership between Christians(insiders) and non-Christians(outsiders) to undertake research and conversations answering theological questions about faithful practice in order to renew both theology and practice in the service of God's mission. Here are some practices that I learned during my three years' lockdown and post pandemic periods.

1. A sower with no distinction: during lockdown periods, I saw no sign of students or young people in the empty streets of London's learning quarters' throughout the year. My main group was ended up as a handful of Taiwanese who could not move back home. I needed to reach out and bring into relief to the fore the voices of those who were marginalised, and their everyday experiences were a source of valuable knowledge to me. Even now these local isolated, lonely and vulnerable people maintain a fundamental participatory role in my ministry.

2. Sharing and connection: I am thankful that three mission boards are behind my ministry, I have a commitment to a conversational method, sending what I have learned or experienced here back to my home church, and enhancing any possibilities? Opportunities for cultural, art, religious, or pastoral sharing. These is also a form of theological reflection in that it follows a cycle of experience, reflection, learning and action. It does have some distinguishing features. One is that, our church(PCT) could contribute to my mission here, and my mother churches as a whole also could take the experience of URC to be our action and learning components.

3. Bearers of theology: missionaries must have a good perspective and high degree of autonomy. In 2020 I began to prepare for the centenary anniversary of Dr James L. Maxwell; in 2021 we started a transcription and translation task for his 50 letters in SOAS' archive. After 15 months online study work, 5 historians have contributed their efforts to this historical landmark. We can see the interaction between the present(our mission) and the past (first missionary in 1864 sent to Taiwan) as a dance, then it is clear that the dance is an uneasy one. Another new project carried on over 1 year, an online Bible study group cooperated with local churches back home. We are happy to have two sports team, a badminton group and Marathon group. All these new attempts allow practice to transform my conditioned doctrinal mindset, I still have so much to cope with and to explore. In a year of seemingly stagnant ministry, I saw myself like an onion peeled off more than 20 times, with long hours of phone consultations and prayer, online baptisms for a whole family, ongoing online meditation, and a variety of creative activities and techniques to learn. Even under the threat of the epidemic, the ministry of the church has not been swallowed up, but real disciples have showed more concern about the development of the church, about isolated young people, and see our gatherings as a rare opportunity to serve and love one another.

Finally, I would like to thank our moderator and churches from Thames North synod, they open their arms to embrace my ministry, what a privilege I have to use Lumen as my base, and to participate in

our trainings, meetings, events and celebrations, to know many ministers in person, and to be supported within the ministers group, that's so meaningful for me. I'd like to say that missionaries are the bridge, the cultural platform that brings East and West together for dialogue and exchange. By God's grace, we are able to have new wisdom and to be filled with a constant and deep concern for people, and to continue to sow seeds in the wilderness. In the future, I must work on my limits which could be spotted and moving towards the path that I still could explore.



