



# 感恩与代禱 Praise & Prayer

福音自傳會

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## Foreword

When we recall the humble beginning of CNEC, we are reminded of the numerous pioneers and predecessors who laboured through the corridor of history. We are privileged to be surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses who testified to God's faithfulness. In this issue, we are featuring the late Reverend Professor William Chang Hsueh Kung and the late Reverend Jonah Zhao. May their testimonies inspire every faith community to purpose itself as an agent of God's mission to the world.

## In Memory of Reverend Professor William Chang Hsueh Kung - Holding firm to the Word till death

**"By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain." (1 Corinthians 15:2)**

Chang Hsueh Kung, also known as Chang Zhong Wen, was born in 1897. His hometown was a remote and backward village known as Hexi village in the Wei county of China Shangdong province. In the early days, foreign missionaries had set foot in this county to evangelize. An American missionary from California, Grace Mary Rowley, brought the Chang family to Christ. Chang's grandmother was the first convert, followed by Chang's grandfather. His grandparents' faith had profound influence on the generations to come.

God was gracious to the Chang family. The young Chang was tutored by Rowley. The missionary taught him the Scripture and nurtured him in his faith. Chang was intelligent but humble and teachable. Although his family lived in poverty, he cherished every learning opportunity he had. Chang studied in Guangwen High School in 1912. With Rowley's help, he went on to attend the Shangdong Christian University (later known as Qilu University). In 1924, Chang graduated from the university. The following year, Chang was appointed by the Principal of Northern China Theological Seminary, Dr Hayes, as a faculty member. In 1927, Chang was the Principal of Wenmei Middle School in Wei County. He married Liang Hui Ting the same year. In 1928, with Rowley's help, Chang left his family in China and went alone to Princeton Theological Seminary to further his theological education. After Princeton, he furthered his study in Chicago Moody Bible Institute. In

Chicago, he wrote a book on evangelism. When he returned to China, he authored the commentaries on the Gospel of John, the Pastoral Epistles, the Epistle to the Colossians and the Book of Isaiah. In 1930, Chang was back with Northern China Theological Seminary. Chang served as the Acting Principal in 1934 and subsequently became the Principal of the seminary when Dr Hayes retired in 1937. Northern China Theological Seminary was reputed for upholding the inerrancy of Scripture and their unadulterated teaching of Christian doctrines. The seminary had trained many high quality graduates who were highly demanded by churches in the region.



In the era when a string of wars and political upheaval took place in China, Chang had to shoulder the heavy responsibilities of the seminary alone. He had to manage his preaching and teaching responsibilities, daily operations of the orphanage and leprosarium, and the finances of the seminary. Chang displayed his tenacity when he faced immense difficulties. Chang knew the ruthlessness of the Japanese soldiers. When the Japanese soldiers wanted to inspect the orphanage, he saw through their intentions. He removed all girls aged sixteen years and above, hid them away before the soldiers arrived. Chang did not hesitate to put his life on the line to protect the weak and the vulnerable. Not long after,

Northern China Theological Seminary was forced to close.

In 1940, Chang went on to teach in Hong Kong Bethel Bible Seminary. Later, Chang and his family moved to Nanjing. Chang's formative years in Shangdong Christian University had exposed him to rigorous academic training and cultural experience of the East and the West. Chang was always passionate about theological education. When he arrived in Nanjing, he handpicked a large number of young Christians with great potential from his church and gave them theological training. The training was rigorous, just as the training he received in Shangdong Christian University. Due to the unstable political situation, Chang moved several times from Nanjing to Changsha and Guilin, taking his family and students along so as not to disrupt the training.

In 1945, Chang set up Tai Dong Theological Seminary in Nanjing. Chang was the first Principal of the seminary. Under his leadership, Tai Dong produced numerous notable indigenous Christian leaders. The theological training in Tai Dong was rigorous, hands-on without compromising scholarship. Many theological students have benefited from the training. Chang led his students to pioneer ministries outside Nanjing. They printed and distributed evangelistic tracts, equipped mission teams, sent out evangelists, set up Bible Schools and planted many indigenous churches which grew rapidly. Meanwhile, Chang and other Christian leaders also devoted their life to nurturing the second generation leaders. Besides teaching in the seminary, Chang also evangelized in remote villages whenever time permitted. He assigned his students on missions to far-off villages and borderland. He used creative ways such as trumpets and accordions to attract the crowd before sharing the gospel with them.

Whenever he brought his young son (Bao-Wha) along, Bao-Wha would lead other children in songs and tell them Bible stories while the father shared the gospel with the adults.

Tai Dong Theological Seminary was the first seminary formally established under China Native Evangelism Crusade. Following Tai Dong Theological Seminary, other seminaries were set up. They include: CNEC Training College in Shanghai, where Rev Alfred Chow was the Principal; Kunming Bible School and Guizhou Qianguang Bible School, where Rev Calvin Chao was their Principal; Bible Seminary of Hong Kong (formerly known as Hong Kong Bible College, 1949); and Singapore Bible College, which was established in 1952. Tai Dong Theological Seminary was closely associated with China Native Evangelism Crusade (the precursor of Christian Nationals' Evangelism Commission, CNEC) from which the seminary received tremendous support. Due to political changes in China in that era, foreign missionaries were forced to leave the country. Realizing the importance of local Christians evangelising to their own nationals, Tai Dong Theological Seminary set up Bible Schools, nurture young pastors

to shoulder the responsibilities of reaching their own communities. Therefore, the mission of Tai Dong was very much in line with the strategy of CNEC.

Apart from training pastors, Chang was also concerned with children living in poverty. Once, Chang and his young son Bao-Wha met a poor widow with four young children on the road. Chang helped the widow buried the deceased husband and brought the distraught family home. He took them in and provided for the family. Bao-Wha could not understand what the father was doing. Chang left these words with Bao-Wha and the young son could never forget, "Bao-Wha, you must always remember that when we help someone, it is as though they have met Jesus and have been helped by Him. Helping someone is an act of worship." Chang's selfless compassion for the poor greatly impacted his children. Chang taught his children how to worship and serve the Lord through his selfless act. In later years, he continued to teach his grown-up children to live as a living sacrifice through his faithful service. When Bao-Wha recalled the seventeen years he had with his father, the private moments with his father were most memorable. The time Bao-Wha spent with his father allowed him to observe how his father lived his faith. The young Bao-Wha was impressed by such a formidable figure in his life. Chang put into practice the "Holistic Gospel". By



taking the poor widow and her four young children under his shelter, Chang demonstrated what "Holistic Gospel" meant. Bao-Wha could fully agree with "Holistic Gospel". In 1970s, when Bao-Wha became the Director of CNEC, he employed the "Holistic Gospel" approach to the mission model and strategy of CNEC. When Rev James Lai became the succeeding Director in 2006, he fully identified with this mission model and continued to

build on the foundation laid by Bao-Wha.

Chang was a man highly respected by his peers. He was learned, scholarly, determined; yet humble and caring. He was an exemplary pastor to many. Some described Chang as:

"A modest scholar...He went to Moody Bible Institute. When he returned, he never bragged about his achievement." (Rev Moses Yu)

"A neat, humble, steadfast and zealous person who prayed unceasingly. The Lord Jesus was his joy. He lived for his Lord and he was prepared to die for his Lord."

"A calm preacher at the pulpit who delivered his sermon clearly (albeit a strong Shangdong accent) and affectionately."

"A gifted poet."

During the 1950s when China experienced political upheaval, Chang was persecuted for his religious convictions. He was sent to a prison in Guangxi. He stood firm in the faith. Chang died a martyr in the prison on March 5<sup>th</sup>, 1962. He was sixty-five when he died. These words were inscribed on his gravestone, "A Faithful Servant of God".

# Rev Jonah Zhao—A Faithful Servant of God



**B**orn in the year 1949, Reverend Jonah Zhao was a native of Nan Wan Village in Gui Gai City of Myanmar. His ancestors were from the Longling County of China Yunnan Province. Zhao was a second generation Christian. His God fearing parents played an important role in his life. It was his parents' unwavering faith that inspired Zhao to dedicate his life to full-time ministry. When Zhao was twelve, he travelled with his parents on horses to the countryside to evangelize to the rural folks. When he was sixteen, his father was called home to be with the Lord. Zhao took care of his widowed mother. One of the twelve daughters of Zhao, Pastor Zhao Li Juan recalled, "My grandmother used to tell me the story of my father before his life was changed. When my father was younger, he would always get into fights. My grandmother could not find ways to discipline him. However, God worked in my father's life in ways we could not comprehend. When my father was twenty, he was called to full time ministry. To fulfil the wishes of his aged mother, he decided to be married first before pursuing his theological training." In 1969, Zhao married Chuan Da Mei. Soon after marriage, he went to Gui Gai Jin Po Theological College to pursue his theological training. He spent four years in the collage. Upon graduation, Zhao was posted to Na Pa Ga Lisu Baptist Church. He was ordained by the Baptist church. Zhao initially knew only Burmese and the Jing Bo language. It was through his ministry among the Han Chinese and the Lisu that he gained proficiency in four languages. This had enabled him to effectively minister and pastor a church which has varied ethnic groups. In the nineties, when transportation in Myanmar was not well developed, Zhao took the Jing Bo and Lisu teams to the mountainous regions of Myanmar for evangelism. They visited countless villages to bring the good news to everyone they met. Zhao was eager to train his young disciples. Every trip they made was an exercise of their faith. Their journey varied from weeks to months. To finance their trip, they would cut firewood and sold them along the way. When there was no firewood, they would help the villagers grow crops to supplement their income. One day, while Zhao and his disciples were carrying firewood up the mountain, they met Reverend Cha Tin Yone, who is the current director of CNEC Myanmar. Cha was moved by Zhao and his disciples' faith and determination to bring the good news to the remotest regions and the least reached people groups. Zhao was introduced to CNEC. This marked the beginning of CNEC's partnership with Zhao.

Zhao devoted much of his life to missions. He placed his calling before his family. There were often times when Zhao had to be away from his family for a long period of time. "When is Papa coming home?" His young daughters often asked their mother. Zhao was heartbroken when he learned that his absence brought distress to his children. Nevertheless, he bore the heartache and journeyed on with the higher calling. In those days when Zhao was absent from home due to ministry commitment, his wife single-handedly took care of the family. She often fell ill but never failed to trust in God's providence. Whenever Zhao was at home, he would do his best to relieve

her from the housework. There were times when they could not make ends meet. In those years, Zhao worked as a carpenter to supplement the family income. Despite the hardship, they were faithfully married for forty-six years.

Zhao was a faithful and honest person, with an upright character. He had great faith in the Lord he served. His daughter Li Juan recalled, "In my younger days whenever my father returned home, no matter how tired he was, he would make it a point to lead the family in praise and worship before we went to bed. He insisted on this practice till he was very ill." Zhao was known to be a kind man. He disciplined his children not through caning but through perseverance in prayers. He wisely counselled his children when they misbehaved, earning his children's respect. Zhao was a hospitable person. He loved each and every of his church member. He treated them just as he would treat his own children. In his pastoral ministry, he often sought solace from the Lord in times of distress.

Besides his pastoral ministry, Zhao also initiated several mission projects. He pioneered short-term mission training courses, built student centres and orphanages. Under Zhao's leadership, the short-term mission training courses have trained numerous evangelists and six Lisu pastors. Zhao also displayed great problem solving skills. When he and his team were building one of the student centres, they were short of funding. They moulded their own bricks and completed the student centre. When he was short of funding again while building one of the orphanages, along with his co-workers, they assemble the stones, sand and bricks to bring the orphanage to completion.

Zhao had some knowledge of western medicine and traditional medicine. He hardly visited the doctor. He made use of the medical knowledge he had to treat his own illnesses and some of his church members. By God's grace, they found recovery. Besides treating their physical illnesses, he also cared for their spiritual health. In his ministry, he often found himself sharing the gospel and casting out demons to bring wholeness to one's life.

In 2011, Zhao was diagnosed with pulmonary edema (water retention in the lungs) and pulmonary tuberculosis (growth of bacteria in lung tissues). He had much difficulty breathing. While on the last evangelistic outreach with his team, Zhao's condition worsened. They found out that he was at the terminal stage of lung cancer. Family members and church members prayed earnestly for him. Zhao endured the pain from cancer without complaint. He prayed for his loved ones on his deathbed and asked them to pray for him. On 23 August 2015 – two months after he was diagnosed with cancer – he was called home to be with the Lord. More than two thousand came to bid farewell to the faithful servant of God.

Reverend Jonah Zhao was one of the pioneer indigenous co-workers who devoted his life evangelising to the different ethnic groups in Myanmar. May his faithful love for the Lord encourage us to yield our lives to Christ in missionary service.



*Rev Jonah and his family.*



*Rev Zhao shared the gospel with this family and brought them to Christ.*



*Rev Zhao took the gospel team to the mountainous regions for evangelism.*

## Introducing Our New Co-workers

- Miss Grace Quah has been appointed by CNEC as the person-in-charge of Sponsor-A-Child (SAC) Program with effect from 1st October 2015. Sponsors please call Tel: +65 6280 0312 for all matters related to SAC.
- Miss Yeng Woon Cheng has been appointed by CNEC as the Finance Officer with effect from 7th September 2015.

### Grace Quah

I am currently attending a church in Malaysia, which was planted by CNEC many years ago. I have never expected myself to work in a mission organisation. I joined CNEC on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2015 and I am in charge of the Children Ministry.

Prior to joining CNEC, I worked in Singapore-based travel agencies for several years. My working experience has by far been very pleasant. For me, switching from a secular workplace to a Christian organization was a drastic change. Besides grappling with a completely different work environment, I was not accustomed to my new job scope. I am afraid of making mistakes in my work. I am also worried that my colleagues may misunderstand any of my unintentional verbal cues.

Therefore I prayed to God, "Dear God, if it is your will for me to work in CNEC, please assure me with your presence." God was gracious to me. He understood me, forgave my ignorance and showed me that He would help me.

Last November, we set up a display booth during a mission

conference organized by a church. I had the opportunity to share about the ministries of CNEC, in particular the Children Ministry, with those who came to the booth. A sister who had previously supported the SAC program approached me. As we wrapped up our conversation, she said she would consider participating in the sponsorship program again. However, I forgot to follow up with her.

A month later, I received a call from the same sister. She asked how she could participate in the SAC program again. I was surprised to hear from her. "What made you wish to take part in the SAC program again?" I asked. "God revealed His will to me through events I encountered and people I met, urging me to respond to you. I have to obey Him." I was moved and recalled Psalm 121:4, "He who watches over Israel will neither slumber nor sleep." Of course, God's plan always surpasses our understanding!

From this incident, I realized that we are not working alone-God is working together with us. Our work is under His blessing. Although I may make mistakes in the course of my work and it may not always be perfect, God knows if I have done my best. Serving the children is certainly what God wants me to do. If God works hand in hand with me, I have nothing to fear.

Finally, I would like to share with you a message which that sister-in-Christ shared with me:

"When you run alone, it is a RACE. When GOD runs with you, it is GRACE!"



### Yeng Woon Cheng

Prior to joining CNEC, I was a freelance accountant. I provide accounting service to accounting firms which have a large clientele. By God's grace and His provision, I was able to work from home with relatively flexible hours. I was able to choose my clients. During my free time, I volunteered at CNEC. I helped with translating sponsors' letters. It was from the translation work that I get to know more about CNEC.

Last year, I took up a short-term course on missions. During the 'Kario' course, I was challenged to participate in missions. I felt guilty during the lessons as I hardly shared the gospel with anyone. I have been reminded by the Holy Spirit on a few occasions that I should serve in missions while I am healthy and able.

When one of the staff in CNEC shared with me about the needs of the organization, I volunteered to come for an interview with the Director. During the interview, I realized that CNEC

was looking for a full time Finance Officer to manage the accounts. I accepted the challenge after much prayers. There is peace within me that surpasses all understanding. Deep down in my heart, I desire to serve God with my skills. I joined CNEC on 7<sup>th</sup> September 2015.

I have worked in CNEC for several months and I am still in the process of familiarising with the organization, the work culture, the ministries and the mission fields. To an introvert like myself, getting to know the organization has never been easy. My deficient communication skills have occasionally caused unintended misunderstandings. However, I thank God for the patience of my colleagues who accept me with unconditional love. Please uphold me in your prayers. May the Lord grant me wisdom, good health and unwavering faith to trust and obey Him as I journey in this ministry.



MINISTRIES:INDIGENOUS CHURCH,BIBLE SCHOOL,TRIBAL WORKS,SPONSOR-A-CHILD MINISTRY,CREATIVE ACCESS MINISTRY,HOLISTIC MISSIONS

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All funds received in support of CNEC ministries, not more than 20% is used to sustain the office for ministries' purposes