

First Missions – Taiwan

First Missions – Pioneering Workers – Taiwan

Taiwan

Revised March 20, 2024

Taiwan, officially the Republic of China Located in East Asia

When did the workers first arrive? 1956

Who were the first brother workers? Charles Preston and Dellas Linaman; later Wolfgang Klussmann

Who were the first sister workers? Betty Crawford and Eileen Trevithick, both from US

Who were the first to profess? When? 1956-1957

Who was the first native to go in the work? Sister worker Hsin Shu-yueh started in 1966 and was in the work until her death in 2004; three of her brothers were also in the work at one time, making four Hsin siblings in the work. Circa 1976, Chin-Sung Hou was the first native brother worker. First Chinese worker to labor in Taiwan was Descartes Chan (1962-1965).

When & Where was the first meeting?

When & Where was the first baptism? Before 1963

When & Where was the first convention? 1963 at Taichung (central Taiwan) hosted by Tsai family; Moved to rented facility in Taipei in 1965; Lai-Yi (southern Taiwan) on March 18-19, 1967

Where is the convention currently held? In 2023, conventions are held in Wulai (northern part) and Lai-yi (southern part)

Who have the Overseers been? Charles Preston (1956-1992); Dellas Linaman, John Potter; in 2024, Wayne Squair from B.C. Canada

Gospel to Laiyi, Taiwan, 1962

In the village of Lai-Yi (Ly-ee) in SW Taiwan, the Paiwan tribe lived high in the mountains. They believed that at one time the sun moved near the earth and left an egg, from which they originated. Also, they looked to a certain stone as a god. The witch doctors controlled their worship. Among the customs, the people would kill enemies and keep the skulls as trophies, and also the skulls of wild boars.

The village was moved to a much lower location (elevation) after World War II. A Mr. Hsin of the village heard there was a "living God" and began his search for Him. The Baptists came into the village and converted some, and a church was begun in Mr. Hsin's home. After a while, one of the women concluded those Baptists were false preachers—so there must be true preachers somewhere! Some began to pray that God would send true preachers; and Mr. Hsin even asked the witch doctor where he could go so that this living God would hear him when he prayed.

A Baptist preacher, Lee Ping Sung, wanted to find missionaries who would come to help him. Hearing of some Finnish Lutheran Missionaries at ChaoChou about 10 miles away, he purposed to go there to see if some of them would come to Lai-Yi.

At this time Dellas Linaman and Wolfgang Klussman were baching and having gospel meetings in ChaoChou. One day, when inviting people, a maid of a home where they visited asked them to go to Lai-Yi. The workers had heard of drunkards, witch doctors, etc., being there, so decided not to go. One Sunday afternoon Dellas was suddenly awakened from a nap with a strong urge, saying, "Get up, and take a walk, NOW." He started out and the urge told him, "Go to the railway station and return." As he neared the station, he observed a man eyeing him, and when he nodded to the man, he asked if he was a missionary. It was Lee Ping Sung, who had come to see the Finnish missionaries.

They conversed, and he asked if Dellas and Wolfgang could come to Lai-Yi. He seemed very sincere, so, after a pass was obtained, Dellas and Wolfgang went to Lai-Yi the following Thursday. **This was in November 1962.** They found Lee Ping Sung and learned that people were expecting a meeting that night. Wolfgang felt he needed to return to ChaoChou to secure their bach, but Dellas remained and had a meeting, with Lee Ping Sung interpreting from Chinese into Paiwan.

There were many thanks and requests for Dellas to return, so the brothers arranged three gospel meetings a week. After some time, some young folk informed the brothers that Mr. Lee was not saying the same things they were, while interpreting. A foreign Baptist missionary told Tien Pau, who owned the house where the brothers had meetings and also where the Baptists met, to put the brothers out. One night Mr. Lee came in at meeting time, saying, "Tonight we will sing some Mountain songs", but Dellas, fearing trouble, rose quickly and gave out a hymn.

Lee Ping Sung repeated the hymn in Paiwan and then left; so Tien Pau interpreted. Tien Pau heard of the Sunday a.m. meeting at ChaoChou, and he and a younger man attended it one Sunday. They were met at the door by an educated Chinese, who washed their feet (they were barefoot). These young men were amazed and could hardly believe an educated Chinese man would stoop to wash the feet of Mountain boys.

The following week, Tien Pau informed the workers they would have a meeting the next Sunday like in the Bible. The workers felt it best not to be there, as the Baptists met there on Sunday a.m.s, with quite a mixture of people. Three Baptist preachers came that Sunday. Tien Pau, who was about 21 years old, arose and told them they would have a meeting like in the Bible, and that the Baptist preachers could leave, which they did. Then he announced, "Anyone else here with a Baptist heart can leave, too. A few others left; then Tien Pau conducted the meeting, after telling them how it should be.

After these things there was much persecution, and a drought of 8 months added to this, as the workers were blamed. The witch doctors ordered a ceremony to cleanse "evil spirits" from Lai-Yi, and all the village, including the Baptists, participated, with the exception of our friends. The ceremony included taking old worn-out objects to a place of superstition and leaving them there.

The police came to question why the friends didn't participate. They were reminded of the government's efforts to improve the peoples' living standards by leaving old customs and superstitions, which they hadn't done anything about for 15 years; also that if the people were encouraged to continue to bring back old customs soon they would practice head-hunting again, and the police would be among the heads taken! With this, the police left, with no further trouble!

In November of 1963 thirteen were baptized. The first convention was held at Lai-Yi on March 18-19, 1967. This year, on April 21-24, 1988, about 110 gathered for the 4-day convention. The "maid" that first of all asked workers to come to Lai-Yi, Hsin Shu-yueh, is now in the work, and three of her brothers; also two cousins, a brother and sister of Tien Pau.

**Spreading the Good News (福音, the Blessed Voice, the Gospel),
in China, Hong Kong and Taiwan (1930-1962)
A Brief Account by Charles Preston (1)**

1930

In September, Ross Steele and Charles Preston (溥師德) arrived in Nanking (南京, Nanjing), China (2). They, like William Jamieson (朱梅生) and Tom Fowler, also studied Chinese with Mr. Y. T. Wong.

Earlier that year, Charles McKeown returned to Canada.

1932

James Pascoe (2) (裴師柯 (3) and Alfred McLeod arrived in Nanking from Canada, and they also learned the Chinese language from Mr. Wong. At this time, there were 6 workers in China.

1933

William Jamieson and Tom Fowler started gospel meetings in Nanking city. Ross Steele and Charles Preston spoke in these gospel meetings once a week [in Chinese (4a)].

1934

All 6 of them moved to another part of Nanking city and started gospel meetings where they lived. It was during these gospel meetings that Mr. Y. T. Wong (王) (the language teacher) and his second son made their choice to serve God.

Willie and Tom went to the outskirts of the city and started gospel meetings there.

In December, a Mr. Huo (火) made his choice in Charles and companion's meetings. Mr. Huo was a Muslim. After that, a different Mr. Wong (王, cf. above) and his eldest son and eldest daughter all made their choice.

1935

Charles Preston and Ross Steele returned to the U.S. for home visit in May.

1936

Charles returned to Nanking, departing for the trans-Pacific journey from Vancouver, B.C. in August. On the same ship were fellow workers Hubert Sylvester and Howard Ioeger, on their way to pioneer the work in the Philippines (5). Hubert, who passed on in 1976, was a younger brother of Tharold Sylvester.

In September, Charles arrived in Nanking. Ross Steele needed to take care of his mother who was gravely ill, so could not return to China. James Pascoe, on his way back to New Zealand, met with Charles in Japan.

Alfred McLeod could not continue to learn Chinese due to serious insomnia. He returned to the U.S. in December, accompanied by William Jamieson.

Thus, there remained only 2 workers in Nanking, Charles Preston and Tom Fowler.

1937

In August, the Japanese army occupied Shanghai (上海).

On August 15, Nanking was air-bombed the 1st time.

On August 26, Charles and Tom traveled from Nanking to Hankou [漢口, part of modern Wuhan (4b)] by boat and from there to Guangzhou (廣州) by train.

On September 2, a typhoon hit Guangzhou, making rail travel to Hong Kong (香港) impossible. So, they traveled to Hong Kong [a

British territory at the time (4b)] by boat.

Charles and Tom stayed in Hong Kong, waiting for opportunity to return to Nanking (thinking that the war would end soon).

They started to have gospel meetings in Hong Kong, initially on the 4th floor apartment where they lived, later moved it to the ground floor. They spoke in either Mandarin or English, depending on the audience present and deciding at the moment. Later, sometimes, they used interpreters [presumably to Cantonese (4a)].

Charles started to learn Cantonese [the prevalent Chinese dialect spoken in Hong Kong (4b)].

1938

In December, Mr. & Mrs. Young (楊) and their daughter-in-law made their choice to serve God in one of the gospel meetings.

The Young's was the first 'open home' in Hong Kong. Mr. Young did not continue. His wife, Rose Young continues, as does one of their sons, Lucky Young [as of this writing (6)].

James Pascoe came to Hong Kong from New Zealand to join in the work, and he also started to learn Cantonese.

Willie Jamieson attempted to return to Nanking from Hong Kong but was denied entry. At the same time, he could not stay for long periods in Hong Kong (because being a naturalized U.S. citizen originally from Great Britain, he could not stay for long in Hong Kong, a British territory – according to U.S. Laws at the time). He left Hong Kong and went to the Philippines.

1940

By ~ December, Charles could preach in Cantonese. Jim continued to learn Cantonese and Tom concentrated on Mandarin.

1941

Charles Preston returned to the US for home visit in June.

On December 8, U.S. declared war on Japan.

Charles stayed in the U.S.

Jim Pascoe and Tom Fowler were not able to leave Hong Kong in time. Consequently, they were held in Japanese concentration camps until the end of WWII.

1947

On February 11, Charles Preston started to travel back to Hong Kong. On the same ship was fellow worker Truman Denio who was traveling to the Philippines.

1951

Mr. and Mrs. Y. P. Tsai (蔡) made their choice (7).

Mr. and Mrs. Chan (陳, Paul and May) made their choice.

1953

Charles returned to the U.S. for home visit.

1954

Charles returned to Hong Kong.

Mr. & Mrs. H. F. Tse (謝) made their choice.

1956

On May 8, Dallas Linaman (林安民) and Charles Preston (溥師德) arrived in Keelung (基隆), Taiwan (台灣) from Hong Kong via sea.

Dallas studied Chinese with Mr. Ke Chang (張) (8) in Hsinchu (新竹) before enrolling in a language school in Taipei (臺北).

1957

Charles started having gospel meetings/bible studies in the Women's Club in Hsinchu city (新竹市婦女會辦公室).

1958

Wolfgang Klussmann (顧思文³, from Germany) joined Charles and Dallas.

Betty Crawford (郭貝蒂³) and Eileen Trevithick (塗愛倫⁽³⁾), both from the U.S., joined the staff.

1959

Virginia Poage (溥貞儀) and Helen Sharp (夏艾齡³) went to Taiwan from the U.S. and Canada, respectively, to join the work.

1962

Paul Sharp (夏保羅) and Cliff Toane (童立夫), both from B.C., Canada, went to Taiwan, and Murray Huggett (何慕瑞), from western Australia, arrived in Taiwan – all joined the staff.

Notes:

1 From a brief oral account of the spread of the Good News (福音, the Blessed Voice, the Gospel) in China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan, based on Charles Preston's encounters and recollections, as he (~79 years old at the time) recounted to John C. T. and Anna T. C. Lu in July, 1978 while visiting them in Burnaby, B.C. Canada – it was recorded in Chinese by John Lu. Translated by Linda D. L. Lu Chang in 2024 (VA, U.S.).

Mr. & Mrs. Lu (盧) heard 福音 from Charles Preston in 1958/59 in Hsinchu. I (the translator) remember that time fondly.

2 First Missions – China

3 When noted, one or two of the characters for the Chinese names of the workers are homonyms of the actual character, so are not completely accurate. My apologies. I did my best via Google Translate, absent a better tool.

4a conjecture of the translator. 4b translator note.

5 **Philippines – First Missions**

6 That is: as of 1978, when Charles Preston gave this account to the Lu's.

7 Translator's comment: The Tsai family moved to Taiwan later in the 1950's. In time, Charles lived in Mr. Tsai's office in Hsinchu which he left for the workers to use (~1957~1959) when he and his family moved to a different city. The Tsai's home in Taichung was the location of the first 2 conventions in Taiwan (1963,1964).

8 Translator's comment: Later, Mr. Chang and two of his daughters made their choice. Their home was the location of the Sunday morning meeting in Taipei for several years starting from 1967.

Additional or corrected information on this country will be very welcome.

TTT Editor's Note: In the absence of a written account, the above information has been compiled by the TTT Editor from various sources. Corrections or additions are most welcome; as well as other historical accounts for this country [Email TTT](#)