Chinese Ambassador Supports Chinese Ministry in Santo Domingo

The Inter-American division has been home to a growing number of Chinese immigrants since the late 1800's. In July, Samuel Wang, CEAR Chinese Evangelism Resource Developer visited three countries in IAD to help kick off evangelism to Chinese.

The Dominican Republic has been home to Chinese immigrants for over 125 years. While no official census has been taken, the population estimates range from 30,000-50,000.
Early immigrants tended to assimilate into the local culture, putting their own rich culture behind them, but a recent wave of immigration in the early 1990s sparked an interest in renewing Chinese culture and honoring past immigrant generations. In 2004, the Chinese diaspora living in Santo Domingo were granted permission to establish and construct a Chinatown. Two years later, in 2006, Santo Domingo’s new Chinatown, Barrio Chino, was inaugurated and promoted as a tourist attraction highlighting and preserving Chinese heritage and culture in the country.

In early July, Samuel Wang visited Dominican Republic and helped provide an orientation to Chinese evangelism and outreach for the local church members in preparation for their first Chinese church planting effort. Dr. Wang was happy to work alongside Miss Deborah, a Chinese missionary sent to Dominican Republic in January. Miss Deborah has worked hard to develop friendships among the Chinese and was key in dreaming up a plan to open a Chinese Cultural Center as a center of influence in Barrio Chino. The Chinese Cultural Center plans to serve the Chinese community by teaching Mandarin to Spanish-speaking businessmen as well as to Chinese children, offering Spanish classes, providing free health checks to the Chinese community, and serving as the location for a dental service. The center also has a Friday night Bible study using Dr. Wang’s *Back to the Beginning* Bible study set specifically written for the Chinese, and a Sabbath morning worship service followed by cross-cultural evangelism training for members working for the Mission-Chinos evangelistic thrust.

While in Santo Domingo, Dr. Wang was happy to participate in the opening ceremony for the Chinese Cultural Center on July 15 which was attended by the Chinese ambassador who gave a speech, participated in the ribbon cutting, and offered his full support for the center.

Dr. Wang also visited Panama City and Trinidad where plans are also being made by the Church to target the Chinese populations within those territories. Dr. Wang met with Church leaders to discuss mission and evangelistic strategies and was also able to make contacts with key Chinese leaders and business people who are excited about partnering with the Church to provide specific services to the Chinese community.

We praise God for how He led during Dr. Wang’s visit and for the plans that were laid while he was there. Please pray for the Church in the Inter-American Division as they take on the big task of reaching the Chinese for Christ.

How do you help a friend who is mourning? What do you say? What do you do? What if your friend is Buddhist? Is it spiritually safe and appropriate for you as a Christian to participate in the funeral rites and rituals? Or does attending the funeral put you at too much risk spiritually? Does caring for your mourning friend outweigh the spiritual danger? Or is there really danger at all? What is a Christian to do?

These are just a few of the questions we are encouraging the church in Asia to wrestle with. Our next Mission Issues Leadership Conference will focus on Funeral Rituals and Christian Witness in East Asian Contexts. For Buddhists and other East Asians, funeral and ancestor rituals are a vital part of life. Christians seeking to be a blessing to their communities need to find helpful ways to minister to mourners that also honor God.

CALLING FOR PAPERS:

CEAR is inviting topic submissions for papers until January 10, 2014. Possible topics include:
Plan to be a part of our Mission Issues Leadership Conference. Lend your voice to improving ministry to those who are hurting.

**Change, Change and More Change...**

Earlier this spring, our center’s name was changed from “Center for East Asian Religions and Traditions” to “Center for East Asian Religions”. The change came about as it was felt that the name was too long to easily remember. So after much thought and discussion of name alternatives, it was decided just to drop “and Traditions”, thus reducing our acronym from CEART to CEAR.

In July, CEAR went through another change as we relocated to Bangkok. While the countryside of Ayutthaya was a haven from the busy-ness of life, we believe that being in Bangkok affords CEAR a greater opportunity to serve the world Church as well as the Church in Thailand. Thailand Adventist Mission (TAM) kindly made space for an office in the TAM building as well as on-campus housing for the director’s family. The church plants in Ayutthaya, Nakhon Luang, Suphanburi and Angthong were fully transferred to TAM, and the Division is selling the home property. While it’s sad to say goodbye to church members and attendees in the church plants, our interest is still with...
these church plants and we are thankful that we have the opportunity to dialogue with the four Thai pastors at monthly Hope for Bangkok meetings.

With our move came another change – a sad goodbye. Mrs. Jubilant Arora served six years as secretary of CEAR which was a vital support for the large multi-cultural team involved in the four church planting projects. With the decreased number of personnel we realized that we no longer needed a dedicated secretary. We’re sorry to lose Mrs. Arora and will miss her gentle, mothering ways and professional efficiency. We pray God’s richest blessings on her and her husband as they resettle in Bangkok to be near their children.