

Service to the Whole Community *China*

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When Ms. Ling met Pastor Liao Xiao Qin and heard her vision for serving the community, she was excited about the possibilities for collaborating. An ELCA grant to the 15,000 member Luzhou Christian Church—one of the biggest church bodies in the province of Sichuan and a companion church to the ELCA—supported special training for two nursery school teachers from Grace Nursery School. Last September, young children with cerebral palsy began to attend class, joining other pupils for art and music.

Four church, social service, and government leaders from Sichuan province told this story during a visit to the ELCA Global Mission Event last summer. They were proud to tell listeners how Christianity in China has exploded since 1979, when the government began to allow religious expression.

Pastor Liao’s church is one of 60,000 churches and meeting points registered with the China Christian Council and the Three Self Patriotic Church, an umbrella of Protestant churches formed after denominational structures were abolished. Today these post-denominational churches are overflowing with worshipers and launching vibrant new ministries.

“Jesus came not to be served but to serve,” says Pastor Liao. Through her church’s health clinic, the nursery school, and the new cerebral palsy program, “not only our members, but all of the community, have seen us witness to the Lord,” she says.

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