

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH OF HONG KONG - ELCHK

Year Started and Brief History

At the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century, Lutheran missionaries came from Germany, Northern Europe and the United States to spread the Word of God in China. In northern China, and in the provinces of Shandong, Shanxi, Henan, Hebei, Hunan and Guangdong, they established churches, schools and hospitals. In 1920, the Chinese Lutheran Church was formed along with a seminary and the Lutheran Publishing House.

The Lutheran Theological Seminary in Shekow, Hupei province, moved to Hong Kong in 1948 because of the civil war, and was relocated on Tao Fong Shan in Shatin. As class after class of students graduated, the work of spreading the Gospel expanded throughout Hong Kong, Kowloon and the New Territories.

On Feb 27, 1954, representatives from all the Lutheran congregations in Hong Kong gathered at Tao Fong Shan to formally establish the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Hong Kong (ELCHK). She is now preparing to celebrate her 60th anniversary in 2014.

Church Leader

The Church has her elected bishop with terms of years. The current bishop is Rev. Jenny Chan.

Membership

The ELCHK is member of the Hong Kong Christian Council, Hong Kong Chinese Christian Union and the Lutheran World Federation.

Organisational Structure

ANNUAL ASSEMBLY: carries the highest authority within the ELCHK and convenes once a year.

REPRESENTATIVE ASSEMBLY: meets once a year and is attended by all co-workers as well as lay representatives from congregations.

CHURCH COUNCIL: holds meetings once a month for the purpose of facilitating administration.

ADMINISTRATION: The Bishop oversees the whole church, assisted by the Vice-bishop, Secretary, Treasurer, and directors of 10 administrative departments (Department of Personnel, Department of Finance and Stewardship, Department of Pastoral Care and Evangelism, Department of School Education, Department of Christian Nurture, Department of Family Concern, Department of Social Welfare, Department of Overseas Mission, Department of Mass Media and Department of Youth).

Main Areas of Work

EVANGELIZATION

Our ministry of spreading the Gospel in the different areas of the territory began with work among refugees who came from China in the early 1950's. At the present, the ELCHK has 50 congregations with a membership of over 17,000 and almost 120 evangelists and pastors as co-workers, including about 10 foreign missionaries from our partner churches.

OVERSEAS MISSION

The work of the Overseas Missions Department is to promote mission work in the congregations, organize mission fellowship, arrange short-term mission visitations, form prisoner concern groups and oversee a host of other programs.

In 1982 an agreement was signed by the Norwegian Mission Society (NMS) and the Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Mission (FELM) and ELCHK to form the Lutheran Mission in Thailand. In 1987 the ELCHK began financial support for Lutheran mission work in Thailand and by 1988 sent its first missionary. Nowadays we have two missionaries in Thailand and one couple in Fuji. The Overseas Missions Department plans to start mission work in Cambodia within the frame work of Mekong Mission Forum of LWF.

SCHOOL EDUCATION

Hong Kong churches play an important role in the field of education. About 50% of the schools in Hong Kong have been established by church organizations, and many of these enjoy an excellent reputation. ELCHK now has 5 secondary schools, 6 primary schools, and 7 kindergartens. In 2012 school year, we had a total of over 7000 students and 500 teachers.

SOCIAL SERVICE

The social service ministry of the ELCHK began in August 1976, with the establishment of youth centre in Shatin. On this foundation for social service, other projects and service units were developed including community development projects, school social work, day centres and hostels for the elderly, nursery school, children and youth centres, outreach teams, home help teams, day care and hostel services for the mentally handicapped, drug abuse counseling service etc. In 1996k, NMS and FELM began to transfer their social services units to the ELCHK. Nowadays we have over 45 service units and 1000 social workers serving among us. The two anti-drug services of FELM will be integrated to the social services of ELCHK in 2014.

PUBLICATION

Tao Sheng Publishing House: The Tao Sheng Publishing House is the publishing arm of the ELCHK. In addition to publishing Christian literature, Tao Sheng specializes in books for theological education, personal and spiritual guidance and Lutheran theology. Tao Sheng operates a bookstore on the ground floor of the Lutheran Building.

EXTERNAL RELATIONSHIPS

Lutheran Theological Seminary: The Lutheran Theological Seminary (LTS) was first established in Shekow, Hupei Province in 1913, and in 1948, was moved to Hong Kong. In 1977 the ELCHK, the Chinese Rhenish Church, the Tsung Tsin Mission, and the Taiwan Lutheran Church cooperated in reorganized LTS as a united seminary.

Special Challenges

As the economic power emerging in China, the problem of pollution and the disparity between rich and poor come in the fore front. Hong Kong as a city of China cannot escape from her influence too. The ELCHK faces consumerism as every church in big cities. The disparities between rich and poor in China as well as in Hong Kong are big. The less fortunate people are being marginalized. Our environment of living is polluted from China as well as from Hong Kong herself. The Church is called for this challenge to be witness for a more just and clean society. Furthermore, Hong Kong is now facing the challenges of social and political problems recently. Most of the problems are influence from China.

Involvement in Networks or International Operations

The ELCHK involves in networks such as the Mekong Mission Forum and co-ordinates with her partner churches on the works and relationships inside Mainland China. She also takes part in the conference of the Asian Chinese speaking Lutheran Leaders.