



Scott & Angie
PAGEL

旅行

PLANTING CHURCHES IN NORTHERN TAIWAN

2007 — December

House Church Development

Before we made the decision to move to Ankeng, we talked with other missionaries and with Taiwanese Christians about what the next church plant might look like. Only one thing was easy to put on a list of things we planned to do: meet in homes. Of course, that was the most important thing to agree about, but it still left us with several decisions to make.

For example, some churches meet in homes just to save money on a building. That is a good reason, but I felt like there was something more than finances in what God was directing us to do in Ankeng. As we prayed and talked about it some more, we found that we were constantly returning to Acts 2:42:

“They joined with the other believers and devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and fellowship, sharing in the Lord’s Supper and in prayer.” (NLT)

I certainly don’t think I can improve upon the way that Luke wrote it in Acts, but here’s what that verse led us to think:

*“Let’s look at what we **think** church is and take away everything **except** the things in **Acts 2:42** and start the new church with those things **only**.”*

Sometimes I even described it this way...

“What is the least that we can do and still have church be church?”

As you can imagine... this was a bit of a new paradigm for us. We didn’t come here to Taiwan to “do the least possible”! We came to work ourselves to death like good missionaries! ☺

In all seriousness, the “simple” church described in Acts seemed both strange and appealing to us. Our goal as church planters is clear: **to see an indigenous church planting movement established in Taiwan**. Since we are foreign church planters, we must always be careful to ensure our actions and the patterns we establish are biblical rather than based on habits and customs of our home culture. If the accounts of the early church are reliable, the patterns we see in the 1st century church should be supra-cultural. The pattern must be reproducible regardless of local culture.

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So nearly a year ago, we started meeting together in a casual environment and with a focus on each member discovering and using their spiritual gifts in the context of an Acts 2:42 type meeting. The kids (ranging from infants to high school) were with the group at all times. It was hectic sometimes, but also quite lively and fun!

We wanted to be very careful about adding anything to the worship times because it is easy for preferences to become laws and we would hate to let that happen in the establishment of a church planting movement.

What we discovered was this: People enjoyed having kids and adults together and we all thought it good for the kids to grow up learning that they are a part of the church too! However, there was strong desire for the

kids to have lessons more geared towards them. One of the strengths of the house church format is that it can be extremely flexible and this proved to be one of those times. The moms gathered together for a brief meeting and came up with a plan for Sunday School without any board meetings or votes.

So... that is how Sunday School for children got started in our church. I'm glad that we went so long without it because it allowed this development to be **natural**—rather than mandated.

We've been blessed to have several junior and senior high school boys join our fellowship. We are currently praying about starting something for them—like a Bible study specifically related to things that they face from day to day. We pray for wisdom and discernment.



Recently on the Blog

- ◆ Something I've Learned
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- ◆ Jellocar
- ◆ Mr. Splashy Pants
- ◆ Mosburger Menu
- ◆ It Happened Again...



<http://pagels.teamexpansion.org/sqjtaipei/>

Angie's Book Study Group recently met @ our house

Zach joined a soccer team and LOVES it!



Changhua—Bikers in Changhua County will soon have a new place to enjoy themselves when a scenic bike trail is completed in April next year, county government officials said on Wednesday. The officials said the 14km bike trail currently under construction starts from a water park in Tianwei Township and will pass through a series of scenic spots, including an ecological park along the Choshui River. After the trail is completed, cyclists may ride along the route and also take a rest and stop at eateries along the trail to savor local delicacies. The officials hope that the new bike trail will attract bike lovers from neighboring counties and boost local tourism. (From <http://www.taipeitimes.com/News/taiwan/archives/2007/11/23/2003389145>)