President Jeffrey Bullock

University of Dubuque

2000 University Avenue

Dubuque, IA 52001

January 25, 2021

Dear President Bullock,

It is my joy to thank you, and it is an offering of praise to God, in bearing witness to the fruit that God has grown over nearly a generation of ministry through Rev. Moses Wu and Ms. Tina Lee. Over the past several years, the number of Mandarin speakers on the UD campus has diminished. And in the last year, between the impact of COVID and the geographical moves of core members of the Mandarin Worshipping Community, it seems that the ministry has reached a natural transition point. I am writing as a member of the NWC “coaching team” to add our thanks to that of Moses and Tina for all that has been made possible.

When I arrived at UD in 2004, one of my first stops was an invitation to Tina and Moses’ home where they were hosting their weekly dinner and program for Taiwanese and Chinese students. When I showed up, the living room was full edge to edge with students, talk, laughter, savory aromas, abundant food. Moses and Tina called on me to share with them about the mission work I had done in Africa, and to provide a witness to the desire of the church to be far-reaching in sharing news of God’s love.

During those early years, I came alongside Phyllis Garfield as she partnered with Moses and Tina to bless the many Asian students coming through UD campus life. There were elaborate charts of host families, and conversational English partners. Quarterly we rolled up sleeves in the Westminster kitchen to put on dinners for 100+ students and friends and find winsome ways to reflect the gospel in stories of Thanksgiving or the Lunar New Year. It was impressive that over the years hundreds of students received a witness to the love of God and the care of the church.

When Moses and Tina returned to Taiwan, I continued to partner at times with Phyllis to maintain the good program that had been developed. I was less hands on but present enough to see that fruit continued by the labor of love of Phyllis and the many friends of this ministry that had been developed.

It was a happy moment when Tina returned to UD and Dubuque in 2013. I worked with her in an SPM as she and Moses again hosted students in their home to share the gospel (and good food) with intentionality and warmth. Though the numbers of Taiwanese and Chinese students were dropping, I watched as Tina worked with Phyllis to minister to international students from many countries. Tina’s personal and ministry experiences have informed a faithfulness, compassion and understanding that has been a unique gift at UD in international student ministry.

I was also a witness when Moses and Tina had the startling call by a women in the grocery line who told them that there was not a Mandarin speaking church community for over 100 miles, and “why couldn’t you be my pastor?” There have been few call stories to me as striking as their reception of that conversation as God’s intention for provision in the Dubuque community.

As they applied for the first 1001 New Worshipping Community grant, it was exciting to realize that we had all been alerted to a mission through UD to those beyond the campus who were thirsty for the gospel. Surveys of Dubuque revealed Mandarin speakers on the margins quietly working in Chinese food restaurants, a few of them vulnerable to exploitation in the sex trade. In addition to working with UD students, Tina with Moses also began spending time around town in restaurants and in contact with any names provided them. They continued opening their home. To add to those home cooked meals, a dedicated Mandarin Sunday school and worship service nested in Westminster Presbytery made the open door all that more clear.

Over the past several years, it has been inspiring to see how they have used weekly table tennis to care holistically for Dubuque Mandarin speaking community, and also invite people to learn more about God’s love. There have been worship services, baptisms, Easter celebrations, Lunar New Year feasts, and top notch discipling through Bible study that have helped inquirers and new believes take firm hold of the gospel.

I have mixed feelings as I write now. There is some sadness to see this Mandarin community dispersed. But there is also the recognition that seeds have been planted, watered, sprouted, grown here, to provide seeds that are now carried literally across the Midwest and around the world. If surprising, it seems a natural progression. May God bless the gospel and those carrying it now to Mandarin speakers in many places.

None of this would have been possible without the varied forms of nurture at UD – from the education and formation which Moses and Tina received (and contributed to) in classes; to the encouragement and partnership of Phyllis Garfield (for whom another letter of deep and wondrous appreciation is due), to the receptivity and loving faithfulness of many UD faculty, staff and their families in engaging in the Mandarin ministry; to the scholarship support and generous housing that has provided not just a home base for ministry but a ministry space.

I pray that this brief narrative supports your own recollections of God’s goodness over the past (almost) two decades. Thank you for the vision and gifts to support such a significant mission through UD over the years. To God be the glory!

Yours in Christ,

Beth