



MISSIONS FOCUS

From bulletin: January 22, 2023

Our Missionaries, their health and ministries affected by Covid-19

Kingdom Rice

Bay Area, California with Pastor Steve Hong

From today's bulletin / Missions Report from Missions Team

Kingdom Rice (KR) released a new book written for missionaries. Steve Hong applied the biblical ideas of God-given face, community, patronage, reciprocity, and other ideas commonly found in Chinese culture to the training of missionaries, and stated that support raising is not cause for "losing face." He is getting requests from missionary organizations around the world to speak on this topic because these organizations realize such training cannot just come from a Western perspective. BACBC's partnership with Kingdom Rice is enabling them to minister to AACF, IV, YWAM, Wycliff, and more and in particular, to missionaries who are Asian, Black, Latinx. The result will be changing paradigms and breaking the missionary enterprise to a more biblical, faithful, less Western-oriented approach. Evangelically, he continues to write for Chinese museums and non-profit organizations in San Francisco. Most recently, the Examiner read Steve's blog and decided to interview him and the article was published on July 8th. Steve has used these behind the scenes opportunities to share the Gospel with many.

Highlights from his monthly reports:

They have met and trained missionaries in other countries via Zoom. This fall, they concentrated on hosting cohorts where participants train to excavate and articulate shame-reversal stories of the Bible, themselves and others. The October report details how the cohort works using two people's example before, during and following their participation in the training.

BACBC.ORG

1801 North Loop Road | Alameda, CA 94502 | info@bacbc.org



· BAY AREA ·
CHINESE BIBLE CHURCH
灣區華人聖經教會

For what is Steve Hong thankful? He shares some of his top blessings including a new 50-pound member of the family. "Seeking God's peace at Christmas in SF's traditional African-American and Chinese neighborhoods" is the title of the latest update from KR. Understanding and learning people's experiences through immersion, the hope is that more community members will experience the true Christ throughout the year

**AACF, IV, YWAM are primarily ministries for college students and young adults. (Asian American Christian Fellowship, InterVarsity, Youth With a Mission)

To read the last 4 updates (September, October, November, December 2022), they follow.

Thank you for reading about and praying for our missionaries, countries and people locally and globally!

[View this email in your browser](#)

KINGDOM RICE



Dear Bay Area Chinese Bible Church!

December 27th, 2022

I wish I grew up knowing what my son now knows about Christmas, and the difference that makes in loving our neighbors. For example, he knows...

- Why Jesus was born about 4 B.C. and not 0 B.C.
- That Christmas has Winter Solstice roots when people worshipped a "sun" deity before this was replaced with worship to a better "Son," the Son of God!
- That the [whole barn/stable narrative is a Westernized telling of the Scriptures](#). Instead, mangers were found alongside the ancient "living room" in the middle of all the action (because the guest room (inn) was occupied). **This setting is much more hospitable and welcoming for visitors like the shepherds.**
- That Christmas means extreme loneliness and deeper depression for many displaced from homes, family, or even those shopping!



Though I wasn't exposed to these historical and social perspectives in my youth, today they have given me greater credibility with neighbors (*we are not Christians with "blind" faith*) and have helped me to build greater trust with them this past Christmas. (The label "Christian" *without the relationship* is typically met with suspicion in my circles) For example in the past week, my son and I had a great conversation with our local barista about their Solstice traditions and we also attended a Hanukkah party where my son lit one of the candles as guests sang in Hebrew. And we even worked out a new "barter" with one of the recipients we've been delivering meals to this past year...receiving tutoring in exchange for piano lessons I'm giving their teen. These are just a few ways we're hoping to have others experience Christ this "Christmas" and throughout the year.

The Gospel is hospitable; the Gospel invites reciprocity. **The Gospel is not just about Christians doing good things for others; it's also making space to receive, vulnerably. In these circumstances, often times under persecution or trial, people experience Christ among Christians.**

Christmastime in pluralist San Francisco is a wonderful season to learn to see and better relate to others as Jesus would, in my family and through Kingdom Rice. For example, earlier this month, former board member **Nate Lee and I led an immersion for ministers from four churches who banded together after the 2020 justice uprisings**. Their goal is pursuing racial solidarity between their respective Latinx, African-American, and Asian-American congregations. **Immersing ourselves into the stories of people in different neighborhoods holds us accountable to the lenses we use to see others,**

God, and see ourselves as God does.



This particular immersion involved visiting multiple sites within SF's historic African-American and Chinese neighborhoods, Bayview/Hunter's Point (BV/HP) and Chinatown. On the left, Nate and I stood in front of Chinatown's public housing that today houses 50 Latinx and African-American families. Formally a case manager for these families, **Nate used his experience to unfold stories of racism, trauma, and advocacy in these housing projects** (*Read [Nate's article about housing advocacy here](#)*). Likewise In BV/HP, two leaders who are deeply connected to BV/HP through their work, homes, and churches were our guides. Both Danny (in the middle picture) and Brittenne (walking next to me in the right picture) live and work in BV/HP. They gave us an intimate experience of a school Danny helps lead ([riseprep.org](#)), community non-profits where Asian-Black solidarity is being nurtured, and at-risk youth training programs ([oldskoolcafe.org](#)). These vignettes of beauty were sometimes set against brokenness of the 'hood, the social needs, the "food desert," products of decades of neglect and racism. Oh that we learn to see the beauty and brokenness of places as God sees them.

When we immerse ourselves into different neighborhoods with vulnerability, we're able to address the lenses we see through, and to see others with greater empathy. Too often, people enter into other neighborhoods with only a consumerist lens (*e.g. looking for the best boba, soul food, etc.*). and of course, there are many examples of people bringing threat to neighborhoods and cultures, no matter how explicit or subtle. Sadly, Christians are not immune to these dynamics, even with good intentions. Yet by the Spirit, Christians have the power to enter into neighborhoods with the vulnerability and empathy of Christ.

This is why we offer immersions (and lead cohorts) to pastors, missionaries, and seminarians. As the year ends, **consider investing in this work in the amount of \$25, \$50, \$100, \$200 a month or whatever is significant to you.** You may also invest a special end-of-year gift. Click "[How to financially invest](#)". All gifts are tax-deductible.

Thank you for reading! Feel free to comment or let me know how you are doing [by clicking here](#). **May we be healing lights this season because He first shone his healing light on us.**

Happy New Year from Kingdom Rice and my family to yours!

- Steve Hong

[View this email in your browser](#)

KINGDOM RICE



Dear Bay Area Chinese Bible Church!

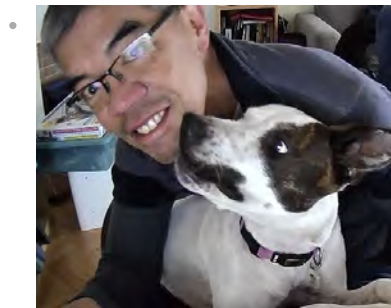
November 16, 2022

"I am the RICE of life!" - Do you think Jesus might have said that had he served the Lord's supper from Asia? Perhaps Jesus would have picked up a pot of rice at the Lord's Supper, served his disciples and said *"Take eat, this is My body which is broken for you...this do, as often as you eat, in remembrance of Me."* This Thanksgiving, let's imagine Jesus calling us to **remember his work on the cross, not just the transactional work, but the sanctification and shame-reversal work that brings healing.**



As the end of the year approaches, please also **consider investing in the innovative, leadership-replicating, community-healing work of Kingdom Rice.** Most of what we do is supported by individual donors. I'd be honored if you'd consider investing \$25, \$50, \$100, \$200 a month or some other amount. You may also invest a special end-of-year gift. [Click here for instructions.](#) We are a 501c3 non-profit organization so all gifts are tax-deductible. As some of you have already done, you may also share this newsletter and/or to others.

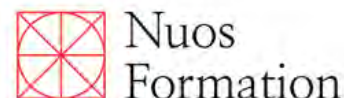
Love to share with you a few of the things I'm thankful for this Thanksgiving:



My family: As far as Kingdom Rice is concerned, my family has so intricately and profoundly shaped the values, context, and focus of my work through times of joy but especially through times of grief. Also thankful for our 50-lb dog we adopted last year. I would never have imagined how much Ruby would impact our family's emotional

and physical rhythms!

- My enrollment in a spiritual director's program:** As our board considered how to bring better practices to our cohorts, we wanted to learn from other cohorts whose values



After inviting their director, Julie Barrios, to speak at our board meeting, our board recognized the strategic potential of learning from Nuos. The board voted to finance me to join their two-year program; in fact, two of us on the board are participating. Visit nuosformation.com to learn why this program is such a wise investment for KR. Though I don't envision being a spiritual director, what I've learned in just the first two months is already having a profound impact in our andragogy.

- **The Spirit's work among the participants** in the Kingdom Rice cohorts:
 - A myriad of leaders, pastors, engineers, and doctors participate in our cohorts and learning to bring God's peace to a diversity of places including cosplay. I featured a cosplay ministry called Jesus Otaku a couple years ago. ([*Did you know that the anime community is bullied at 3x the national ave and is 6-8 times more likely to identify as LGBTQ+ than the general population?*](#)) We've since taken our partnership to much deeper levels through our cohort.
 - *"This cohort has been so rewarding. I didn't expect the cohort to be so healing. I feel like we have only brushed the tip of the iceberg, and I could see why people would return to do more sessions... I can see how this could have a greater effect if we tried to replicate this within Jesus Otaku."* - Gwen - Jesus Otaku leader
 - Gwen, pictured above, came into the cohort with another Otaku leader. In fact, most of the participants have come into the cohort with a fellow leader (*just as two of us from Kingdom Rice have joined the Nuos training in the last bullet*). They and the other participants are developing concrete vision for the places where they live and work. Meanwhile, **repeat participants are experiencing transformation with each succeeding cohort, and learning to embody the shame-reversal Gospel, a Gospel for the soul, and learning to lead others on this journey.** I'm blessed to witness this work.



Overall, we're diving deep as learners and as providers; it's a season of tooling all we do with greater skill, theology, and 2 Tim 2:2 impact.

I thank God for all his graces, for Kingdom Rice, and for you! Love to hear how you're doing; [feel free to drop me a line](#). Happy Thanksgiving! - Steve Hong

[View this email in your browser](#)

KINGDOM RICE



Dear Bay Area Chinese Bible Church!

October 14, 2022

Developing Leaders who Embody a Shame-Reversal Gospel

What comes to mind when you think of Christian leaders? A great teacher? One with lots of degrees? I grieve that I've been promoted to past positions because of my skills and training without enough regard for emotional maturity. Too often, leadership is selected based on outside qualities vs. inside qualities. (e.g. 1 Sa 16:7, 1 Ti 3)

With this letter, I will share a few snapshots of our **leadership replication process** that puts priority on the inside qualifications best expressed in our vision, and that is **to see "an embodiment of the shame-reversal Gospel for the healing of our communities."** To do that as concretely as possible, I've asked the permission of Flo and Jeff to share their experience of stepping into our leadership development process. They learned about Kingdom Rice through a combination of our ministry at Youth With a Mission, watching an on-line Kingdom Rice webinar, and from participating in a live Chinatown immersion.

Learning from seasoned Kingdom Rice leaders:

Flo and Jeff attended our cohort information meeting and was able hear from and interact with past participants about how these objectives were coming to life for them and their communities.

- Identifying the lenses by which we learned to see God, ourselves, and others
- Excavating our own shame-reversal stories, and learning to share them with others
- Making space for shame-reversal stories in the communities where we work, learn, live, and play

The highlight of the evening was serendipitous! Flo and Jeff and other "newbies" noticed the **embodied, collective approach** being described by our past participants. As the new members began interrogating that issue, the veteran participants responded with more real-life examples than we had time for. Many noted how unique this approach is, even among those who have participated in other emotional life cohorts. Our collective approach provides a key element in our leadership development. My apologies, it's too hard to explain "**embodied, collective approach**" in a few words. [You can click here](#) if you want to expand what this means. For Flo and Jeff, this one meeting showed them that our

Entering leadership training with others in our cohorts:

The very next week Jeff and Flo began meeting in a six-week Sunday evening cohort with other participants who come from Middle-Eastern, African-American, and Asian backgrounds. After introducing our households and spiritual communities to each other, we shared the immediate social circles we're seeking to bring God's peace into. These communities include elderly in hospice, Japanese youth, cosplay, LGBTQ+, and homeschoolers. Naming these circles frames the cohort in faith-stretching, concrete relationships and away from the abstract.

One of the Kingdom Rice leaders in Flo and Jeff's cohort is Shihching, a three-time repeat participant. Flo and Jeff witnessed Shihching embodying and articulating concepts she could not when she was a "newbie" like them to the cohorts. Behind the scenes, Shihching is part of a group of past cohort participants I've been coaching to take their leadership and embodiment of our objectives to the next level.

I'm excited for Flo and Jeff, for their cohort journey and its group dynamics, and for the fruit to come.

Representing Kingdom Rice as an ambassador:



Flo and Jeff (pictured here) took up my invitation for them to represent Kingdom Rice at a local church (Reality SF) who sponsored a "Justice and Prayer" event. After they both spoke and interacted with the church afterwards, Jeff and Flo reported the following two kinds of responses:

(1) Curiosity and intrigue - "I'd never heard the gospel framed like that before. Tell me more."

(2) Gratitude - "What you two shared really spoke to me. Thank you."

I felt joy that others are experiencing what I normally do!

As you can see, Flo and Jeff's Kingdom Rice leadership training is multi-faceted. Veteran KR members are ministering to them, peers are wrestling with them in the cohort, and they are sowing the seeds of our vision and mission to the uninitiated. As director, I create the structures and processes and coach developing leaders like Jeff and Flo so that together, **leaders are growing to further the mission and to do this more skillfully.**

Through the years, I've seen God water these seeds. Today, our board and leaders embody our mission. And I pray this tribe will continue to grow faithful, long-haul leadership.

God bless! - Steve Hong

The logo for Kingdom Rice, featuring the words "KINGDOM RICE" in a bold, black, sans-serif font. The background is a light green color with a faint, stylized map of the world.

Dear Bay Area Chinese Bible Church!

September 9, 2022

This past summer we've been widening the imagination of **strategic leaders through shame-reversal storytelling**. This fall, we're inviting participants to dive deeper, **excavating** their own shame-reversal stories.

A flyer for a special Sunday service. The background is a mix of brown, yellow, and orange. At the top left, it says "Special Sunday Announcement!". In the center is a circular photo of a man with glasses, smiling. Below the photo, it says "SUNDAY SERVICE SEPTEMBER 25TH@10AM!". At the bottom, there is a paragraph of text describing the service and the guest preacher, Steve C. Hong.

Special Sunday Announcement!

A circular portrait of a man with short dark hair and glasses, wearing a brown sweater over a white collared shirt. He is smiling and looking towards the camera. The background of the portrait is a blurred outdoor setting with trees.

**SUNDAY SERVICE
SEPTEMBER 25TH@10AM!**

On Sept 25th, guest preacher Steve C. Hong will present a special two-part Sunday, **first** preaching about how the 150 years of racism and advocacy in Chinatown finds itself in the story of God. **Then** like the worship leader in the 48th Psalm, Steve will lead us across the alleyway to Portsmouth Square (after the worship service). Some of you are familiar with the beginnings of Chinatown. Fewer though, are familiar with how the square and the subsequent settlement of Chinese presents profound pictures of God's Story, a story you can find your own story in, regardless of where you grew up.

These **strategic leaders** include the pastor of [Chinatown's Chinese Congregational Church](#). I wanted to share their flyer (shown above) with you because it's one way we "shame-reversal story-tell" to connect **God's Story** to real places.

Churches and mission groups from all across the U.S. visited us in San Francisco to engage with these stories. These included students from both

pastors of SE Asians, Black, Indigenous, East Asians, and other ethnic and white ministries. We've also met and trained missionaries in other countries serving across the globe via zoom. I don't travel any more; yet, **our local work is resulting in global impact.**

Of all these groups, **training local InterVarsity staff and chapters** was especially unique. Former board member Sarah Akutagawa led the training. Also present was [IV's National Asian American Ministries Director Sabrina Chan](#). She drew from her new co-authored book "[Learning Our Names](#)" as we stood



in front of the former Chinese Telephone Exchange where Chinese operators memorized thousands of names in several dialects. See the Gospel connection? Most Chinatown residents held false identities, but their true names were known by these Chinese operators. Similarly, God sees past all our false identities and calls us by our real names. *(Adults pictured above are from L to R: KR's bookkeeper Brook Maturo, Sabrina Chan, KR board member Felicia Larson, and me)*

During debrief, one **participant described our time as a "mini Urbana"** (triennial stadium-sized missions conference), a fitting description **because indeed our mission entails training influencers to engage with our communities more authentically and holistically.** However effective though, we are not satisfied with this level of work; our mission is not fulfilled until it is embodied in others. Therefore...

As the fall season draws near, Kingdom Rice will shift our focus away from teaching/preaching/immersions to make space for cohorts where **participants train to excavate and articulate shame-reversal stories of the Bible, themselves, and others.** This is our most strategic way to replicate our mission. Read more about our cohorts [by clicking here.](#)

You are invited to our cohort kickoff info Zoom meeting 8:30pm Pacific Time on 9/25! Come join those who have already signed up, and hear from past participants and board members. There's no obligation to commit further. [Click this link to sign up, even if you're not sure.](#) I'd love to see you.

God bless you this month! — Steve Hong