

FCC: Chair's Annual Report October 2025

Since the annual meeting in October 2024, FCC has been active in welcoming visitors from China, bringing together FCC members on Zoom with different speakers every month, receiving reports from FCC committee members on their visits to China, and sending funds for our partners at Amity and the Bible Society.

FCC was delighted to welcome and host two Chinese visitors in the summer of 2025.

- a) Mr Fang Jun, from the Amity Foundation in Nanjing, who wished to learn how UK charities encourage long-term fundraising, as well as



improve his English language fluency, and experience British culture. Several FCC members very kindly hosted him while he was here for 5 weeks, including our partners in the Scottish Churches' China Group. There were in-person meetings in Oxford and London to meet Fang Jun.



Amity is a large NGO in China with many international partners, but the staff visits to FCC are unique: we host people in our own homes and give them a wide experience of UK culture. Not many guests from China have the chance to spend time on a Scottish island, as Fang Jun did!



- b) Dean John's Hong Kong experience ministry in visited for while also theological Pusey Through KK was



KK Chan from St cathedral in wished to cathedral the UK and about 2 weeks, attending a conference at House, Oxford. our various links, hosted in

members' homes and visited a good number of cathedrals.

The hosting of guests from China can involve a lot of work, but again this year has been very rewarding. Thanks are due to those who made the arrangements, and those who offered hospitality.

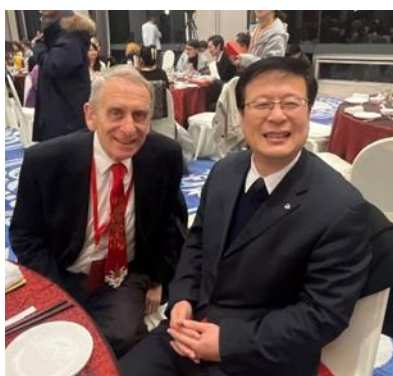
While some FCC members were able to meet Dean KK and Fang Jun in person, both guests took part in Zoom meetings, open to all. And this past year has seen the value of those monthly Zoom meetings, which included up-to-date reports on recent visits to churches in China, fascinating stories of missionaries in China a hundred years ago or more – told through biographies written by current members of their families and work that FCC members are involved with in China today. Many FCC members have long experience of China, but would not be able to travel to meetings, so Zoom has proved a real blessing to them and to FCC.



For the Annual meeting in October, we were delighted to have a presentation by Dr James He Qi, a renowned Chinese American contemporary artist, who gave an illustrated talk about how he came to paint artworks which are fully Christian and fully Chinese, blending Chinese folk customs with Western art.

Involvement with Amity

We sent a donation to Amity (£2k from FCC and supported by £1k from Barbour Trust) enabling 113 solar study packs to be distributed to children in high altitude regions, including Tibet. These packs enable children to charge up packs during the day to have light in the evenings to do their homework – other electricity sources can be erratic in remote areas. Our donations are small but send a message of support and goodwill. However, our planned gift to the China Christian Council did not go ahead, because of regulations affecting donations from abroad.



Amity celebrated their 40th anniversary in November 2025, and three members of FCC were able to be there. But many other FCC members were mentioned by name during conversations – those who over the years had been full-time teachers or taught in the Summer English Programme, which unfortunately no longer happens. Amity is looking ahead to its next 10 years, with exciting

plans to increase the number of young people from other countries whom it will host in Nanjing.



Visits to China were made by members of the FCC committee. Godfrey and Dot visited in May 2025. They were very warmly welcomed by churches, pastors and seminary faculty members, with whom we have been linked for many years. There is always a deep appreciation of the fact that FCC members manage to come and visit. Significant and deep friendships have developed over the years. Although

facing various challenges, our ongoing links enable FCC to continue supporting them consistently in prayer.

Looking ahead

The structure of FCC has largely remained unchanged over the last 40 years. But events have changed the landscape in which we operate.

For example, many members are linked back to a time when there were group visits to and from China, and of course the summer English programme. Those things – once a big part of FCC – don't happen now. So where should we look now for new members? Almost all our current members are in the UK and Ireland, as was envisaged by the Constitution. Should we encourage more members from elsewhere?

When FCC began, Hong Kong was still under British rule. What might be the role of FCC now with churches in Hong Kong? We have a new Chair and Treasurer who bring knowledge of Hong Kong. Maybe our links with HK churches will increase.

Pre-Covid, it seemed to be much easier to arrange visits here from China – both from seminaries and universities. Now, that seems more difficult. Are there ways in which our historic links with churches in China can be sustained and developed? We are well-thought of by our partners in China and our track record and experience are assets in this work. But we are a small organisation. How do we use our resources – of money, friendships, experience - in the best possible way?

One way will be by offering more opportunities for seminary staff and doctoral students to come to the UK for short periods of study. They will be some of the future leaders within the Three Self Church and by helping them, we will be helping the next generation of Christian pastors and their churches. Those opportunities will continue God's work of friendship with our sisters and brothers in the churches of China and support the work of mission.

Having been Chair of FCC for 2 years, I now hand over that role to Dr Kerry Houston. My thanks to all the Committee – specially Dot Stone. It is due to her that things have happened at the right time, and all of us have been kept up to date with meetings and news.

And thanks to Jim Gibson, who with his wife Maida has been treasurer of FCC for 7 years, guiding the finances with gentle and competent care. We are extremely grateful. He is handing over to Paul Ng, originally from Hong Kong, who has worked in financial management for many years here in the UK.

But my thanks to all the Committee. At our meetings, I've realised the breadth and depth of experience which committee members have, and their commitment to the work of the church in China. I look forward to continuing to be part of FCC.

John Austen October 2025