

PROFILE



REV. DR. PAUL MCLEAN TAIWAN

Paul grew up in St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Brampton, ON. After studying Applied Mathematics at the University of Waterloo, Paul felt God's call to full-time ministry. He served as a student minister in Portage la Prairie, MB, Cape Breton Island, and St. Andrew's Islington, then graduated from Knox College in 1982. Offering himself for overseas service in Taiwan, he began a new cross-cultural journey in which he became "a Canadian grain of wheat planted in a Hakka rice field". In Hakka, Paul is called "Mak Muk-su" or "Pastor-teacher Wheat." He and his wife Mary Beth, along with their three sons, lived beside Hakka rice fields and in Hakka cities during their 12 years in Taiwan (1983-1995). There they learned to speak the minority Hakka language and came to love Hakka culture and people. The name Hakka means "guest families" and refers to their identity as "sojourners" among the large Chinese family of peoples. Of Taiwan's 3-4 million Hakka people, only 2 or 3 in a thousand are Christians.

As a missionary with the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan and the Bible Society in Taiwan, Paul's main job was helping a team of 10 Hakka ministers and elders translate the New Testament & Psalms, then Proverbs for *Today's Taiwan Hakka Version of the Bible* (published in 1993 and 1995 respectively). He thanks God that, "Hakka people can now read and understand the good news of Jesus Christ in their own mother tongue." Yet more work needs to be done to review and finalize draft translations of the remaining books of the Old Testament.

After the McLeans moved back to Canada in 1995, Paul pursued doctoral studies through Knox College and the University of Toronto. He focused on the Hebrew Old Testament and its translation in the Greek Septuagint, always hoping he could reapply his knowledge of ancient and modern Bible translation.

In 2004 the Presbyterian Church in Canada reappointed Paul to work as a full-time Bible translation consultant in partnership with the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan and the Bible Society in Taiwan. His primary responsibility is to help the Hakka translation team ensure that their good fluent Hakka translation is at the same time an accurate reflection of the meaning of the Hebrew original. Much of the year Paul lives with his family in Toronto where he carefully reviews every word and sentence in computerized Hakka draft translations, and where he can correspond with his co-workers using email. Then each year during three intensive 5-week visits to Taiwan in March, July and November, Paul and the Hakka team finalize their work together. Each trip he visits and preaches in Hakka churches around the island. He is also one of several Old Testament editors on a Mandarin Chinese Study Bible project sponsored by the Bible Society in Taiwan.

Paul is grateful to God for the encouragement he receives from friends at Knox (Spadina) PC, Taiwanese churches in Toronto, PCC congregations across the country, and from his family. His wife Mary Beth is one of the support staff in International Ministries of the Presbyterian Church in Canada. They have three sons, Andrew, Peter and Mark.