

My name is Greg Byers and I am the Bishop of the Yale Mandarin ward in Irvine, CA. I was called to start a Chinese speaking branch a little over 7 years ago. Since the beginning, we have been privileged to be part of a missionary hastening and in just 4 years become a ward.

Most of our members are from Mainland China and are still very new to the gospel—They are true pioneers and still growing their testimonies. My most strong desire is to see these new converts become fully converted with strongly rooted testimonies and a desire to lead.

In the past, our ward members have been able to participate in the Overseas Chinese LDS Pioneers Association events. The ward members have been able to strengthen their own testimonies by listening and interacting with other Chinese pioneer members that were baptized many years ago. They are also able to meet returned missionaries that love the work and their Chinese brothers and sisters.

The events offer our new members an opportunity to participate in workshops, attend the temple, and hear seasoned members testimonies. I have witnessed in my own ward an excitement and a desire to serve—They are rejuvenated with a common bond and an attitude to want to grow in the gospel—These long-term members have been strong influences on the members that participate in the events.

I personally look forward to attending each event and fully endorse them. I am excited that Irvine will host the 2018 event. I look forward to seeing many people attend and to once again feel the wonderful spirit that these events bring.

Sincerely,

Greg Byers