

Faith In Action

A new series profiling members and friends of SMCC

Marie Melrose

How many have served God by teaching in Appalachia and then 32 years teaching children and adults in Korea? That is the tip of the iceberg of who Marie Melrose is and what God has led her to do. In her early years, growing up on Hainan Island, China, where her parents and grandparents were missionaries, Marie was aware of the fear experienced by islanders always trying to appease animistic spirits through offerings and sacrifices. Marie's strong, loving Christian family was a haven, and when at age 7, she began to live in Los Angeles with her grandmother, she experienced separation and isolation. Her church was central and very mission-minded and where she sensed God's call to missions. She earned her B.S. in Social Sciences from UCLA before beginning studies at Princeton Seminary. Romans 12:1-2 influenced her to present herself as a living sacrifice to God. Marie says, "I wanted to do something hard for the Lord."



After teaching children of all ages "up and down the holler" in Appalachia, Marie became a missionary in Taegu and Seoul, Korea. She learned Korean and worshiped at Korean churches where she discerned the need for children's age-appropriate Christian education. Until pastors and leaders understood from her that children learn best by participation, not by lecture under high authority, the Sunday schools did not communicate the Gospel winsomely to children. She established Christian Education Research Institutes in both cities' seminaries, where she also taught at the college level.

With gifts and training in teaching and a passion for sharing the Gospel with "unreached people", Marie's retirement years have included six stints of teaching in China, where she has reconnected with people who knew her parents and her as a child. She also spent two years "teaching teachers to teach" Christian Education on the remote Vanuatu chain of islands between Fiji and New Caledonia. The Ministry Training School of 100 students and their families was isolated by 17 miles from the nearest village with no public transport and roads too treacherous for bicycles.

She has also taught English and shared the Gospel for two terms in Kyrgyzstan, two in Colombia, as well as stints in Brazil, and Kenya, Africa. Since moving to Monte Vista Grove Homes and joining SMCC in 1999, she has taught Conversational English and began a Bible study in simple English. She was drawn to the church by the Conversational English ministry, as well as our worship service's dignity, and that this is a growing church with not all "gray heads". SMCC's Outreach thrust in proclaiming the Gospel in word and deed to un-reached people is an important avenue for Marie. The Outreach Team and her Conversational English colleagues and students rejoice in the rich experience, deep, tried faith, and wisdom Marie brings to these ministries. It is a joy to have her among us as one who serves.