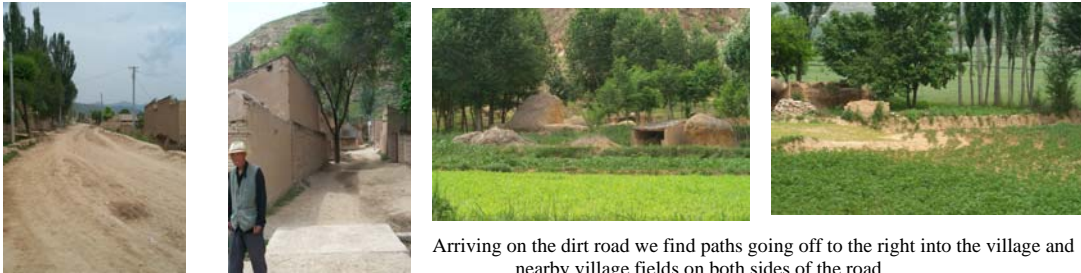


## Dong Zhuang Village Clinic - Dr. Sun Jinglin

Through this project, our partner, the Amity Foundation, is reaching out with a loving and helping hand to those in need, while simultaneously fulfilling another of its goals, that of making the presence and the caring of Chinese Christians for all people more widely known in Chinese society by working with people of many different backgrounds to bring concrete expressions of love that touch the deepest needs of others in tangible ways that make a difference in their lives. Through our help in the building of the village clinics and through our provision of some needed medicines, we American Baptists have also become a part of this ministry of love-in-action. Here is the story of Dong Zhuang Village and of village doctor, Dr Sun (Sun Jinglin)

Dong Zhuang Village is located in a relatively flat area of Sha Tang Township in Long De County toward the southern end of the Ningxia Autonomous Region of China. The original village itself consists of a little more than 160 families with 650 or so villagers, approximately 150 of whom are children fifteen years of age and under.



Arriving on the dirt road we find paths going off to the right into the village and nearby village fields on both sides of the road.

Dr. Sun, a 34-year-old villager and farmer, graduated from Amity's village doctor training program in 2002. His father, who served as the village doctor in the past, was getting older and needed to turn the work over to someone younger. So, Dr. Sun attended the year and a half long training program in order to gain the knowledge and skill needed to carry on the work. Since 2002, in addition to his farming, Dr Sun has also served as the village doctor, making it easy for villagers to continue to receive treatment for most common illness.

Dr. Sun, his wife and two children live with his parents. and until June 2005 he would see and treat his patients in a very small one-room clinic that has now been torn down. It was not very private, not too convenient, and not so adequate for some medical procedures.



Dr. Sun and his parents in the courtyard of their home  
(His wife was working and his children at school)



Judy and Dr. Yang (local Amity staff overseeing this project) learn about Dr. Sun's village and his work.

With \$1000 in One Great Hour of Sharing funds contributed by American Baptists and sent through the Amity Foundation added to funds from his farm work along with help from relatives and friends, Dr. Sun has been able to build a new clinic according to the specifications of Amity and the requirements of the Provincial



Health Bureau.<sup>1</sup> He now has a facility large enough to meet the needs of the village. The clinic has three rooms—a reception room, an examination and treatment room, and another room with a bed for patients who might need to stay at the clinic overnight. The farthest any villagers have to go to see the doctor is one km (or 0.62 miles), and there are people from nearby villages who also trust and come to Dr. Sun for treatment.



Judy Sutterlin gives Dr. Sun the final amount of our contribution.



As the clinic building has just been completed, Dr. Sun has just begun set up the examination table and the cupboards to store supplies.



The Dong Zhuang villagers are Han Chinese, which means they are the people we usually think of as being ethnically Chinese. Relatively poor mountain farmers, they have an average yearly per capita income of about 400 *yuan Renminbi* (approximately \$50). Their main crops include wheat, potatoes, a type of bean, and benne (a type of sesame grown in this area and used to make edible cooking oil). Some villagers also raise bees, a couple of goats or sheep, or one or two head of cattle. The plots of land farmed by each family are relatively small and farming is generally done by hand.



The number of patients Dr. Sun sees each week depends a lot on the season. More become ill and seek the doctor's advice in the winter and spring than in the summer and fall. On average, he treats about twenty patients a week. The main conditions that bring people in for medical advice are colds and flu, other respiratory illnesses, and digestive problems. The day before our visit, Dr. Sun saw a patient with mild appendicitis and treated him with an I.V. containing medication to reduce inflammation. Since the patient was planning to return that day, Dr. Yang Wen (local Amity staff overseeing this project) recommended that he help take him to the county clinic to be checked there as well. This is what the village doctors are taught to do when an illness may exceed their own training. Dr. Sun told us that their village also has a woman doctor who specifically works with the woman on prevention of gynecological problems.

Every year Dr. Sun also provides preventative medical care for his villagers as well, giving vaccinations against measles, tetanus, hepatitis and other contagious diseases as appropriate. He uses a blackboard posted outside the clinic to post health, hygiene and sanitation information important for the villagers to know. From time to time, he also uses a hand held megaphone to tell the villagers things they need to know to protect their health. The information he shares comes from what he has learned in his training program and from additional materials he gets from the township hospital. Sometimes the township hospital also provides him with health brochures which he distributes to each family. If the parents are illiterate, he asks the older children to read the brochures to their parents.



After Dr. Yang (local Amity staff overseeing this project) explains to Dr. Sun about the medicine we have given for him to use in treating patients who cannot afford to pay, he unpacks and looks at all of the different types of medicines we brought him.



Many times patients who come to see the doctor cannot pay for the small cost of the medicine they need, let alone any fee for the doctor. In this case, they usually sign some kind of I.O.U. These patients will always try to pay the doctor back gradually and will do their best to clear their debt at harvest time. Nonetheless, there are always some who are so poor that they cannot pay back what they owe and the doctor continues to pay for their treatment out of his own pocket even though the doctor and his family are also quite poor. This is true of Dr. Sun, as it is of other village doctors as well. To help mitigate this problem and enable village doctors to continue to serving the poorest of the poor in their villages and surrounding areas without totally draining their own resources dry, American Baptists, with the help of the Amity Foundation and the Ningxia Provincial Health and Sanitation Office have started to provide a supply of commonly needed medicines that these village doctors can use when treating those who cannot afford to pay for their care. ABWM is currently raising White Cross funds to help with this project.

Dr. Sun and other village doctors regularly attend additional training seminars held in either the township or the county hospital to continue to develop their skills and their knowledge so that they can serve the villagers' medical needs better and better over time. These seminars would also alert the village doctors to any special health risks that might be coming into their area and give them additional training in prevention, diagnosis and treatment.

When asked what the effects of the new clinic might be, Dr. Sun said that it provides him with a bigger facility and better conditions to provide for the medical needs of his fellow villagers. He believes that more villagers will come for treatment right away when they are ill, thus making it possible for them to receive treatment early enough to prevent their condition from worsening. With the medicines that we brought, Dr. Sun is grateful to have more kinds of medicine to effectively treat the illnesses his villagers most often face.

Thanks again for your part in this ministry of "love in action" in Dong Zhuang Village and in nine other villages, also in the southern part of the Ningxia Autonomous Region in China.

<sup>1</sup> ABC International Ministries is interested in helping other similar villages with their medical needs in the same way. The \$1000 reflects what was needed for the construction and provide basic equipment for each clinic in 2004. As costs have been rising, any future clinics built will need \$1400 for construction and basic equipment.