

## Ye He Village Clinic - Dr. Yang Kejing

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 know 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 Ye He Village and of village doctor, Dr. Yang (Yang Kejing).

Ye He Village is located in the mountainous region of Shen Lin Township in Long De County toward the southern end of the Ningxia Autonomous Region of China. The 120 families which include 850 people have joined with 75 additional families from nearby villages, bringing the population of the area to 1300. There are 200 children up to eight years old and 117 children between the ages of eight and fifteen.



Looking down into some village courtyards and  
Looking out over the hillsides with some of the villagers' fields and homes

Dr. Yang Kejing, a 34 year old villager and farmer, used to work with his father who has been the village doctor over the years. Since his father is getting older and needs to turn the work over to someone younger, Dr. Yang Kejing attended Amity's one-and-a-half-year village doctor training program in 2005 to gain the additional knowledge and skills he would need to serve as the village doctor. Since he completed the training program, in addition to his farming, Dr. Yang has also served as the village doctor, continuing to make it possible for villagers to receive the treatment they need right in their village when they are ill.



Dr. Yang's family

Dr. Yang is married and has two young children, aged three months and five years old. They live with his father. His mother died in 2004.



Judy interviews Dr. Yang in his home.

Originally, Dr. Yang would see his patients in the very old, very narrow one-room clinic his father had used. There wasn't even room enough for myself and the two others visiting with me to sit in it with Dr. Yang. It was clearly not very convenient for examining and treating patients.



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. Yang has been able to build a new, more adequate clinic according to the specifications of Amity and the requirements of the Provincial Health Bureau.<sup>1</sup> 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. When Judy Sutterlin visited in June 2005, the new clinic had just been completed and Dr. Yang was getting ready to move his medical supplies over from the old building.



Judy Sutterlin came in June 2005 to help hang the Ye He Village Amity Clinic sign and to see that the clinic was ready to have the supplies moved from the older inadequate structure into this new facility.

The Ye He villagers are Han Chinese, meaning they are the people we usually think of as ethnically Chinese. Relatively poor mountain farmers, the villagers main crops include wheat, small beans, corn, potatoes, benne (a type of sesame grown in this area and used to make edible cooking oil), and grasses for fodder to feed ox and goat. The plots of land allotted to each person or to each family are relatively small and farming is generally done by hand. Some families may also raise two or three goats or sheep or one or two head of cattle.



Villagers wait and look in the distance.



In the distance, you can see a field, some homes and a flag that marks the location of the primary school.



It's noon. Soon the children come rushing down the hill on one side and up the hill on the other side, coming home for lunch.

The number of patients Dr. Yang 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. Overall, he averages 120 patients a week. The main conditions he treats include headaches, colds and flu, other respiratory illnesses, digestive problems, and small injuries such as sprains, cuts and bruises. Dr. Yang also provides prenatal care and advice for pregnant women.

Dr. Yang provides preventative medical care for his villagers as well. He gives vaccinations for measles, tetanus, diphtheria, whooping cough and any other appropriate vaccinations for the children. At the village center, he sometimes offers lectures about sanitation. Other times he discusses aspects of this topic individually as he visits other villagers in their homes.

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. Yang Kejing, 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. Yang Wen (Yang (local Amity staff overseeing this project) explains to village doctor, Dr. Yang Kejing about the medicines we have given for him to use in treating patients who cannot afford to pay for them.

When asked what he expects the impact of the new clinic to be, Dr. Yang Kejing said, "It encourages me to do my work of caring for the health of the villagers well."

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