

Vital Planting

Church starts five congregations

Chris Kim's church in Mt. Prospect has helped start five Asian congregations in Illinois. Kim has engaged in such prolific church planting by offering the same kind of mentoring he received. "We have to take care of our family first, right? That's our mentality," Kim said. "But he is doing the opposite."

"He," in this case, is **John Yi**, an IBSA church planting catalyst working with ethnic groups in Illinois. Yi started a community mission to reach poor families in Maywood, then worked with Pastor Kim to plant a Korean church in Mt. Prospect.

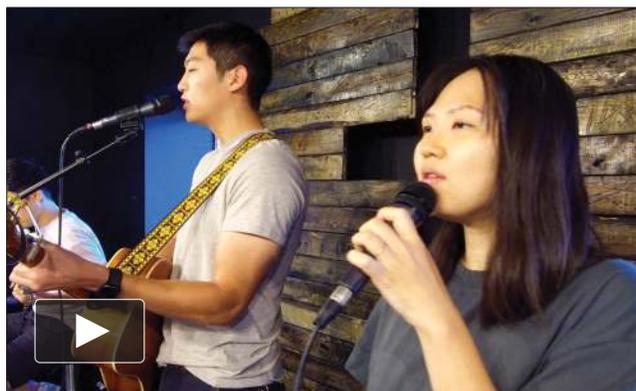
"His idea of ministry is kind of different from what I have done," Kim said of Yi's planting strategy. Yi modeled the Great Commission. "Jesus said in Matthew 28 that we have to go to all of the nations," Kim said, and with Yi's assistance, he has.

"These are people God has sent," Yi said, "coming from all over the world." While many are focused on taking the gospel to the far corners of the globe, missionaries in Illinois can easily say that the world is here on our doorstep.

Some 3.2 million immigrants live in Illinois. In partnership with the North American Mission Board, Yi works especially with first- and second-generations.

Bethel SBC is the sponsoring church for a Burmese-Thai congregation in Glen Ellyn, a Chinese student church plant in Urbana, a multi-ethnic group in Wicker Park, a Chinese start in Wheeling, and a Mongolian church who meets in Bethel's building in the northwest suburbs.

"I didn't know how to plant a church or how to minister," Kim said. "I didn't have any idea,



but Pastor John Yi taught me a lot of things." Including how to mentor other planters as he was mentored.

Erdenekhuyag Vandan is planting a Mongolian church that shares space with Bethel SBC. "Pastor Kim and Pastor John and Bethel Church, they were so good to me and helpful," he said.

Pastor Eggi, as he is called, was serving in Washington, D. C., when his church learned of need in Chicago. There are ten-thousand Mongolians in the city. "So that's why I came here to try to evangelize people," he said. "I started a cell group in my home, and after a while I was looking

for a place to have worship."

Assistance from Yi and IBSA proved valuable. "They offered me a free space and they were so good to me, and I was so happy, of course." Today Pastor Eggi has a growing congregation among a people group that was largely unreached in Illinois. And the Great Commission approach to church planting rolls on.



CHRIS KIM



JOHN YI



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