John McCall teaches at Taiwan Theological Seminary in Taiwan’s capital city, Taipei. He instructs students in the areas of spiritual formation, preaching and worship, and the theology and practice of ministry. John’s passion is helping to prepare students to be visionary, healthy, and faithful pastors. He oversees a program that helps young pastors have a positive experience in their first pastorate.

John has been under appointment as a mission co-worker since 1996. After two years of language training, he worked for several years with the aboriginal peoples of Taiwan on the east coast. There are 13 aboriginal tribes on the island who speak 13 different languages. Some 65 percent of aboriginals are Christian, while people on Taiwan as a whole are only 3 percent Christian. The Presbyterian Church in Taiwan, with whom John works, is the largest Protestant denomination.

John also works with the seminary’s Center for Spiritual Formation, which organizes small groups in which every student participates. These groups are led each week by local pastors who receive training. John also leads training events, retreats, and conferences for pastors and lay leaders in various presbyteries around the island.

The seminary also runs an academy for laypeople interested in studying the Bible and theology. “I teach in this academy on Wednesday evenings from 6:30 to 9:30,” writes John. “These are mostly working people who ride their motorcycles or take the subway from their places of work to the eighth floor of a high-rise church in downtown Taipei. More and more young adults are attending these classes. After spending a long day at work myself, I am always inspired by the energy and interest they bring to class. Their energy gives me energy. And it thrills me to think that they leave the class to be Christ’s light in their families, jobs, and in the world.”

Taiwan is a small island 100 miles off the southern coast of China. John’s work situates him on the frontiers of the Christian faith in an increasingly integrated world. Working in predominately non-Christian Taiwan, one of the most advanced and sophisticated places on the globe, his calling requires him to rethink constantly the place of his faith tradition in its encounter with other faith traditions and with cutting-edge modernity.

John continues his work with aboriginal people on the weekends, both those who have come to the city for work and those who remain in high-mountain or coastal villages. John writes, “God has truly given these people a wonderful gift of song. They are warm and welcoming people and love to laugh. Currently, there are several needs for the aboriginal church. One is for members to have a deeper understanding of the Bible and how it relates to daily life. Another is to find ways to reach the young adults who are often not involved in the church.”

John earned his bachelor’s degree from Duke University in Durham North Carolina. He later graduated with a master of divinity from Princeton Theological Seminary in Princeton, New Jersey, and holds the doctor of ministry degree from Columbia Seminary in Decatur, Georgia. John served as associate pastor of First Presbyterian Church in DeLand, Florida.

Immediately prior to his appointment as a PC(USA) mission worker, John was pastor of Black Mountain Presbyterian Church in Black Mountain, North Carolina, for seven years. Black Mountain Presbyterian Church has many retired pastors, educators, and missionaries in its midst. John describes it as a church with a deep sense of connection to the world church, which helped him to develop a vision of a church that stretches around the world. He was chair of Central Florida Presbytery’s Committee on Preparation of Ministry (CPM). In Western North Carolina Presbytery, where John is a clergy member, he chaired CPM and served on the Guatemala Partnership Task Force.