

From Our Acting Senior Pastor:

Have You Found Your Mission in Life?



by PASTOR DANIEL CHAN

I was born to a poor family in Hong Kong. My father had some bad habits. For a long time, my mother was the breadwinner for the family. She has been a virtuous and hard-working woman. On her way to and from work, she would get off the bus 3 or 4 stops early to save ten cents of fare. Seeing this as a young boy, I resolved to earn lots of money when I grew up, so that she could retire happily and be proud of her children in front of our relatives.

Just before I finished Form 4 (grade 10) in secondary school, my father wanted me to quit school and find a job, in order to help the family with the finances. My mother was rarely successful in swaying my father's decision. However, she strongly objected because I was doing quite well academically. Eventually, I was allowed to stay in school. Nevertheless, I knew I must finish my education as soon as possible to lessen my mother's burden. Searching for the fastest route to become a professional, I opted to enroll in the Building Department of Hong Kong Polytechnic. My choice proved to be correct. Hong Kong's economy was thriving at that time. High-rise buildings went up everywhere. I got a job right after graduation. In a few years, I

became a member of a prestigious professional society in the United Kingdom (England). My salary grew more than ten times. Then I thought of pursuing an MBA degree, so that I can jump from a technical role to a management role. I came to Boston for that purpose in 1982.

Joining BCEC changed my life. Becoming a student again, I returned to a simple but joyful lifestyle. I began to ponder whether earning big money should still be my goal in life. I found "space" in America. The physical space widened my perspective and allowed me to see how other people made their life choices. The mental space allowed me to think about the values and meaning of life. Living a busy life in Hong Kong, I did not have such space to think. But perhaps more importantly, I met a group of people who took their faith seriously at BCEC.

When I was about to graduate from business school, I attended the Missions Conference at BCEC. The theme was "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few." This familiar message prompted me to think about how I should respond to the Lord's calling. At that time, there were several seminarians in Joshua Fellowship. One of them was a carefree person. He might have a difficult time meeting the expectation of a traditional Chinese heritage church. However, he gained my admiration for his clear sense of mission to serve God full time. He jokingly said to me, "You look more like a minister than my friends and me. Why don't you put God in your future plan and come study in seminary?"

I was indeed thinking about my future, but I had not thought of "putting God in my plan." After a period of prayers and discernment, I heard God's calling to serve Him full time. That started my 30+ years of pastoral ministry. I am thankful that I discovered my life's mission at the age of 28. It was purely by the grace of God. But BCEC was an enabling partner in the journey. When I applied to seminary, I had very little money left. BCEC gave me a generous scholarship and summer internship. It helped me finish my theological training.

I have a dream. I wish to see everyone who joins BCEC will find his/her mission in life. Christopher Wright published the book *The Mission of God* in 2006 in which he proposed that the whole Bible can be linked together under the concept of mission. God is a missional God. He is constantly looking among His people for those who are willing to align their mission with His. Our priority in life is therefore to find out our mission in relation to God's plan.

In society, some people find their mission in business, politics, or raising a family. In church, some people find their mission in teaching, evangelism, or administration. When we find out our mission from God and commit to it, our life will become purposeful and meaningful.

I hope to see BCEC become a tool in God's hand to help our members discover their gifts, find out their life's mission, and offer opportunities to start their missional journey. This is my dream for BCEC.



Chinatown Campus Children's Christmas Party (12/15)

Table of Contents

<i>Have You Found Your Mission in Life?</i>	1
<i>My Post-Retirement Missions Trip</i>	2
<i>Christmas at the strip club: Bringing cheer to unloved women</i>	3
<i>This Year's Social Responsibility Conference on Our Global Needs</i>	3
<i>Reflections from Winter Local Mission</i>	4
<i>Witnessing God's Faithfulness</i>	5
<i>Seeking the Welfare of the Immigrants of Quincy</i>	6
<i>Worshipping in Unity</i>	7
<i>Upcoming Events</i>	11

My Post-Retirement Missions Trip



by EMERITUS PASTOR STEVEN CHIN

I want to share about the missions trip I took to the Philippines after my retirement and about what I learned.

Before sharing about my experience, I want to take this opportunity to thank the church community for honoring me with the retirement celebrations. My wife, Nancy and I were overwhelmed with all the love and support from current and past members. We appreciate very much the encouraging words we received from so many of you.

With my parents declining in health in the past few years, I had avoided trips that would take me away from Boston for more than a week. But after both my parents went home to the Lord early in 2019, I was able to accept a standing invitation from missionary Sharon (Tan) Pastre to teach at her continuing education program for ministers. I had never been to the Philippines before, but quite a few people from BCEC have gone on short-term missions trips there in the past. As a result, I was able to get a lot of advice on what to expect.

The Philippines is comprised of many islands, some having their own unique characteristics and even dialects. It is the largest majority Christian country in Asia. Most of the people (80%) are professing Roman Catholics. Evangelical Protestants can make up about 8% of the population. There is also a significant Muslim population of about 5%, especially in the southern islands.

On November 14, 2019, I took a long flight to the city of Cebu, which is in the middle of the Philippines Islands. It is one of the cities that missionaries Manny and Sharon Pastre serve through their orga-

nization, Grace Community Empowerment (GCE) International. I was taken to see their ministries to the poorest of the poor. We visited an abandoned cemetery where a whole community of people, especially families with young children, have moved into it. They live there because they have no other choice in order to survive. They have taken over mausoleums and are living among the above ground tombs that are housed there. I was also taken to a dumpsite where whole families live in one room shanties with no running water or electricity. People survived by selling things they would salvage from among the trash.

After that initial ministry tour, I flew to the city of Dumaguete to teach at GCE's Arrows School of Ministry. The students were about 40 men and women, some young and some older. Most of them were already serving in ministry in remote areas but lacked formal training. I came in the last week of their month-long training to teach them about endurance. Because I had survived over 40 years in a Chinese church, Sharon wanted me to share some insights that would prevent these ministers from giving up. Many serve in very challenging, non-Christian regions where they would have to walk over an hour through rough terrain to preach. I shared four sessions a day for five days using the Bible, the biographies of missionaries, and my own experience. It was extra challenging because my talks had to be translated into their Filipino dialect in hot and humid conditions with no air conditioning and lots of flies and mosquitos. Amazingly, the sessions were well received by the students. Thank you for your prayers and support.

Next I flew to Manila, the capital, where missionaries, David and Norma Ngan, drove me to Lucena City, which is about four hours by car. The Ngans serve there with OMF International, which was founded by Hudson Taylor. Their lives are in transition, as they recently adopted a baby boy, Jakin.

I helped give a consultation to leaders of a Chinese church they are helping. I also accompanied their

church members to help a poor Filipino church in a remote mountain area where they provided food and clothing as part of their outreach.

I returned to Boston just before Thanksgiving. I was very tired, but I learned a lot. Here are some of the things the Lord taught me:

- I saw, firsthand, the extreme poverty that many people in the world live encounter. It is heart-breaking to see people live and raise families in such conditions. Especially at Thanksgiving, I am grateful for all the materialistic blessings I have. However, I also want to be more of a blessing to those in need. I want to be an even better steward with what the Lord has given me and to try to share more with those in need.
- Missionaries are not superhuman Christians, but need support and guidance like all of us. They have family challenges, financial issues, and relational issues with coworkers. They are concerned about their future and sometimes need advice and encouragement. They are appreciative of the pastoral care they received from my visit, as well as the ongoing support of BCEC.
- Retirement is a great time to visit missionaries. At BCEC, I had seen Mrs. Yuet Ho Tam Yee (who recently went home to the Lord) go on missions trips into her 80s. With more time and less obligations, those in retirement can be a blessing to our missionaries who serve so faithfully by just visiting them. There is nothing necessarily wrong with taking vacations and cruises for pleasure. (Nancy and I will go visit the Holy Land in March). But let us consider trips with a purpose to bless others.
- Finally, I learned how important prayer is for our missionaries. Visiting them personally has given me much greater insight in the challenges they face and more passion to uphold them in prayer.



SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY CORNER

Christmas at the strip club: Bringing cheer to unloved women



by LING-MEI WONG,
CHINATOWN CANTONESE 3RD
SERVICE

Christmas is a joyful time to celebrate the birth of Jesus, as He came to free us from sin and death.

During this past Christmas season, I went to a strip club not to party nor ogle, but as part of Route One Ministry's annual Christmas basket distribution. It is a place that is far from free and joyful.

The club had no windows, with patrons leering at the dimly lit dancers. The bartender and I were the only women dressed for winter; the dancers were forced to wear outfits that left little to the

imagination.

I handed out 13 gifts to the women, who graciously thanked me.

One woman nearly cried, asking, "Your church gives gifts to strippers?!"

She looked barely 18, and she told me she was Catholic. In that moment, I saw someone who felt unworthy of love and was filled with shame. We hugged each other, as I told her how she was special and loved.

Human trafficking happens in legitimate clubs selling food and alcohol while exploiting victims for both sex and labor behind the scenes, according to Polaris. Victims must provide customers with flirtatious companionship to entice them to purchase exorbitant alcoholic beverages, often with an agreement for commercial sex acts. Many strip clubs and go-go clubs are associated with this type of sex and labor trafficking.

Stripping is far from glamorous and lucrative.

Route One founder Bonnie Gatchell previously shared how women's earnings require fees to the bouncer, stage and more, garnishing most of their wages. The wishful thinking about college students dancing for their tuition might be true, but Gatchell encountered a woman in her 60s who was still forced to perform. Stripping is not fun and profitable for many of the workers.

Strip clubs are down from the Combat Zone heyday, but demand remains high, if the number of parked cars outside was an indicator. While the patrons didn't approach me, I pray Jesus moves in their hearts, so they understand how badly the women are exploited.

In a place devoid of religious symbols, I knew Jesus was with the women. Despite the makeup, heavy perfume, and big hair, they were His daughters and precious to Him. It was a privilege to partner with Route One Ministry to share His love in this joyous season.

This Year's Social Responsibility Conference on Our Global Needs

by PASTOR KENNETH KWONG AND JAY LEUNG,
CHINATOWN CANTONESE 3RD SERVICE

The City of Boston has started a project called "Imagine Boston 2030." It is the first citywide plan in 50 years to determine a roadmap to further develop and strengthen the city. This framework to "preserve and enhance Boston" comes from comprehensively surveying more than 15,000 residents. If you had a chance to read it, you will see climate change frequently cited. Amongst the five main goals, one of them is to "promote a healthy environment and prepare for climate change." The report detailing climate change focused on extreme fluctuations with the weather and temperature, as well as rising sea levels, which can adversely affect the city plus countering mechanisms that are currently under consideration. The report noted that based on current projections to 2070, annually there will be 33 days where the temperature will reach at least 100 degrees Fahrenheit, and Boston will have 18% of its confines experiencing flooding due to more frequent and powerful storms, along with rising sea levels.

We are currently living in a country with the biggest economy, most abundant manpower and resources, as well as possessing the most advanced technology in the world. We are well equipped with these assets to take on the challenge of cli-

mate change and reduce the harms that it can bring. However, not every country has the resources we have when they have to take on the same challenge. The decrease in crops and harvest production because of climate change has already threatened the people in poor regions. In a 2017 United Nations report entitled "Climate Change and Social Inequality," the data showed how climate change is causing economic harm to poorer people. Those who are poor may suffer economic loss that are 20 times higher in proportion than those with higher income. Climate change has already gone from an environmental problem into a societal one, and it is a matter that would concern the God who cares about the orphans and widows. How are Christians facing these challenges, and are we actively working with others to address this crisis?

This year's Social Responsibility Conference is focused on the topic of climate change, with our theme being "Green Grace: Christian Love through Environmental Stewardship." We hope that God will speak to us during the conference, leading us to action to respond to this global need, so that we can be good Christian witnesses in actively addressing this crisis, and that through our actions people can see the love of Christ.

We are pleased to welcome three amazing speakers to our conference. They are Reverend Ben Lowe, Dr. Amos Tai, and Dr. Derek Yam.

Lowe is one of the founders of Young Evangelicals for Climate Action, where he is currently a senior advisor. He has also served in various capacities with other environmentally-focused Christian organization. A graduate of Wheaton College (in Illinois), Lowe has authored various books such as

"Green Revolution: Coming Together to Care for Creation" and "Doing Good Without Giving Up: Sustaining Social Action in a World That's Hard to Change." He is ordained in the Christian and Missionary Alliance and is currently pursuing graduate studies at the University of Florida.

Dr. Tai is an Associate Professor of earth system science at the Chinese University of Hong Kong. His research addresses the pressing issues of air pollution, climate change, and ecosystem degradation by better understanding the complex interactions between atmospheric chemistry, climate and biospheric processes. Tai earned his bachelor's degree in environmental engineering science at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and his doctorate in environmental science and engineering at Harvard University.

Dr. Yam is currently a visiting Assistant Professor of Divinity School of Chung Chi College of the Chinese University of Hong Kong, as well as the chief editor of the Christian Times, a Christian publication based in Hong Kong. He is also an associate researcher at the Christian Research Centre of the Chinese University and a member of the Ecological Care Advisory Group of the Hong Kong Christian Council. His academic research includes the religious and theological implications of media culture, social and political context, and the theology of food. He received his Ph.D. in Philosophy from the University of Edinburgh, and his Master of Theology from Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary.

Our conference weekend is from March 27th to 29th, and we hope that you will take the time to attend.

*Boston Local Short-Term Missions:***Reflections from Winter Local Mission**

by JOHN WONG,
NEWTON CANTONESE

In December 2019, 34 brothers and sisters from seven Chinese churches, including four friends from New York, participated in Winter Local Mission organized by Boston Short Term Mission. At first, several shopping malls and elderly residential facilities did not respond to our inquiries, but we finally managed to contact them. In addition, we praise God for preparing several well-suited speakers for us! Here are reflections from three brothers and sisters from our church.

Jacky Wong (Newton Cantonese)

Predicting the future is something that everyone desires because it can satisfy a lot of our desires. However, as the seasons change, the body will deteriorate, and eventually life will end like turning off the lights. Praise God that we can also foretell what will happen. The Bible says, "I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life." (1 John 5:13 – NIV). It also says, "Very truly I tell you, the one who believes has eternal life." (John 6:47 – NIV)

Why do people stubbornly refuse to accept the gift of eternal life? One reason is never hearing about the gospel. Three years ago was my first time joining the Winter Local Mission in Boston, where I learned how to share the name of Jesus with strangers. Naturally, training increased my confidence. We had the opportunity to participate in Christmas caroling, as well as to visit the elderly, and these were meaningful activities. Sometimes when I looked at an elderly person, it felt like looking at my future. No one can stop time, so I want to join the Winter Local Mission every year to proclaim the gospel to save souls that are lost.

Winter Local Mission 2019 recently ended, and each time I had something new to learn. Although passing out gospel tracts, visiting the elderly, street evangelism, and Christmas caroling in shopping malls seemed to have become our routine activities, these are all the work of the Holy Spirit. This year at a residential facility for the elderly in Malden, I met a man with esophageal cancer who was willing to confess his sins and accept Christ during our visit. I was really touched, and the experience was like a shot in the arm. I truly believe that we should do as much as possible to save as many souls as possible. All the glory to Jesus Christ, our Lord!

**Anna Kwong (Newton Cantonese)**

This was my first time joining the Winter Local Mission, which was a three-day event that was held between December 12-15 at the Chinese Christian Church of Grace in Malden. The experience gave me a cozy feeling because most of the brothers and sisters from different churches had already known each other. There were fantastic training classes with a variety of topics including "How to share the Gospel with the Elderly" taught by Minister Peter Wong, gospel tools, restaurant evangelism, etc.

What was most unforgettable happened at a restaurant, where I was able to apply what I had learned from Minister Wong and form a relationship with a young man. This opportunity allowed me to get to know a young, reticent, well-educated nonbeliever called Mr. Wang. During dinner, after we all shared and talked about our daily lives and background, Mr. Wang eventually talked to us about things in the Bible that he thought could not be practically applied in our lives. He also believed that the Jesus Christ in the Bible was a fabrication by its authors. Our team included a brother who was well versed in the Bible and quite experienced in evangelism. He was able to acknowledge what Mr. Wang said and told him that these views used to be the same ones that he once shared. He then talked about how the years were numbered in our calendar and told him that there are scientists who also believe that God exists. Following this question and answer format, he invited Mr. Wang to attend a church fellowship that evening. He hopes that he can continue to deepen this relationship and share the complete message of the gospel with Mr. Wang in the future.

I learned a great deal during this year's Winter Local Mission. I have always recognized the difficulty in sharing the gospel with people of different ages, genders, and educational levels. During one of the classes on short-term strategies in relationship evangelism, I learned to find common ground with the other person using a smile and a gentle voice. I need to remind myself that we are vessels of God, and sometimes we will inevitably encounter someone who refuses to accept Jesus. We should be vigilant at all times and keep praying for God, who is almighty, to be involved. What was

particularly useful was something that Minister Wong taught us: we should pay attention to the walls that nonbelievers build around their hearts and to their emotions, telling them that while our knowledge about them and love for them might be limited, the love of Jesus whom we know is limitless. Therefore, we should encourage them to put their trust in Him.

Steven Choi (Chinatown Cantonese 2nd Service)

This year's Winter Local Mission was held on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, and I signed up to participate. It is not possible for me to take Friday off, because I work in the retail and shipping industry. Christmas is an especially busy time of the year, but Saturdays and Sundays are my usual days off. There were wonderful activities scheduled for Friday, but since I was absent, what I knew was limited, but I heard from other brothers and sisters that they learned a lot.

On Saturday, I went to the Chinese Christian Church of Grace in Malden, which is not the church that I regularly attend. It was a new experience, and it was a joy serving God with brothers and sisters from other churches. In the morning, there was time for singspiration, devotion, and training, including a class on restaurant evangelism to share the gospel with restaurant workers. At noontime, we visited different restaurants to practice what we had learned. In the afternoon, we had song practice before our Christmas caroling at Copley Square, which was my favorite activity because I got to sing beautiful songs to praise God in a loud voice and proclaim the Great News of Jesus' birth.

On Sunday, participants went to our own churches for worship in the morning. After gathering at the Episcopal Quincy Chinese Center at 2 p.m. in the afternoon for more song practice, we visited South Shore Plaza for another happy period of Christmas caroling. During our singing, there were many people who took a break from their shopping to listen to us. Some even took photos and videos of us, and several of them encouraged us by giving us a round of applause.

This year's Winter Local Mission took away the coldness and brought warmth to bodies and our hearts, so you must check it out in the future!

*Panama Short-Term Missions:***Witnessing God's Faithfulness**

by PANAMA SHORT-TERM MISSIONS TEAM

The Panama Short-Term Missions (STM) trip may seem ordinary when comparing with other STM trips. Panama is not an exotic place. The people there are not the unreachable group. Panama is only six-hour flight from Boston and is in the same time zone. There is no need for money exchange, and an interpreter is not always needed. However, every time we go to Panama, we see God doing wonderful and exciting work through the STM team in Panama.

During our trip from January 1-13, 2020, we have seen multiple changes to the people in the Changuinola (banana farm) area, as well as the STM team members. First, we met the Chinese families again who work in convenient stores among the banana farms. They have become Christians and are regular members of the Iglesia Alianza de Changuinola (Chinese church). We can see the harvest of the Lord's work on these people over the years of STM trips. We also met their children again in the Vacation Bible School (VBS).

They have grown and matured physically and spiritually.

In addition, we have been wishing to build connections with the local Spanish churches for years. Since Changuinola (the Banana Farm area) is far away from Panama City, which is about 12 hours driving, it is impossible for the Chinese churches to follow up with the new converts in Changuinola. This year we have discovered that a local church has been praying for outreaching the children of the banana farms. This discovery was particularly encouraging to everyone. The local Iglesia Cuadrangular leaders visited our VBS and gave a short message to the parents during the closing ceremony. We plan to have further collaboration with them in the coming years.

Furthermore, the average age of the STM team members from the Chinese churches of Panama has become younger. Felix is only 10. He join 13-year-old brother William to serve as teacher assistants. They have been serving with passion, but as most of the young STM members, their Chinese language skill is not as strong. It seems the need for Chinese VBS teachers will shift to our Boston STM team in the future.

Moreover, we have noticed the Jehovah's Witnesses and the Muslims are growing in Panama. At this moment, these may not be the target groups of our Panama STM. On the other hand, if we

do not outreach to those who are practicing other world religions, or still searching for the meaning of life, they may follow the wrong religion soon.

The Panama STM trip may not be as challenging as other STM trips, but it is suitable for those who have never been on a STM trip. If you consider the Boston Local Mission is Lesson 101, then Panama STM is Lesson 102. We encourage you to experience God's wonderful work either in the January banana farm Chinese VBS or in the June English Gospel Camp.



1) One of the teacher assistants, 13-year-old William, with a child in VBS 2) Visiting a local Spanish church called "Iglesia Cuadrangular" 3) Chinese VBS 4) Members of the Iglesia Cuadrangular performing at our closing ceremony 5) One of the teacher assistants, who used to be a VBS participant, serving with us this year

Seeking the Welfare of the Immigrants of Quincy



by ROCKEY CHAN,
CHINATOWN ENGLISH

As a Chinese American Christian, I have always lived in Quincy except for my time in college. As a child, my family was one of the few Chinese families living in Quincy. Local businesses and services reflected the larger blue collar Irish and Italian Catholic families at that time. Community services and resources for Asians existed mainly in Boston's Chinatown. There were very few people with similar cultural experiences to share and guide us through the process of understanding the challenges of being a first-generation immigrant. *There were also very few churches in Quincy outreaching to the Asian immigrant community.* But now, Quincy's estimated Asian population is around 35%. Since the early 2000s, Quincy is experiencing a large growth of Mandarin-speaking immigrants settling down and starting families. The Patriot Ledger Newspaper dubbed Quincy like a "Chinatown South"¹ with all its restaurants, salons, markets, and community services for the Asian immigrant population like Quincy Asian Resources, Inc. I am thankful God called me to plant my roots in Quincy, but my heart breaks for the Asian immigrants of Quincy. I would like to share with you what God is teaching me about the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of the immigrant community.

A common situation are parents become sepa-

rated from their children while immigrating to Quincy. Many immigrant parents must leave their children in their native countries for various reasons. When they are reunited, their children may not readily accept them as parents or develop attachment disorders. The parents are suddenly parents again and could have difficulties with parenting. Many immigrant parents need to work 50 to 60 hours a week. They missed out on their children's critical developmental milestones. It is also hard raising bicultural children when their parents are holding tightly to their native culture. There are some youth in my programs where school counselors and my staff are concerned about their social and academic progress because of these circumstances at home. I am concerned they will fall into the at-risk category in a few years. I am praying and thinking about how local churches and non-profits can support immigrant parents, so they can flourish in Quincy.

Another situation I am seeing with the American-born and immigrant Chinese youth is where they are putting their hope in for their future. Some youth hope to achieve their dreams, while some lost their hope for a better life than their parents. I have met American-born Asians who are striving to reach the Asian American dream of going to a prestigious college, working in one of the five stereotypical Asian approved industries, earning a six-figure salary and a comfortable life. They are high achievers, ambitious, self-reliant, with a GPA well over 4.0. Their hope is on improving themselves without realizing their physical, emotional, and spiritual limitations. Their hope is on controlling their outcomes and goals not on a God who is in control over creation. On the op-

posite end, there are youth who because of situations they cannot control have lost hope for a better career path or life goal. One recent immigrant youth lost hope for his future career because he is struggling with learning English and academics. He just wants to work in a restaurant for the rest of his life not because he lost hope for something better. My coordinator and I are trying to restore hope in his future, and there are ways to restore his hope in earning a college degree and pursuing a career he desires. However, my position at QARI cannot fully restore his hope because I cannot directly share the gospel with him at work. I am limited in this capacity.

God has shown me the necessity of partnerships between the local churches and non-profit organizations in order to holistically meet the needs and provide resources, so immigrant families can thrive in their new community. I need the local churches to partner with me to walk alongside the immigrant community in Quincy to help them with their immediate social service needs. More importantly, I am praying that there will be local churches who can walk alongside the immigrant families to offer the hope of Christ through that relationship. They do not need to struggle like how my family did in the 1970s because there are more social service organizations and churches. The issue is many immigrant families do not know about them. We will need to go out to them to offer those services and most importantly the hope of Christ to them. Amen.

¹ Ronan, "Growing Asian Population Changing Quincy's Present, Future."



Winter Local Mission (12/13-12/15): 34 brothers and sisters from seven Chinese churches, including four friends from New York, shared the gospel through elderly home visits, an evangelistic meeting, Christmas caroling in shopping malls.

Worshiping in Unity



by BEN WONG,
CHINATOWN CANTONESE 3RD
SERVICE

Chinese leadership meeting is a time when Chinese-speaking leaders from the church's ministries come together with the mutual goal of enriching the church's purpose in worshiping God, edifying believers, and sharing the Good News that Jesus Christ is the Lord and Savior in the contextualization of the overseas Chinese culture in the Greater Boston area.

This first Chinese leadership meeting for 2020 had the following highlights: preview of ministry events (Chinese Retreat and Marriage Enrichment Retreat), update on Senior Pastor search, small group Bible study, a deliciously cooked meal with love, and an open forum on the important topic of the future Cantonese worship format in Chinatown.

Bible study in general with my own experience thus far usually involves dedicated preparation in studying the scripture in advance, planning for a location and time, and arranging for attendance of

group members, not to mention the refreshments. However, the small group Bible study session in the Chinese leadership meeting refreshes my motivation for studying God's Word together by making Bible study seem so simple and natural to organize and lead. In other words, when we come together to respect the Word of God and seek its truth in humility and obedience, we can definitely put down our worries on the program flow and enjoy whole-heartedly the dish of "spiritual food." The small group format was facilitated by an arbitrary group assignment, which allows new faces to sit together and discuss the stimulating topics. The scriptural passages were given to us (Acts 15:1-18; 36-41), along with a list of questions, which led us into deep thoughts and reflections. The brothers and sisters in my small group shared our insights, allowing us to see how the Holy Spirit guided the early Christians through complex church matters such as how the church issue was resolved and that the Gentile believers were integrated with the believers with a Jewish background. At the same time, this Bible study experience inspires me and hopefully others to look for more opportunities to begin relaxed but yet meaningful bible studies with other people.

After the wonderful lunch prepared by our beloved sisters, we had a discussion session where we talked about the future Chinatown Cantonese worship service format after the 249 Harrison Ave. building is turned over to the city of Boston. About 50 ministry leaders got together to represent the Cantonese Second and Third worship services. The forum atmosphere nurtured an open sharing without critique. We were able to share on the topics including what it is like to have a worship service with more than 400 people across different ages at the Lincoln school building, Josiah Quincy Elementary School, or 120 Shawmut Ave. building with a combination of traditional hymns and contemporary music to praise the Heavenly Father. Among those present, I sensed a steady and strong perception that our worship stands on a solid foundation to support our Christian way of life, and that we choose freely to come together to worship the one and only true God as one body with our whole heart and person. On this last note, as is the focus of this discussion session, let's do our part in praying together and working together to create a worship environment at the Chinatown Boston campus that is both stable and lively. We trust that God will carry out His perfect will, enabling the growth of the body of believers through time.



Joshua 2 Fellowship (College): Mini Camp (1/31-2/2)



English Young Adult Retreat (9/20-9/22)



Advent Concert (12/7)



Christmas caroling at South Cove Manor (12/21)



Pastor Steve's retirement celebration and appreciation



2019 Annual Meeting (10/27)



Saul Lee's commissioning ceremony (11/17)



Chinese New Year celebrations at various Chinatown Mandarin fellowships



Newton Cantonese Chinese New Year celebration (1/26)

UPCOMING EVENTS

MARCH

- 1 CHINESE SUNDAY SCHOOL
SPRING SESSION BEGINS
- 8 DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME BEGINS
ONE HOUR AHEAD
- 13-15 COLLEGE RETREAT
ENGLISH
- 21 24 HOURS
NEWTON ENGLISH
- 27-29 SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY
CONFERENCE

APRIL

- 10 GOOD FRIDAY SERVICE
- 12 EASTER SUNDAY
- 12 BAPTISM
- 20-24 PDAS BREAK

MAY

- 7 NATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER
- 10 MOTHER'S DAY
- 17 CARING SUNDAY
CHINESE
- 22-25 TIOB YOUTH RETREAT
NEWTON ENGLISH
- 25 MEMORIAL DAY
OFFICE CLOSED

JUNE

- 5 LAST DAY OF PDAS
ENGLISH
- 7 CHINESE SUNDAY SCHOOL
SUMMER SESSION BEGINS
- 7 PDAS FAMILY NIGHT
ENGLISH
- 7 NEWSONG & ENSEMBLE
END-OF-THE-YEAR CONCERT
- 14 59TH CHURCH ANNIVERSARY



Christmas Eve Services (12/24): 1-2) Chinatown English 3-5) Chinatown Mandarin



BCEC Connections is a quarterly publication of Boston Chinese Evangelical Church. We would love to hear from you!

If you would like to help with this publication (writing, translation, or editing), please contact Helena Fong at helena.fong@bcec.net.

Do you have a story you think would be a blessing to other BCEC members? Do you have a great photo of a recent church or ministry event you'd like to share? Please send your submissions, questions, or comments to helena.fong@bcec.net. We reserve the right to edit the submissions, as we deem appropriate without notice.

Visit us on the web at www.bcec.net

Managing Editor
Helena Fong

English Editor Joshua Chin **Printing** Patrick Yeung

Chinese Editor Kelvin Li **Translation Staff** Jay Leung
See Yee Morante
John Wong
Angela Yuen

Layout Designer Charlotte Lai

The printing cost of this newsletter is partially donated by XPress Repographics, Inc.



6-12) Baptism (12/15)