

Chinese Bible Church of Greater Lowell (CBCGL) English Congregation Community Newsletter

SUMMER/FALL 2010

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A Message from Pastor MacDonald

Merry Christmas and have a Blessed New Year. 2011 is just around the corner and it promises to be an exciting year of positive changes for our English Congregation and for CBCGL as a whole. As we seek to transform lives and communities – the CBCGL vision – we expect, first, to be transformed by God. Then we can become agents of transformation used by God to transform lives and communities.

As channels of God's grace we need His grace to renew us, reform us and cleanse us. We all need attitude adjustments and God's strength to give up our comfort zones and do things we would not normally do. As a church, we need to be transformed from being a holy huddle to being mission's frontiersmen. We need to leave our strength and sufficiency behind and submit to receive Christ's strength and His sufficiency. By God's grace, through prayer and the teaching of His Word and calls to obedient action, God will change us and direct us. This will be dynamic to see. I am excited as I anticipate how God will work in our congregation and in our church to transform us into agents of transformation so that we might become a missional church. Then we will begin to see how God uses us to transform lives and communities. Now that will be something to participate in!

May the Lord, the Father of our Lord, Jesus Christ, give you His grace and be gracious to transform you and us.

In the Lord,
Pastor MacDonald

Pray for English Congregation's 2011 Leaders

Tom Wong – English Congregation deacon
Gloria Hum – Youth ministry deacon
William Fung – Church wide Missions deacon
Bob Lin – Elder
Nathan Willems – Youth Minister
Steven MacDonald – Pastor of the English Congregation



Called to Serve as a Deacon by William Fung

"And Joshua said unto all the people [of Israel], ... choose you this day whom ye will serve; . . . but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord" - Josh. 24:2, 15

Joshua was around one hundred and ten years of age when he summoned Israel for the last time during his judgeship. Joshua called the people together at Shechem so that they could renew their covenant with the Lord. This is something God required his people to do periodically.

About 1.5 years ago, I left CBCGL English Congregation Youth ministry for a sabbatical leave in search of a new direction to serve our Lord. As I got older, I felt that I no longer had the energy or wisdom to serve our young and energetic youth group as a counselor. They move and think much too fast for me. It was hard for me to keep up with them both in Bible quizzes or games. So I asked the Lord to give me a new direction and he did answer; however, I lacked the confidence to respond to the Lord's calling. Although I did not go anywhere to do special study, I learned a lot about serving God throughout the year with the help of my dear friends, doing Bible study with Dan Murphy and having lunch meetings with Bob Lin.

Serving the Lord as a deacon on a church board is not new to me. I had served Him twice before in two different churches at different stages of my life. Being young in physical and spiritual age, in both cases, I served Him out of boldness and an "I know how" attitude. This time it is different. I fully understand that I was chosen to serve Him as a deacon not because of my "talent" or my "skill set", but to address my weakness – lack of faith. I got the calling 3 years ago, but kept refusing and stating it was not the right time. I told God that I had to secure my professional fulltime job first and that I needed signs to confirm that this was what he wanted me to do. Most importantly, I did not want to be under scrutiny. As he was with Jonah, who got God's calling to go to Nineveh, but fled to Tarshish, God was very patient with me. His ways are higher than mine. He showed me I could not secure my own job, but that it is He who provides.

In Matthew 6:33 Jesus states, *"But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."*

One of the hardest things a Christian has to learn to do is to rely on God's ability and not our own strength. May I share with you the following: Joshua 1:9 *"Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Don't be terrified; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go."* May we all learn from Joshua as we serve our Lord.

God on the Move via Global Link, by Dan Murphy

A number of people from CBCGL had the opportunity to participate in the Lausanne Congress, Cape Town, 2010, conference by video that was distributed around the world via the Internet. The Lausanne Movement is a global network of evangelical Christians who share a vision to respond to God's call for "the whole church to take the whole Gospel to the whole world." This Cape Town, South Africa event gathered 5000 evangelical church leaders from around the world, representing over 100 countries, for one week (10/17/10-10/24/10) to discuss six core issues facing world evangelization today.

Truth: Making the case for the truth of Christ in a pluralistic, globalized world.

Reconciliation: Building the peace of Christ in our divided and broken world.

World Faiths: Bearing witness to the love of Christ to people of other faiths

Priorities: Discerning the will of God for 21st century evangelization

Integrity: Calling the church of Christ back to humility, integrity, and simplicity

Partnership: Partnering in the body of Christ toward a new global equilibrium.

Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary in South Hamilton, Massachusetts, hosted this area's Global Link event on Friday, 10/22 and Saturday, 10/23. The format consisted of times of corporate worship and plenary sessions during which video of a number of Lausanne speakers were shown, followed by both large group feedback and small group discussion times. On Friday evening, a special session called "God on the Move" showed videos celebrating how God is moving in many parts of the world today. From the English Congregation, Pastor MacDonald, Bob Lin, Dan Murphy and Sharon Yen Murphy, Ting Che and Angie Tso, Alex Chung, and William Fung participated.

Several things made a lasting impression on me: First the Lausanne Congress was focusing on the fact that there are still upwards of 500 unreached people groups around the world that have no known churches and even more that do not have the entire Bible translated into their own language. We must be willing to listen and respond to the call for more effort and cooperation at reaching those who have never heard the Gospel before.

Second, Christians need to be agents of reconciliation in the world. We must demonstrate love and healing from the scourges of poverty, war, ethnic violence, racial discrimination, slavery, and exploitation. Some examples of how this is being done today are the way that God is working through Christians in Rwanda to heal their wounds of racial division after the genocide that took place 10 years ago and how God is working to heal the mistrust between Palestinian and Israeli Christians.

Third, God is working through believers in India to reach the Dalit (untouchable) people by providing them with material aid, schools, and sharing the Gospel with them, in spite of fierce opposition from Hindu extremists.

All of these efforts are the work of the body of Christ worldwide that is attempting to share the Gospel throughout the world. We are a part of that body of believers and our vision of the church worldwide needs to include believers of all tribes, languages, ethnic groups, and nations.

Videos from Cape Town are available at <http://www.lausanne.org/cape-town-2010>

Campus Crusade Summer Project Mission trip to Wildwood NJ, by Salina Hum

This summer I went to Wildwood, New Jersey with Campus Crusade for Christ on a summer mission project. I applied for the project because throughout my sophomore year, God had really spoken to me about my lack of non-Christian friends and my fear of talking to other people about religion. Being stuck in a Christian bubble is nice and comfortable, but ultimately unrewarding and stagnant. After a lot my church friends that are part of Campus Crusade had gone on their spring break missions trip to Florida, they all kept encouraging me to sign up for summer project. Since I hadn't gotten any internship, I thought why not, especially when three of my friends and the Campus Crusade staff at UMass were all going too.

I applied really late without asking my parents, so of course they didn't want me to go, especially since it cost a lot of money. At first I wasn't too worried – God would provide, right? But as time passed and the responses to my support letters dwindled, I stressed out a LOT. My bank account kept dropping and dropping, and even though I had a job at CVS there, I didn't get many hours and making weekly payments for being on the project was expensive because I didn't even have half my support raised. But! In the end God did provide, and I finally paid off everything during the last and final week of project, which taught me so much about trusting in Him.

Living in Wildwood was so different than growing up in Acton, MA. In Wildwood, a Taco Bell closed down because the owner was convicted of money laundering, and my coworkers got arrested because they faked robberies and got caught! Every day at work I'd see people treating their kids horribly and kids treating their parents horribly, and it was rare to see a family get along. Education isn't really emphasized in Wildwood, which was one of the biggest differences between my life growing up and kids' lives there.

I learned a lot about families through the other people on project as well – even though we are all Christians, sometimes it's so easy to forget that everyone is broken and scarred in some way. I met people from divorced families, people whose parents weren't Christians and who weren't supporting them on the mission at all, not through money or even love. I worked with a girl who had seen her mom commit suicide and I lived with a girl with an abusive father. I really grew to appreciate my parents and my siblings, how much they love me and provide for me.

Summer project really changed my perspective on evangelism and talking about religion. Seeing strangers talking about their own beliefs without hesitation or judgment made me realize that evangelism is all about listening and truly getting to know someone, even if it's just for the next ten or fifteen minutes. The trip has really encouraged me to be more active with Campus Crusade during the school year and to talk more to people in my classes and dorm.

The community I lived with at project was so amazing, although 43 other college students in one house was tough at times, everyone was so focused on growing closer to God and building each other up – definitely evidenced by the fact that 14 girls shared one bathroom the entire summer without any problems! Through all these other students on project, I learned what it meant to live for the Lord and what godly men and women truly looked like. Even though summer project was the hardest experience of my life, it was incredibly life-changing and through it I've been blessed in so many ways and learned so much about how God works in my life. Thank you so much for your prayer and support that made this trip possible! If you are interested in doing a Campus Crusade Summer Project, here is link for more information:

<http://gosummerproject.com/>

HomebuildersToo! Building Households of Faith by Kathy Lin

Fall Apple Picking Outing at Parlee Farms



Christmas Caroling in Westford



As **HomebuildersToo!** comes together to build households of faith, the Lord has given the fellowship opportunities to be in His word, to be ministered to, to minister to others and be in fellowship with one another.

HBToo! has been studying marriage with a biblical viewpoint. Through various book studies, we've had opportunities to study God's word regarding the marriage relationship and encourage each other with lively discussions. We finished building this foundation by reading "Love & Respect" by Dr. Emerson Eggerichs. Parenting discussions naturally fell right into place. To guide the group with a biblical perspective on this, we have begun a new book study of "Shepherding A Child's Heart" by Ted Tripp. To bridge the subjects of marriage and parenting, guest speakers Lee and Miltinnie Yih, a godly couple who have been married over 30 years and have raised 3 children, ministered to our group. They shared how God worked through their years of marriage and helped them raise the very different children that the Lord entrusted them with.

Being ministered to by others has been a blessing but ministering to each other through prayer has also been a blessing. As each family lifts each other in prayer throughout the weeks, the hope is to allow God to work and see His faithfulness in them. To minister to others, HBToo! participated in Operation Christmas Child. It was great to see the kids along with the moms and dads wrapping and filling each shoebox. The most special was to hear the prayers of the children for each box to be given!

Another highlight of HBToo! was the fellowship we had with one another while apple picking at Parlee Farms in October, Christmas Caroling at the Lin's neighborhood in December and during our ever popular themed potluck dinners. Through these times of fellowships, HBToo! has welcomed new families. As the fellowship grows, so do the individual families. We're looking forward to welcoming precious little ones in 2011!

We are so thankful for the blessings that God has bestowed upon this fellowship through the years! To be in encouraged in His word, be ministered to, to minister and be in fellowship – what a blessing!

Gift Baskets Fundraising for St. Paul's Kitchen by Patricia Fung

Kindred Hearts Women's Fellowship putting together the gift baskets



Early in the Fall this year, a Bible study group at a church in Lexington heard about our food drive, the "Shelf of Hope". They were seeking opportunities to help the needy and low income families in the area so they'd like to give to the Shelf of Hope. Instead of donating canned goods and staples, they donated money to us. With this money, we were able to purchase ten Market Basket & Wal-mart gift cards, Thanksgiving canned goods and fixings, oven mittens and pot holders, and materials to make ten gift baskets. With what we purchased, along with some of the non-perishables collected from our congregations for the Shelf of Hope, the Kindred Hearts Women's Fellowship came together to prepare the gift baskets. Six of the baskets were later donated to St. Paul Church in Lowell. The baskets were raffled off at their Thanksgiving fundraising dinner. All proceeds of the dinner would be used toward the soup kitchen sponsored by the church. St. Paul's soup kitchen feeds about 200 low income families weekly in the greater Lowell area. It's the only soup kitchen in the area that feeds children as well as adults; all other soup kitchens only feed adults. The remaining four gift baskets were given to families within the CBCGL communities who could use a little good news during this season of giving.

Our Shelf of Hope is a year-round collection center for canned food, dry products, coffee and tea, drink mix, and paper products. We practically take anything that's non-perishable. However, we do not take clothing or shoes, baby items, household items or appliances, furniture, and electronics. Three times a year we deliver the donated food to local food banks such as the Merrimack Valley Food Bank, St. Paul's Soup Kitchen, Neighbors-In-Need, and the Lowell Food Pantry. Because the recipients of the food we collected are non-Asian, we prefer not to collect Asian products.

Advent is a Season of Hope by Sharon Yen

This newsletter is being prepared during the season of Advent, which is composed of the 4 Sundays before Christmas. Each of these Sundays is associated with a specific emotion related to Christ's coming - Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love. Advent should not be thought of only as a remembrance of Christ's humble birth in Bethlehem, but it should also be a reminder that Christ is with us in Spirit today, and He will come again in the future, after the Gospel goes forth to all nations.

Two years ago at this time, the nation was teetering on the edge of economic collapse and we still feel the fallout from that time. Many in our church and in our communities are still unemployed or under-employed. So in this time of hopeful, joyous celebration, let us remember our brothers, sisters, and friends who are hurting. Let us keep them in our prayers, encourage them with our words, and minister to them with our deeds in any way that God leads us. Our Savior expects nothing less from us.

Christmas Gathering of the English Ministry by Bob Lin

We want to thank the Lord for a wonderful Christmas Gathering of the English Ministry Adult Fellowships on Dec. 4th. The Lord provided everything we needed ... an intimate evening with great food and fellowship to celebrate the birth of our Lord Jesus. The ambiance of the evening was warm and inviting thanks to William and Irene Fung, Josh Feng, and Eric Hsu who came early to set up the fellowship hall. Thanks to Jonathan Pan for mixing us so that we got to know our brothers and sisters in other fellowship groups while enjoying a meal together. Finally, thanks to Joshua Lin for leading the singing as we are reminded through the songs the true meaning of Christmas. The Lord also blessed us with visitors, Alan and Sue, Tom Wong's parents, and Dave Gebo's brother-in-law, Carl. What a joyous evening ... but the greatest was to remember the wonderful hope that we have in our Savior as the Christmas story was read by Carol Tran and Josh Feng. May we always remember the reason for the Christmas season and the joy that we share in our Lord Jesus.

Upcoming Events	Christmas Eve Service	Dec 24, 2010
	Christmas Worship Service	Dec 26, 2010
	New Year's Eve Service	Dec 31, 2010
	Children Ministry Puppet Show	Jan 15, 2011
	High School Winter-Teen Conf	Feb 18 – 21, 2011
	Middle School Winter Teen Conf	Feb 25 – 27, 2011
	30-Hour Famine	March 18 – 19, 2011
	57 th Baptism Ceremony	March 20, 2011
	Good News Celebration	Apr 17, 2011
	Easter Worship Service	Apr 24, 2011

Weekly Activities	Sunday Worship	Sunday, 10:00-11:20am
	Sunday School (Adults and Youth)	Sunday, 11:30am-12:30pm
	Children's Sunday School & Worship	Sunday, 10:00am-12:30pm Bldg B
	Young Adult Fellowship	Wed, 8:00pm
	Adult Prayer Meeting	Wed, 7:45-9:15pm Rm A218
	Youth Prayer Meeting	Wed., 7:45-9pm, Youth Min. Office
	Friday night Youth (LYF) activities	Friday, 7:45-9:30pm, Rm A215
	AWANA children's program	Friday, 7:45-9:30pm, Bldg B, flr2