

**John 4:13-14**

**13 Jesus answered, "Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again,**

**14 but whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life."**

## Editor's Note:

To keep up with the times, the Chinese Christian Church of Greater Washington, DC (CCCGW) is transitioning its Living Spring Journal to a brand new digital format, beginning with the June 20, 2024 issue. Through this modernized medium we aim to share stories of church life and faith in hopes of strengthening our relationships with each other and our cohesion as a church. The Journal is also our bridge for communicating with others beyond our church.

The digital Journal builds on a long history at CCCGW. To this day, our church library still holds some early issues, including several from the 1970s. In those early days when computers were not yet widely available, the publication was carefully crafted under spartan conditions, with each cover hand-drawn, the content in Chinese hand-written, and the content in English typed out on manual typewriters. The Journal shared insights into faith, spiritual growth, church life, and personal testimonies, all of which were highly treasured by our church community. The 1980s saw the formal introduction of the Living Spring Journal; its long record of the real-life experiences of brothers and sisters in the church—their struggles, victories, and spiritual growth—has left us a rich legacy of testimony to God's grace, power, and glory in the lives of His people.



In the new digital format, the Journal will continue to uphold the principle of glorifying God and benefiting its readers. It aspires not only to share information but also to enhance communication among church members and with others farther afield. The

Journal will include content in both Chinese and English and highlight recent activities and events at CCCGW, announcements of major upcoming events, and new ministries or initiatives. It will also feature testimonies from members of our congregation on their spiritual walk with the Lord and their personal growth in faith. We also hope to showcase faith-related artwork, particularly by our children and youth, and to recommend good books. With permission from the artists, we plan to feature the artwork on our church website. We long to see more of our church members take advantage of this channel to share their stories for mutual encouragement, so that we can savor together the abundant grace and love of God in our lives.

The Journal will be published quarterly, perhaps more often if more brothers and sisters sign up for this ministry by joining the website and editorial teams. We will continue to optimize and update this electronic Journal to meet your needs and expectations. Please send us your feedback and suggestions, and do continue to follow us so that together we can witness the growth of this Journal, and rejoice at its progress. We hope this publication will inspire you, warm your heart, and lead us all to praise God for His goodness.

May the grace of the Lord be with you,

The Church Journal Editorial Team

## **The Deacons' Ordination Ceremony and Congregational Meeting**

2024 was another year blessed and preserved by God. On the first Sunday of the year, January 7th, CCCGW held its annual Ordination Ceremony for the new deacons. The new board of deacons includes Brother Stephen Lee as Chairman, Brother Xingfu Chen from the Treasurer's Department, Sister Ada O'Donnell from the Training Department, Brother Shao Chi Yang from the Maintenance Department, Brother Wang Yinong from the Service Department, Sister Xumei Ren from the Usher Department, and Sister Lin Xie from the Caring Department. The re-elected deacons include Vice Chair Brother Tony Woo, Sister Qiaoya Lin as the Secretary of the OB Department, Sister Sharon Tam from the Education Department, Sister Yin Yin from the Evangelism Department, and Sister Zhenzhen Xiong from the Mission Department. We thank God for granting the church these dedicated and faithful servants, and we pray that His will be perfected in them.



On the same day, the church also held its annual Congregational Meeting, during which the pastors and ministers reported on the activities of the Chinese and English

departments as well as the youth ministry. They mentioned the preparation and launch of the fifth round of the Happiness Group Ministry, pastoral care initiatives, Sunday school program arrangements, and discipleship training, among other things. The elders, deacons, and department heads also gave reports on their respective ministries and confirmed the church's budget for 2024.

## **Chinese New Year Celebration**

The church's annual Lunar New Year celebration took place on February 24th (Saturday afternoon) at the church. The event was brimming with diverse activities, including dumpling making, New Year worship, a dumpling feast, and various games. From the inception of promotional materials and website announcements to the preparation of dough, dumpling fillings, and various dishes, venue decoration, children's activities, and kitchen cleanup, the entire event was a collaborative effort of all the church fellowships. Particularly noteworthy was the game segment, organized by Brother Marshall Li, one of the most senior members of the church. The riddle guessing segment, in which he prepared riddles in both Chinese and English covering biblical figures, place names, and common idioms, was highly popular and fostered lively interactions among attendees. Additionally, he showcased a collection of stamps from different countries, including a series of stamps celebrating the Year of the Dragon, as well as his stamp collection, adding a fascinating dimension to the event.







Thanks to God, this year's Chinese New Year Celebration was a tremendous success, with approximately 130 participants—a significantly higher turnout than in previous years. Some new friends learned about the event through online news, while others happened to join after seeing the large crowd and parked cars outside. The majority, however, came upon an invitation from friends. The cooperation between the English and Chinese departments was highly efficient and deserving of commendation! The Evangelism Department further discussed how to follow up with these newcomers, such as sending follow-up emails and inviting them to join the Happiness Group Ministry, and proposed improvement methods to attract more participation. It is hoped that through such events, more people who have not yet heard the gospel will be drawn, and relationships will be established with them, allowing them to encounter the gospel and get to know God.



**Good Friday Combined Worship Service/ Easter Sunday Combined Worship Service**

On the evening of March 29th at 8 o'clock, the church held a Good Friday Combined Worship Service, where scriptures were read and hymns were sung to remember the suffering and sacrificial love of our Lord Jesus. Easter Sunday featured a combined Chinese and English worship service, celebrating the resurrection of Jesus. Both services were broadcast online. We thank God that seven brothers and sisters were baptized on Easter, bearing witness to the Lord, including Sister Rongjia Zhang, Brother Xinyuan Huang, Sister Christine Zhu, Sister Lori Zhang, Brian Martin, Brother Yigang Zhang, and Sister Sophie Zhang. Additionally, Brother Samuel S. Lee transferred his membership to our church. Congratulations and blessings to them! May the grace of the Lord abound, and we warmly welcome them to join the family of Jesus Christ!





## Spring Walk

In April, with spring blossoms in full bloom and pleasant weather, it was the perfect time for outdoor activities. On Saturday, April 20th at 9:30 am, the church organized a group spring walk to Sligo Creek Park in Takoma Park, just half a mile from our church. The event attracted the enthusiastic participation of more than seventy brothers and sisters. Sligo Creek Park, situated alongside Sligo Creek Avenue, boasts beautiful scenery with lush greenery surrounding the creek, adorned with picturesque bridges.

Brother Stephen Lee, the chairman of the Official Board, stayed back at the church to prepare a sumptuous breakfast with a blend of Chinese and Western cuisines for everyone to enjoy upon their return from the outing. Many brothers and sisters expressed that this event was not only a physical and mental exercise but also provided a precious opportunity for fellowship among the members of the church body. Additionally, it offered a chance to interact with seekers, allowing everyone to deeply experience the profound love within the family of believers. Praise the Lord!





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After the spring outing, several children from the church set up a lemonade stand in front of the education building, offering homemade iced lemonade to welcome the returning brothers and sisters. Next to the stand, the children placed a whiteboard that read, "Fundraising for repairing the church playground. Lemonade: \$1 per cup."

The playground, located next to 609, was once a place filled with children's laughter and joy. However, as time passed, the equipment gradually deteriorated, and some parts became unsafe to use. The children noticed this, took it to heart, and decided to take action to raise funds for repairs, ensuring the playground could continue to bring joy to more children.

The congregation was deeply moved by the children's initiative and came forward to support them. Some, who didn't have cash at the moment, later contributed even more; others generously paid for ten or even twenty cups at a time, creating an atmosphere filled with love and harmony. The children, excited and enthusiastic, worked together to

pour lemonade, collect money, and slice lemons. They were busily engaged, their faces glowing with pure and sweet satisfaction.

We thank God and bless these children, praying they grow happily within the church, learning to love God and others from an early age, and becoming the devout descendants who will carry on the faith.



## Picnic and Outing at Black Hill Regional Park

As the bright and colorful summer days approach, CCCGW held its annual summer picnic and outing at Black Hill Regional Park on Saturday, June 8th. The event attracted about 250 brothers, sisters, and seekers, making the gathering an event of excitement and grandeur. Spanning over 2,000 acres, Black Hill Regional Park is renowned for its dense forests, tranquil trails, and stunning lake views, providing an ideal spot for outdoor activities.



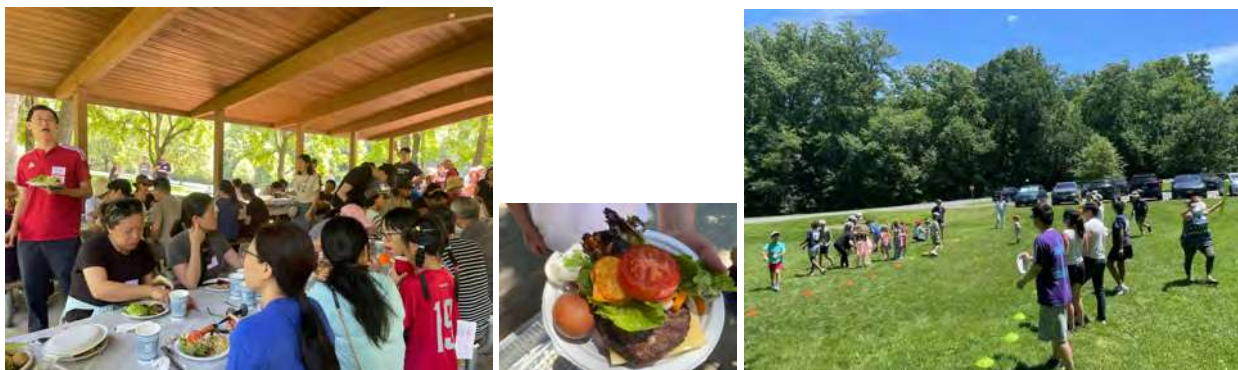




The day's events were rich in content and filled with joy and warmth. From preparing food and setting up the picnic to barbecue grilling by brothers and the final cleanup, all church members from each fellowship group worked together in unity. The event began with everyone singing the hymn "How Great Thou Art." As the participants sang, "O Lord my God, when I in awesome wonder, consider all the works Thy hand hath made...", they reflected on God's boundless power and love, manifested through creation and redemption, harmonizing perfectly with the natural beauty around them. This led everyone to exclaim, "God, how great You are!"



Following the grace before the meal, led by Pastor Zhao Yu, everyone enjoyed a sumptuous lunch, including burgers, hot dogs, grilled chicken wings, salad with mixed veggies, cold noodles, five-spice Chinese tea eggs, and watermelon. The event also featured a carefully arranged raffle and various games, adding much fun. The free activity session was equally delightful, with some people strolling along forest trails, others admiring the lakeside scenery, or boating on the lake, fully enjoying the beauty of God's creation.



This picnic not only allowed everyone to relax and unwind but also strengthened the emotional bonds within the church community. While enjoying the food and natural beauty, everyone felt God's grace and love. Seekers also gained a deeper understanding and appreciation of the beauty of a life of faith. All members from



different fellowship groups actively participated in the event, helping and caring for one another, embodying the words of Psalm 133:1: "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" This is what pleases God and what our souls long for. Additionally, we hope that friends who have not yet come to faith can genuinely feel God's love in this warm and loving atmosphere and be willing to take further steps to know Him better.



### Recruitment for "Living Spring" Digital Journal: Seeking Editorial, Artistic, and Translation Team Members

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

The CCCGW Newsletter "Living Spring" Spring Issue has officially launched on our church website as of June 20, 2024. To enrich the content of our journal and fulfill our mission of glorifying God and benefiting others, we are seeking active participation from more team members.

Currently, we are looking for individuals who are passionate about writing, dedicated to serving the Lord, and interested in joining our editorial, artistic, and translation teams:

1-2 Text Editors: Responsible for selecting, editing, and proofreading articles. Basic writing and editing skills are required, with a good grasp of language. Relevant experience in writing and editing is preferred.

1-2 Art Editors: Responsible for layout design, formatting the journal, and event photography. Basic graphic design skills, familiarity with design software, and photography skills are required. Experience in design and a passion for photography are preferred.

1-2 Translators: Proficient in both Chinese and English, capable of accurate and fluent translation of texts. Excellent language skills and literary proficiency, with the ability to accurately capture the style and tone of the original text. Experience in translation or related fields is preferred.

If you are willing to serve, please contact our OB Secretary, Sister Qiaoya Lin, at [obsecretary@cccgw.org](mailto:obsecretary@cccgw.org). We look forward to your involvement in spreading God's love and Gospel further and wider together.

Summer Issue - Call for Submissions and Artwork: If you would like to share your faith-related stories, please submit your articles to [editor@cccgw.org](mailto:editor@cccgw.org) by July 27, 2024, indicating the section "CCCGW Stories."

We also encourage talented brothers, sisters, and especially children in our church who have artistic gifts to share their artwork related to faith. If you are willing to showcase your electronic artwork on our website, please submit your creations labeled under the section "Faith and Art" by July 27, 2024, to [editor@cccgw.org](mailto:editor@cccgw.org).

May the Lord bless you all!

In Christ, The Church Journal Editorial Team

# Personal Testimony: A Calling-

## Pastor David Rim



My desire in this personal testimony is to share one aspect of my relationship with God: the call to ministry. By narrowing the focus, my hope is to open my life a little deeper at a key moment in my journey.

My parents immigrated to this country with one goal in mind: a college education. Preferably a good college. Study something in computer programming or engineering, graduate, and get a good job. But life did not turn out the way we expected. It started in the second semester of my freshman year. I met several study abroad students from Korea. They were an entirely different breed. Living in a world I was an alien to. Two things defined them: high end stereo equipment and gambling. I fell into both traps.

I still remember applying for government loans to pay for tuition. I took that money and went out and brought a Bang and Olufsen turntable, Nakamichi tape player, M&K symphonic rated speakers, the very first generation CD player, and a subwoofer that could make our dorm walls shake. Apparently, you can buy a lot of stereo equipment

with your college tuition. With that purchase my stock within the group rose quite a bit. For once, I was the cool kid.

Then there was the gambling. I got introduced to Korean playing cards and we played quite a bit. From Friday right after classes all the way into Saturday morning. Winner brought breakfast for all. Slept all day. Started playing again Saturday after dinner until Sunday morning. Slept all day. Panic studying ensued to finish all the assignments. You can only imagine how much my grades suffered

On top of that, I had to make up for all the money spent on the stereo. To pay for tuition. I did not want my parents to find out what I did, so I got a part time job as a cashier at a newsstand. Biked three miles each way four nights a week to work the evening shift. Rain, shine, or snow, it did not matter. Tuition was tuition.

Before I knew it I was failing almost all my classes. By the first semester of my second year, the school had noticed. They sent me a letter warning me of suspension. If my grades did not rise about a 2.0, I would need to leave for a year. Mine was hovering around a 1.25. I was not going to make it.

One of the hardest things I had to do was call my parents to tell them I was getting kicked out. They had to come and get me. I was supposed to be the first member of my family to go to college. To graduate. Not fail out. They were more confused than angry. It wasn't that I was not smart enough. Apparently, I didn't care enough.

I was home for a year. Drowning in shame. My parents asked me not to come to church. Too embarrassing trying to answer all the questions of why I was home. I had no direction. Lost. I could not sit around home all day, so I got a job driving for Domino's Pizza. And one of my oldest friends, Mike, got a job there along with me. Just to be near me. He knew I was struggling. He invited me to a Navigator's 2-7 Bible Study. Told him no. Kept on nagging me. Finally, I said yes just to shut him up. I would go once.

I went and everything changed. Saw something I had never seen before. In all those years of going to church, I had never seen kids my age truly personalize their faith. In the



beginning of the study, they went around sharing what God was doing in their lives. And it was so personal. So real. Like God was a part of their everyday life. I envied them. I wanted what they had.

And so I kept going back. No longer because of Mike. But in search of something more. A career. Salary. Home. Family. These were no longer enough. And God was there to meet me where I was. As lost as the Prodigal Son, he invited me back home. Reminded me that while I had left him, he had never left me. That he was waiting. This is the first half of my story. Redemption.

But there is a second half. Calling. The question of what to do with my life was still looming. What did I want to live for? I knew God must be somehow involved. But what? During my suspension, I took summer classes at UMBC. To get back into studying. Earn a few credits.

One day I came early to class. Wanted to get some assignments finished. And there was a high school kid sitting there. One of the high school programs had finished and he was just hanging out. I said hi and sat there to work. Then I felt this prompting to talk. Talk? Me? Yes. So I started a conversation. Asked him what program he was in. How he liked it. Then he asked me what class I was taking. And for some reason I started sharing my story. The one you just read. How I went to college and blew it. Came back home not knowing what I wanted to do. How I reconnected with God. Then I asked him if he knew God? If he had a personal relationship with Jesus? That question led to a conversation and the gospel. I asked him if he wanted to receive Jesus. Right then and there. To be forgiven. To return home. And he said yes. I could not believe it. Talk about unbelief. I led him to the Lord through a prayer. First person ever. I will never forget the memory of my classmates coming into the classroom, as he and I prayed to receive Christ.

That was the foundational moment for me. There was no greater joy in all my life than that moment. To help another person to connect with God. I returned to Carnegie Mellon. Started a Bible Study. My roommate came to know the Lord through those

meetings. Finished as a math major. Went off to seminary to become a teacher and a pastor.

This was my life calling. I did not find it. It found me. To be a bridge where people can connect with God. Perhaps I could be that meeting place for others. If you had known me back then, I would have been the last person you would have imagined getting up in front of a group of people to give a message. Quiet. Introverted. Painfully shy. Yet, with God's call came God's grace. Who could have imagined. Getting kicked out of college may have been the best thing to have happened to me.

# My Faith Journey– Pastor Yu Zhao



I was born in a Christian family in Shenyang City, Liaoning Province in 1963, but the place where I grew up was a small village in Tieling City. Because my father was a policeman of the Nationalist Government before 1949 and was also a Christian, our family suffered a lot of unfair treatment. During the Cultural Revolution, we were sent to a rural village in Tieling. From then on, I experienced more hardships and pains in life, but I never gave up hope because my parents taught me to learn to look up and trust God in difficult situations. They set a good example for me.

During the Cultural Revolution, our home was an underground family gathering place, and my parents never stopped gathering. Although I was still a child at the time, I was deeply influenced by my parents' devout faith, and the seeds of faith took root in my heart. In that special era, my parents suffered blows and persecution because of their faith, but they never said a word of frustration; on the contrary, they regarded suffering for Jesus as glory and blessing. Although we were in trouble, we could “always rejoice, pray unceasingly, and give thanks in everything.” In this atmosphere of my family faith, I formally decided to accept Jesus as my personal Savior at the age of twelve. It was a winter night in 1975. I completely confessed my sins and repented. I confessed my sins to the Lord Jesus with tears streaming down my face. I asked God to forgive my sins one

by one that I could remember and that the Holy Spirit reminded me of. At that moment, I knew that my life had changed dramatically. From then on, I decided that my life belonged to the Lord.

I attended high school in Tieling City from September 1980 to June 1983. In early 1981, our local church reopened. Although there were only seven or eight gray-haired elderly believers and an old pastor who had just been released from prison, the worship scene was very touching. When I went to church, I was the only young believer there. As soon as the old pastor saw me, his weathered eyes lit up. I worshipped on time every week, and the old pastor cared about me very much. Once, he came to me and asked me: "Have you ever thought about doing something with your faith?" At that moment, I really had no answer. The pastor knew that his question had stumped me, so he said: "Have you ever thought about going to seminary and becoming a pastor like me after graduation?" Later, I kept praying to God for the pastor's advice. On Easter, April 26, 1981, I was baptized.

After I was baptized, I seriously considered the pastor's advice and waited for God's guidance. I knew very well that if God wants to use me, he will call me and give me a clear proof. One day, during worship, I saw in a vision of burning fire, bright and hot. I was immediately deeply moved, my heart was racing, and I couldn't calm down. I kept praying in my heart: "Lord, are you calling me? If so, please let me calm down!" After praying, I was covered in sweat, but my heart immediately calmed down. From that moment on, I was determined to serve the Lord throughout my life and began to prepare for studying theology. At that time, Jinling Union Theological Seminary was the only seminary in China. In the summer of 1983, I passed the entrance examination and overcame many obstacles to enter the seminary.

I entered Jinling Union Theological Seminary in the fall of 1983. After four years of undergraduate study, I went on to study for three more years as a graduate student, graduating in 1990, the year after the Tiananmen Square incident. At that time, the country's political, economic, and religious policies tended to be tightened. Religion, especially Christianity, was seen as the vanguard of the peaceful revolution of the West.



Therefore, the Chinese church at that time did not accept fresh graduates. I asked God: "Lord! You called me and You equipped me, but when I graduated, I had no church to go to. What is Your will?" Although I didn't get the answer at that time, I felt at peace in my heart, knowing that God will make a way for me, because He is the Almighty God.

At that time, the Nanjing YMCA had just started operating and was in urgent need of manpower, so I worked there for two years. During this period, I gradually understood God's intention. He wanted me to preach the gospel among young people first. The YMCA is an ideal place for evangelism because the government considers it to be engaged in social work. The YMCA was close to Nanjing University. We held English evening classes and many students came to take English classes and TOEFL classes. I took this opportunity to talk about faith with college students, preach the gospel, and introduce them to the church. This is how many students came to know the Savior and accept Jesus.

In 1993, God called me to serve as a preacher at St. Paul's Church in Nanjing. I was ordained as a pastor on April 9, 1995, and became the senior pastor of the church six months later. We organized many church activities, including youth fellowship, catechism classes, Bible study classes, prayer meetings and choirs, etc. We also held spiritual training and evangelistic meetings regularly. I served at St. Paul's Church for seven years, five of which were as senior pastor, during which the church's membership increased from over 800 to over 1,500. In addition to my daily pastoral work, I often visited hospitals and believers' homes, taught long-term and short-term volunteer training classes, and often went to rural churches to hold evangelistic meetings. By God's grace, I gave myself fully to service.

In 2002, I had the opportunity to study for a PhD at Luther Seminary in the United States. I majored in systematic theology when I was studying at Jinling Union Theological Seminary. After arriving at Luther Theological Seminary in the United States, after prayer, I decided to change my major to pastoral care and counseling. I thought this was a perfect opportunity to apply the systematic theology I studied. Thank the Lord, from September 2004 to August 2005, I conducted a one-year pastoral internship at Fairview Hospital of

the University of Minnesota. I often preached in English in the hospital's chapel and accumulated a lot of practical experience, which was very helpful to me. It would go a long way in future pastoral work in the church.

On May 27, 2007, I completed my Doctor of Ministry (PhD) degree. Then, on June 24, I took my family, full of enthusiasm, to prepare to return to China to serve the Chinese church and expand the domestic professional field of pastoral studies. I had made up my mind not to care about personal gains or losses after returning to my country; I only wanted to serve the Lord's flock and please God. Therefore, my wife and I resolutely decided to serve the house church without taking any salary and live entirely by faith. We mainly served in two house churches, one with more than 70 people and the other with more than 50 people, most of whom were young brothers and sisters in the Lord. According to the needs of the church, we adopted the method of simultaneous catechesis and spiritual training. While preaching the gospel, we helped these brothers and sisters lay a solid foundation; while conducting collective pastoral care, we also conducted discipleship training for brothers and sisters with special burdens and gifts. Thank God! We saw God Himself working mightily in the church, and the number of people being saved continued to increase. Now these two churches have grown and been planted into four churches.

At the end of 2008, God called us through the Presbyterian Church in the United States to establish a Chinese church in Corning, New York, USA. The Geneva Presbyterian Church in the United States saw the need for a local Chinese ministry in Corning in New York State and urgently needed a church planting missionary. There were five candidates, and except for me, all the other candidates were already in the United States or Canada. After several rounds of phone calls and interviews, the pastoral recruitment committee decided to call our family from China to Corning.

After five years of service, the Corning Church had grown from six or seven families with about fifteen people attending each meeting to today's church with forty-four members and a total of more than sixty people. Current church activities include Sunday worship,

adult Sunday school, children's Sunday school, Wednesday evening prayer meeting, Thursday sisters meeting, Friday night Corning Bible study fellowship and Horseheads Bible study fellowship, as well as Mansfield University Bible study group and monthly Evergreen Senior Fellowship, etc.

Under God's persistence care and guidance, in August 2014, God called us to serve at the Chinese Christian Church of Greater Washington, DC in Maryland. We saw God's incomparable love and faithfulness. Time flies, and in the blink of an eye I have been serving here for 10 years. This traditional church with a history of 65 years is experiencing new updates and challenges. After the pandemic, the church fully resumed its various ministries. We hope that by organizing the Happiness Group evangelism ministry, more Chinese in North America will have the opportunity to know the Lord. May the Lord lead us to become a church that preaches the gospel and bears good witness to the Lord.

My parents are first-generation Christians, and I am a second-generation Christian; my wife, Peng Enlin, is a fourth-generation Christian. It has been 26 years since we met, fell in love, and got married in the church. God gave us two sons: Abraham and Joshua. Today, Abraham is studying aerospace engineering at Purdue University, while Joshua is still in elementary school. From children, we see God's abundant love and blessings. Jehovah Jireh, Jehovah Rapha, Jehovah Nissi, Jehovah Shammah! I am grateful to God for his rich preparation and wonderful guidance in my life. Serving God all my life is a choice and I have no regrets in this life.

# Faith & Art

## Jesus love me

John 3:16

16 For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.





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CCCGW

# UPCOMING EVENTS

JUNE. 30 | 2nd Congregation Meeting

JULY. 12-14 | **Church Summer Retreat**

SEP. 8 | 66th Church Anniversary  
Celebration