

English Ministry Update

Toronto Chinese Baptist Church

also available on www.tcbc.on.ca

February 2010

Urbana Sharing – He is there

Hannah Wong

Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love. 1 John 4:7-8

Farewell Pastor Tanya

We will be holding a farewell lunch for Pastor Tanya. If anyone's interested in saying a few words of appreciation or have other suggestions for the event, please contact Alicia Chin ([alicia-chin \[at\] rogers.com](mailto:alicia-chin[at]rogers.com)). Stay tuned for further details.

CCSA 2010

We are looking for people to fill the roles of Head Governor, Head Coach or Head Governor for the upcoming CCSA softball season. We are looking for people with the following characteristics:

- 1) Love God
- 2) Love people
- 3) Love to play softball.

If you are interested or have questions about these roles and their responsibilities, please contact Bill Fong before Sunday, February 14th, 2010 ([williamfong\[at\]hotmail.com](mailto:williamfong[at]hotmail.com))

A Swift Exit

To facilitate a smooth transition between our morning and noon services, please exit the sanctuary promptly after the 9:30 a.m. service is complete to allow those arriving for the 11:00 a.m. service to find their seats. Please keep the steps outside the front of the church clear to allow those exiting and entering to do so easily. Any help to those that have mobility issues would be greatly appreciated!

Chinese New Year Gift Packages

We will be handing out Chinese New Year packs to all post-secondary students on Sunday February 14, 2010. Don't miss out!!

During the thirteen hour bus ride on the way home from Urbana, I began to think about how I would respond to people when they asked me how Urbana went. How would I put my experience into words – words that would actually do justice to my experience there? Being half-asleep, no words came to me then, and I told myself that I would think of something later.

Well, it's been several weeks since Urbana, and I'm certainly not half asleep anymore (unless it's during morning lectures...). I've struggled with what to share and how to share about my experience right up till now. And it's taken me this long to realize that it was not Urbana that I had difficulty putting to words, but my encounter with God.

I could easily go on for pages about the activities we took part in during Urbana. I could describe in detail the talented worship team that exposed us to the richness found in many different styles of worship. I could talk about how they taught us to sing songs in different languages, how to worship through dance, and how to worship in stillness.

But I would not be able to find the words to describe the overwhelming joy that comes with praising our Lord.

If you asked me about the speakers at Urbana, I would exhaust you with long explanations of their sermons and testimonies. I would spam you with links to videos of their sermons. I would give you lists of Bible passages that speak of one of the great truths in following God – that is, to care for the poor and the needy as Jesus did. I would quote paragraphs from their eloquently and passionately spoken messages that I scribbled down in my notebook.

But I could not tell you what I heard when the whispering voice of the Great I Am spoke to me.

I could describe the long line-ups and waiting for everything – from getting in and out of the stadium where we held our main sessions, to waiting in the cold for the buses that would take us back to our hotels, to the crowds of people waiting for dinner. I could describe to you the lengthy bus rides through the streets of St. Louis.

But I couldn't tell you why it was in those seemingly wasted hours, that I somehow discovered the peace and stillness of our Father and Maker in Heaven.

As I read through passages of the Bible, I notice that encounters with God are often very vaguely described. My dad offered an explanation for this ambiguity: "Perhaps," he said, "it is because our encounters with God can only be experienced, not described." In the same way, I'm not sure that I can ever put words to my encounter with God at Urbana. I can only hope that how I live my life after Urbana will be a living testimony of my continuous journey with God.

I find it ironic that it was during Urbana – the loudest, most crowded and most hectic experience of my life – that God gave me the ears to hear His voice, the solitude to meditate on His word, and a still heart to receive His eternal peace. I had gone to Urbana as somebody who disliked loud crowds and mega-conferences. I had gone as one lost, with ears that could not hear, eyes that could not see, and a heart that had grown apathetic with the burdens of earthly things. And yet it was in these most unexpected circumstances that God revealed Himself to me. If there was anything I learned during those five days, it was this: Never doubt for a moment that God can speak to you in the most unlikely places. Never, for a moment, expect nothing from God. And hope for nothing less than God as the ever-present centre of your life.

Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence? If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there. If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea, even there your hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast.

Psalm 139:7-10

TCBC Child Protection Policy

Our new insurance carrier requires us to formalize a child protection policy. TCBC had hired an outside expert to write one for us and the January Member's Meeting approved it. It is mostly common sense and good practice. Over the next few months we will be implementing it. It obviously impacts volunteers working with children as there will be more formalized procedures on how they interact with children. Volunteers will also have to be formally screened, including a criminal background check. For the rest of the congregation, some visible changes include name tags on Sunday School teachers and restricting the infant and toddler areas to parents and teachers. Of course, non-parents cannot pickup children from any church program. Stay tuned for more details as we summarize the impact in future newsletters.

Incorporating TCBC

At the January Member's Meeting, we approved funds to start the investigation of incorporating TCBC as a non-profit organization. Our current arrangement exposes our trustees to unlimited liabilities and we are not likely to have new volunteers to take on the duties that these faithful brothers and sisters have done for so many years.

The incorporation process will take some time given the lengthy history of TCBC (e.g. transferring ownership of the building) and will impose new requirements such as an external financial audit. There will also likely have to be a constitutional amendment which in itself is a lengthy process. But in the end, we hope to have a stronger TCBC able to serve the congregation and our community.

Help Wanted

The finance department is looking for assistance on Sunday's after morning and noon services. If you are interested in finding out more details or in helping out, contact Joyce Chow at: joycechow[at]gmail.com

Contacts:

Sam Wong (English Chair): samwsamw[at]gmail.com
 Bobby Lau (Vice-Chair): blau1881[at]hotmail.com
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 Alicia Chin (Student Ministry, FAST): alicia-chin[at]rogers.com
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 Pastor Tanya: tkrahn[at]tcbc.on.ca
 Senior Pastor Timothy Tam: timothytam[at]gmail.com
 If you are interested in helping and improving this newsletter, contact Norman (Vice-Chair): norman.tang[at]gmail.com

Reflections on Advent Conspiracy

Thanks to Jaynelle and Katy for taking some time to share a few of their thoughts on the advent conspiracy initiative.

At the commissioning service of this project, we shared that our purpose was to provide an opportunity and an easy avenue to spread Jesus' love to those around our church community by challenging members of our church to donate and become aware of the blessings God has bestowed upon our lives and the needs of those in our city. In hopes that running this event would open new doors for TCBC and initiate more community outreach events to serve our local foundations, I am extremely thankful and encouraged by the response we have received for this event, and for those who have been inspired to continue this project of rethinking our Christian lives. In light of this, I hope that we will continue to pray for our church and for servant hearts that we will continuously strive to be a blessing and to fulfill the calling and purpose God has provided for us. It has been a pleasure and honour to serve with you!
 - Jaynelle

On behalf of Scott Mission, Urban Promise and University Settlement I would like to thank you for your donations this past season. It was very encouraging to hear people's experiences and how they were individually challenged to re-think the meaning of Christmas. As organizers of this event, it was an obstacle for us to step up and start something new at church. We are very grateful for your support and encouragement. We couldn't have done it with you. Advent Conspiracy allowed us to reflect on the meaning of Christian living and what it means to serve the community. When we delivered the bags of donations, the members of the organizations could not stop thanking us and telling us how this will benefit the increasing number of people seeking our help. (Please read the letters on the Mission Board). In addition, by holding this event, we were able to spread the love of God to those receiving the donations and The Word to our friends and family. I personally had the chance to share the motivation and inspiration to run this event with a non-Christian friend to which he also supported our mission. =) It was been proposed by a couple fellow TCBC-ers to continue this project throughout the year so if you are interested to organize, help or take part in this initiative please feel free to contact us.

Sincerely, -Katy

A CLOSER LOOK...at strategic tools in 25 countries

In our last letter, we spoke of "Pastors...with a CLASSROOM AT HOME." We told of developing and distributing courses for the many Spanish-speaking pastors and church leaders around the world who've never received training at a seminary, training which would give them tools and skills for more fruitful ministry. Our strategy is to "take the training to them." How's it done?

The course we offer on Romans includes a set of five DVD's, and a printed study guide. The disks have 17 lessons, with each lesson lasting about 35 minutes. This gives students and churches a total of about 10 hours of accurate, systematic teaching, with the teacher "working his way" through Romans, one verse at a time. The study guide enhances the student's learning experience. In case those using the course study in a group, they may acquire additional copies of the guide. Say, for example, a pastor wishes to study the course with nine people in the church. He gets one set, including the disks and one study guide. And, he orders nine additional books. This facilitates more people using the course, and saves students money. Students have a "seminary right where they are." From almost 25 years as missionaries in the Spanish-speaking world, we know many tens of thousands of Latino pastors and church leaders need a way to get good Bible training, but without leaving home. These courses do that. That's why we call them "strategic tools". They are tools to help build and equip the Spanish-speaking Church for its mission at home, and around the world. People in twenty-five countries have acquired these courses! They are, indeed, "strategic tools." Last time, we asked you to pray about a number of items. We're happy to share with you how God answered, as well as new prayer items:

Answered prayer:

--The Mexico City conference went well. It was a national-level event. Folks from around Mexico acquired courses to help their life & ministry.

--My recommendation was accepted. My review of one course the Institute began years ago showed it had serious deficiencies. Others accepted my recommendation to not utilize the material.

Current prayer needs:

--A videographer. We need someone adept at filming and editing to join our effort.

--For good work & progress as I supervise 3 student workers assigned by the Institute to assist in my work.

--For continued progress in developing courses on Theology I, and New Testament II.

--New contacts in Mexico report they're currently beginning studying courses they got from us. May God use the courses to build them in their faith, and to enlarge their ministries.

--Pray God leads more people to acquire and use the courses.

--Pray we live a life pleasing to God, and that He fills us with His Holy Spirit.

--Our ministry depends on financial giving by Christians. Please pray God provides for us. And, pray God provides for those who support our work financially.

--That God uses us in our personal evangelism outreach.

Partnering with you in world missions,

Ted & Cecilia Paschke

Loaned by SIM to Rio Grande Bible Institute; Edinburg, Texas