

FLOURISHING

IN CHANGE

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REPORT FROM THE SENIOR PASTOR AND BOARD OF ELDERS

PASTOR DANIEL CHAN

After BCEC resumed in-person gatherings in July 2021, our members slowly returned to worship services, Sunday School classes, and fellowship meetings. The adult in-person attendance of all services totaled about 390 people in December 2021. The number increased to an average of 620 in September this year, which is about 55% of our pre-pandemic size. In general, congregations with a higher percentage of seniors have a slower recovery rate. Some of the older members tell us that since they now know how to use cell phones or tablets to access our online services, they may not physically come back anytime soon. We are happy to know that our senior members are catching up with technology, but we also look forward to seeing them in person when COVID subsides. Besides in-person attendees, there are on average over a thousand viewers watching our weekly

streams/ online services in September 2022. However, not all those viewers stayed through the whole service. As a result, it is difficult to count them all as online worshippers. The statistics for our Sunday services remain inconclusive.

In Chinatown, the 120 building has enough rooms to house fellowship and Sunday School activities. However, its lack of a larger assembly hall limits our capacity to accommodate more people for Sunday services. We praise the Lord that after working out some details with a very helpful Josiah Quincy Elementary School administration, the Chinatown Cantonese service was able to move to the newly renovated JQES auditorium on December 26, 2021. The bigger venue allowed more Cantonese members to join in-person service. Unfortunately, we had to shut down all in-person gatherings again from January 9 to February 6, 2022 due to a sudden spike



Senior Pastor Daniel Chan

in COVID cases in Massachusetts. On September 11, 2022, the Chinatown English congregation closed down its two services at the 120 building and opened a new service at the JQES auditorium on the same day. There was a noticeable increase in attendance as a result.

At Newton, the renovation project prevented the use of the sanctuary. Sunday services had to be held in the fellowship hall and the multi-function room. Our Newton members showed admirable patience, as they worshiped in a cramped environment. I wish to thank

our AV teams on both campuses. Their team members are the first to come and the last to leave. They set up and close down delicate equipment week after week. They are our unsung heroes.

In addition to Sunday services, other in-house and outreach programs have also resumed in-person gatherings. Examples include Adult and Children's Sunday School, community English classes, Project Destiny summer day camp and after school program, August Moon booth, local short-term missions, evangelistic visitation, various retreats, and small group meetings. In September, the Churchwide Response Team decided that masking is no longer required on BCEC sites and facilities starting on October 9, 2022 after reviewing CDC guidelines, COVID-related statistics from cities and towns in Massachusetts, and advices from medical professionals. However, CRT also encourages everyone to carefully consider how face coverings continue to be an important tool in dealing with COVID-19, along with other

tools such as testing, vaccinations, and monitoring symptoms.

Just like in previous times, we conducted three baptisms last year. A total of 28 people were baptized. In addition, some of our pastors were asked to conduct special baptisms for people who were homebound or

moving out-of-state and could not wait for the scheduled baptisms. Eight people were thus baptized. Last year we also accepted fifteen transferred members and three associate members.

We thank God for His provision and the generous donations of our members. We ended our fiscal year with surpluses in all



Board of Elders

funds. Incomes from the Missions Fund and Charity Fund exceeded their budgeted amounts. Both funds now have sizable cumulative surpluses, and both committees are planning to spend them down. The Missions Committee will focus on supporting missionaries' retirement accounts, and the Social Responsibility Committee will focus on supporting new community organizations. The General Fund income was considerably lower than the budgeted amount. However, the actual expenses were also significantly lower than budget, resulting in an actual surplus. Last year, our members donated more than \$90k to the Expansion Fund.

Regarding our pastoral staff, Minister Ben Wong stepped down on May 8, 2022. Minister James Su joined the BCEC pastoral staff as Newton Mandarin Minister on November 4, 2021. Minister Venus Yim started as Director of Women and Caring Ministries on May 29, 2022. Minister Chris Horte started as

Director of Student Ministry (Newton) on October 16, 2022. Brother Louis Leung agreed to extend his pastoral residency for another year. Both Pastor Calvin Chu and Pastor Steve Liu took a sabbatical last year. On the administrative side, Sister Lillian Te stepped down as English Secretary on January 29, 2022. Sister Elysia Moy started as part-time Administrative and Ministry Support Coordinator on January 19, 2022. When we needed temporary Chinese secretarial help at Newton, Sister Macrin Wong has agreed to work as a temporary part-time Chinese Secretary. I wish to take this opportunity to thank our pastoral, administrative, and facility staff members. Their faithful service during the past year ensured a smooth running of the church. I also want to express my appreciation for our elders, deacons, and numerous volunteers. They are the engine of BCEC. Without them, the church will grind to a halt.

The Board of Elders continues to

meet two times a month. The elders always spend the first 35 minutes of the meetings praying for BCEC members and ministries. Pastor Steve Liu started joining BOE after his ordination in August 2022. His presence increased the number of BOE members to 12, while decreasing the average age by many years. May the Lord use him to bring the BOE many fresh ideas. Since there were many personnel changes in our staff last year, BOE has spent considerable time on personnel related issues like work coverage, job descriptions, and candidate interviews. Another major topic on the BOE agenda is Chinatown facility expansion. This topic has started under Pastor Steve Chin's leadership. Various schemes were proposed at that time. All of them involved demolishing the 120 building and rebuilding a larger facility or constructing major additions to the existing structure. The estimated budgets of these schemes are very large. No conclusion was reached during Pastor Steve's tenure. After becoming chair of

the BOE, I continue to lead the discussion on this important issue. Then suddenly COVID hit. The pandemic prompted people to think about using virtual ministries to supplement traditional church operations. It also changed some people's mind about owning and maintaining large facilities. New line of thinking started to emerge among the elders.

The elders conducted a survey on present and future space requirements among the pastoral staff. They also reviewed the trend of Chinese population and its movement, parking situation in the city, financial commitment, different ways to solve overcrowding issues, and many other factors. After considering all those factors, the elders are currently pondering a small to medium scale of expansion to the 120 building. Going forward, we plan to engage architects and building professionals to do feasibility studies, conceptual drawings,

and cost estimates. Please continue to pray for the expansion plan.



REPORT FROM THE BOARD OF DEACONS

CHAIRMAN KEVIN FONG

God is good to us and to BCEC. We experience it every year. It isn't a surprise, as deep down, we know it in our hearts.

This past year, as God has for decades, He provided in ways we can easily see and give thanks.

- Through your financial offering, He again abundantly provided for BCEC's local ministry, global missions, charity, and social responsibility. Through the pandemic and now, inflationary times, His provision allowed BCEC to not only maintain our current staffing, but to add needed staff that multiplies BCEC's ability to witness and serve. Thank you!
- Through your willingness to serve, He provided us with servants to lead and staff our Sunday School, fellowship, small group, and outreach ministries. Thank you!
- Through our deacons, He led us to invest a portion of the 249 proceeds, renovate our Newton facilities for more fruitful ministry in the years to come, search and hire new staff, and perform the many usual tasks to keep our church operating well. Thank you, deacons!

Nevertheless, He also provided in far more and deeper ways that we are often challenged to see. How? He calls each of us to change, to grow, to be more and more like Christ, to be overflowing with the fruit of the Spirit – love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. He pushes us to grow by having each of us participate, with our heart, mind, and soul, in His kingdom work in our homes, our communities, and BCEC. Doing His work causes us to contend with making difficult choices in this broken world where things



are far from perfect. As a result, we are led to call upon Him in prayer, discern His wisdom, and have faith in His power. His kingdom work is not about us, and yet, He makes it about us. He draws us closer into His presence and we grow deeper in our knowledge and experience of Him. And in that, we find joy in all its fullness!

God has always spoken to me in songs. So, I'll close with the lyrics of my favorite song, "Tethered" by Phil Wickham, which wholly expresses what is in my heart. And it is what I pray that all of you feel every day.

*I don't wanna miss the beauty of Heaven all around me
Your power and Your mercy, the greatness of Your love
I don't wanna lose the wonder of being in Your presence
Of knowing such a friendship, to be with You my God
Everything I am, I throw into Your hands
I just want my life to ever be entwined with You, tethered
to Your heart
And I just want my soul to ever stand in awe of You,
tethered to Your heart*

*What more could I desire? What greater thing to
treasure?*

*I'm convinced there's nothing better than living in Your
love
Caught up in the wonder of being in Your presence,
Of knowing such a friendship, to be with You my God
Everything I am, I throw into Your hands
I just want my life to ever be entwined with You, tethered
to Your heart
And I just want my soul to ever stand in awe of You,
tethered to Your heart*

*Draw me closer, take me deeper
I wanna be where You are, I wanna be where You are
I just want my life to ever be entwined with You, tethered
to Your heart
I just want my soul to ever stand in awe of You, tethered
to Your heart*

May we always want to be where He is, tethered to His heart.
It's been an honor to serve you all in Christ, on behalf of the deacons.

ENGLISH-SPEAKING MINISTRIES OVERVIEW

PASTOR ENOCH LIAO

We continue to journey with God through a pandemic along with world events such as another war in Europe and massive natural catastrophes. In all this, God is at work.

In our humble church, the Lord was with us in the various milestones of our church life. We celebrated for the ordination of Pastor Steven Liu to affirm the Lord's calling on him to help shepherd our church family.

We also celebrated our first baptisms, which took place during our English worship services at both campuses

As we looked to God's Word for guidance during this season, our English services heard sermons about our Not So Simple Jesus, Renewal as a Way of Life, and offering Due Honor in a world that seems hungry to know a Savior who loves and honors us.



Pastor Steve Liu's Ordination



Newton English

Chinatown English

CANTONESE-SPEAKING MINISTRIES OVERVIEW

PASTOR KENNETH KWONG

If you step into the Cantonese worship service of the Boston Chinese Evangelistic Church today, you will find that there are many differences from before the pandemic. The pandemic has really brought about great changes, but if you pay attention, it is actually the work of God in it.

Due to the impact of the pandemic, the church's worship has launched an online or Zoom ministry. Both Chinatown Cantonese and Newton Cantonese services broadcast their worship live stream, respectively bringing traditional and modern worship hymns to outside the church. We are able to serve those who are staying at home due to health problems, old age, handicap, and who are far or near to meet in the air to worship and to seek. These developments were unimaginable before the pandemic. In fact, this situation is similar to the spread of the

gospel in the early church!

After the ascension of the Lord Jesus, the early church experienced dynamic growth in Jerusalem: Peter's sermon on Pentecost led 3,000 people to accept Christ; believers gathered to worship in the temple and at home daily, and they found favor in all the people. God added more believers to them daily; some believers even sold their properties to support the work of the church and the apostles. The word of God prospered! Because of the smooth development, the apostles and disciples never thought of leaving Jerusalem at that time, so there was no large-scale work to promote the gospel to the Gentiles until the church in Jerusalem was persecuted, and the disciples scattered all over Judea and Samaria. At the same time, the footprint of the gospel expanded as never before. Persecution played a role in promoting

the gospel in the early church. Likewise, today's pandemic forces the church to establish a new ministry, hoping to make a difference in the current circumstance.

Although the change is unforeseeable by people, God has prepared us beforehand! The technology of live streaming has been successfully used in our Annual Meeting to transmit audio and video messages between the two church sites in Chinatown and Newton. It is also expected to be used when the second and third Cantonese services in Chinatown are combined together. The live stream technology is able to broadcast the worship service in the Josiah Quincy Elementary School auditorium to the cafeteria to handle the overflow and for those who are not able to access the auditorium. In addition, the live stream helps the combined services of the second and

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third Cantonese worship compensate for the shortage of ministerial staff caused by the pandemic. Furthermore, it reduced the impact of the renovation of Newton Campus during the pandemic.

God's wonderful planning allows us to uphold His presence. We are also convinced that the church's ability to survive the pandemic is a display of God's faithfulness. Let us continue to follow God by faith, so the church can grow spiritually and to inspire us to have hope for the future and make us believe that "tomorrow is a better day."



Women's Fellowship



Ruth Fellowship



Chinatown Cantonese



J2 Fellowship

MANDARIN-SPEAKING MINISTRIES OVERVIEW

PASTOR ANDY SU

According to the situation of the nearby Chinese churches, Boston is still a place to attract a large number of immigrants. In the suburbs, the main source is young couples and families with their parents, while the main source near the city are young students, working young adults, retired seniors, and a large number of service-sector families. Therefore, the main issue for the church in the third year of the pandemic is whether there are enough ministry staff to shepherd a large number of new immigrants. At present, most of church staff for the Mandarin congregations are from the older generations. As a result, when it comes to shepherding, there is generally a smaller number of Christian lay workers who can truly respond to the call and are willing to shepherd. We are almost at a

point of time when there is a serious pastoral gap in major ministries.

Therefore, the direction that the existing Mandarin ministry needs to work on is to establish and equip enough lay workers to shepherd a large number of immigrants. However, most of the brothers and sisters in Mandarin are relatively late to believe in the Lord, and it takes a relatively long time for the gospel to deeply transform the life of an individual and the life of a group, as well as to gradually break through and change the part of the original Chinese culture that was opposed to the gospel. It usually takes seven years to more than 10 years. Therefore, even though the attendance of the church may increase, the time for growing enough lay workers to shepherd may not be ready, so many difficulties arise in many Mandarin ministries. At this time, it is necessary for

the preachers to stick to their own service posts and work with brothers and sisters and grow together for a long time over 10 years. God's grace is enough for us, and years of companionship will gradually produce a church culture that is more able to focus on the gospel. Gradually, brothers and sisters are willing to follow God's way and love each other unselfishly.

At present, the Chinatown Mandarin congregation has been encouraging and exhorting each other for 22 years. They are faithful to build the whole church together. They are quite happy to accept immigrants from different backgrounds. Everyone is also delighted to fellowship and exercise together. The Newton Mandarin congregation has accumulated some faithful lay workers over the past ten years, shepherding each other silently, serving many new

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and young families over the years and leading many people to believe in the Lord. However, but they are also tired and in need of more new co-workers to work together. Both congregations need a long time to continue to cultivate new co-workers. We are also grateful for the current group of faithful co-workers, and ask the Lord to continue to give them strength to lead new brothers and sisters to become new co-workers.



Chinatown Mandarin



Newton Mandarin



Newton Mandarin Men's Bible Study



Newton Mandarin

STAFF LIST

(as of 10/22/2022)

Senior Pastor: Daniel Chan

English Ministry Staff:

| | |
|-------------|--|
| Enoch Liao | Assistant Pastor |
| Ken Liu | Assistant Pastor |
| Calvin Chu | Assistant Pastor |
| Steve Liu | Assistant Pastor |
| Lorraine Ho | Children's Ministries Director |
| Ryan So | Director of Young Adult and College Ministries |
| Chris Horte | Director of Student Ministries (Newton) |
| Steven Chin | Pastor Emeritus |

Chinese Ministry Staff:

| | |
|---------------|---|
| Daniel Chan | Senior Pastor |
| Kenneth Kwong | Assistant Pastor |
| Andy Su | Assistant Pastor |
| Barry Lam | Assistant Pastor |
| James Su | Minister (Newton Mandarin Congregation) |
| Venus Yim | Director of Women's and Caring Ministries |
| Louis Leung | Pastoral Resident |

Operations Support Staff:

| | |
|---------------|------------------------------|
| Helena Fong | Office Manager |
| Dennis Chin | Facility Manager |
| Kwok Wah Wong | Maintenance Technician |
| Connie Ho | Chinese Administrative Staff |
| Elysia Moy | English Administrative Staff |
| Macrin Tai | Chinese Administrative Staff |



We would also like to appreciate the following people who served on staff this past year: Lillian Te (Secretary, Newton Campus), Minister Ben Wong

CHINATOWN CANTONESE CONGREGATION

PASTOR KENNETH KWONG

We praise God that we can experience His grace and witness His kindness and beauty. When we resumed in-person activities, Chinatown Cantonese 2nd and 3rd services officially combined. A year has gone by, and the path we took has not been easy. However, it is so exciting to see how those who had been serving in two separate congregations are now serving side by side, helping each other, bearing with one another, and working as one. It is especially true when we have a joint worship team on the fifth Sunday of each month that brings together worship leaders from those two congregations. Such unity is pleasing to God and exemplifies the wonderful relationship within God's family. Although we may have different views about music, worship, and many things in life, the grace of Jesus Christ our Savior has brought us together through thick and thin to journey ahead. Before

Jesus our Lord, all differences become negligible, and He deserves all the glory and honor!

When cultural trends are advocating that people of different ages should pursue different dreams and hobbies, we become divided and generation gaps become widened. However, the gospel and the life that God has given us allow us to be steadfast during turbulent times and to go against the flow, demonstrating our unity in God. This transformation was described in Romans 12:1-2 (NIV), such that you may *"offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will."*



CHINATOWN ENGLISH CONGREGATION

PASTOR ENOCH LIAO

Thanks be to God for another year in which we saw God's hand at work in midst of tumultuous events such as a pandemic. For the Chinatown English Congregation, here are some of the milestones and highlights.

This was a year of returning to in-person retreats and conferences and small groups. While many small groups continue to meet online, many began to meet in person at church or in various homes. We also saw the return of in person retreats for College Retreat and Base Camp (summer youth conference). What a joy to come together in person, yet not without challenges of running retreats during a pandemic.

Among the pastoral staff, some milestones included not only the ordination of Pastor Steven Liu, but also him taking his first sabbatical. That's significant because it means that our pastoral staff have served faithfully for a

number of years. We look forward to our staff having longevity in service to our church.

We continued to hold various events to engage our community and one another. PDAS returned in person with our desire to serve the youth. And we held our first ever Worship Nite to celebrate in song and scripture in person, something we have had less opportunity to do during the pandemic.



Project Destiny



College Fellowship Retreat



Chinatown AfterHours

CHINATOWN MANDARIN CONGREGATION

PASTOR ANDY SU

The reopening of the church in the past year is basically a process of re-establishment. In addition to the original brothers and sisters, some new people have been added to the in-person Sunday worship and Sunday School. Therefore, the dynamics of the overall interaction are different. When we are thinking about the process of how to connect the new and the old, we try to start a ping-pong ministry. Initially a ball outreach ministry, but after running for six months, we found some contribution to the overall rebuild, as we report on the progress of the ping pong ministry every Sunday the first goal is to help everyone to face the epidemic bravely and joyfully. Starting from the health of the body, it will lead to a lively and joyful atmosphere in the whole body, mind, and spirit. Then some new brothers and sisters and seekers will easily follow the old brothers and sisters. They all got along with each other quickly in the

ping-pong ministry. For the brothers and sisters who did not participate in the ping-pong ministry, they were also very enthusiastic about the overall lively and joyful atmosphere, which helped everyone to slowly return to physical worship. The ping-pong ministry gradually became the stepping stones for our outreach ministry. We formally trained two coaches to help existing students gradually become coaches, and then using the relationship between coaches and students to build up between Christians and non-believers. A long-term relationship with non-Christians has transformed the gospel of Christ from the training of table tennis character and skills, leading the team into a dynamic small group with the drive of the gospel of Christ. After reflection, we found that the ping-pong ministry is just a platform for serving, and the ministry of Christians is a ministry that creates culture. When the

gospel of Christ works in our lives, the gospel itself is a substitute for the values of world culture. Although the process may be difficult, the is a ministry that pleases Christ.

In the process of rebuilding, we deeply saw that God's Word began to be manifested in different fellowship and small groups. Although we are still very imperfect, after the practice of preparing for the Bible study in the past few years, we have also seen brothers and sisters walk in His way. Go to the deep waters and experience the lively and practical changes of God's Word in our lives. At the same time, in the marriage counseling group and individual counseling, seeing how God's word is applied to the preparation of marriage is truly the wonderful grace of God. After the pandemic, we participated in the Mid-Autumn Festival booth for the first time. More than 30

brothers and sisters participated. Some led worship, some handed out flyers, and some helped everyone play games. We also felt that after the pandemic, some even danced the dance of praising the Lord, and we once again felt the shocking power of Christ's gospel to create culture. After the two or three years of practice after the pandemic, God has been using the environment to purify our body and mind, as if preparing us to face revelation. These are extreme challenges in the post-apocalyptic era. We can foresee the explosion of a better, more wonderful gospel. The best is yet to come.



Ping-Pong Ministry



Chinatown Mandarin

NEWTON CANTONESE CONGREGATION

PASTOR BARRY LAM

While writing the annual report each year, I have the opportunity to stop and reflect on how God has shown us (Newton Cantonese congregation) grace and mercy over the past year. This year, not only will I show appreciation to each department's brothers and sisters, I also have a few heartfelt words to share with everyone because these are what God has shown and taught me about humility:

1. **Reliance in the midst of suffering**

During the past two years of the pandemic, the lives of brothers and sisters were faced with many great challenges. Some people lost loved ones; some people faced physical weaknesses and even suffered from severe illness; some people felt physically and mentally exhausted and powerless from being trapped in complex relationships. However, I'm grateful to see how brothers and sisters are relying on God's grace, holding onto His promises, and following Him step by step through times of trouble. There is a sister who is battling cancer. After overcoming countless treatments and facing cancer recurrence, a weak body and varying will power, she continues to hold a strong faith in the Lord deep in her heart, learning to look towards Jesus for

help each day. Her faith also inspired the love and faith of brothers and sisters nearby. Over the past two years, we all learned how to hold onto God's faithfulness in times of change, how to cry out to God in times of despair, how to rely on God in times of shortage, and how to love and faithfully follow God in times of misfortune. Many times, we only focus on the growth of church attendance and ministry development. Although these are important things, God allowed me to see that the most important and gracious thing is that He has built up His disciples over the past year and their love, faith, and hope for Him erupt in His grace. When we have strong love, faith, and hope in God, we will see infinite possibilities in God.

2. **Enthusiasm in the midst of restriction**

Newton Campus renovations have exceeded our budget in terms of money, scope, and time. Originally, we thought we could utilize the times where fellowships aren't meeting during the pandemic to carry out and finish the renovations. However, the project was delayed due to various factors. Thank you to all the brothers and sisters for tolerating the space restrictions.

As more and more brothers and sisters come back to meet in-person, we have taken safety precautions and started using the conference room to live stream worship service. Even though we were faced with many inconveniences, we can see our brothers and sisters' passion for worship and enthusiasm for serving other brothers and sisters and newcomers during each worship service. These limitations can't stop our passion for God and others, which makes me feel grateful.



Additionally, although the pandemic limited our face-to-face opportunities, we took advantage of the online gatherings. The attendance of our fellowships and prayer meetings have actually grown significantly. Some brothers and sisters were even physically outside Boston or even the United States. The pandemic broke

geographical restrictions, bringing people closer together. What is even more amazing is that God used our *Evangelism Explosion* and *Alpha* ministries to reach more than 100 people with the gospel and many of them believed in the Lord. The brothers and sisters that participated in the evangelism all experienced the power of the gospel in Jesus Christ, which allowed their love for God and for those unheard to be more passionate. In order to welcome and shepherd more new believers and newcomers to the Newton Cantonese congregation, we saw a need for small group leader development. Last September, we held the first six-month training for small group leaders. Those who finished the training are already leading small groups, *Alpha* courses, and Bible pre-studies. This September, we plan to hold the second training session. Please pray that God will raise up and equip more servant leaders to become fisher of men, building up more disciples and expanding the kingdom of God.

3. **Bravery in the midst of unknown**

Lastly, I am grateful that God gave us the opportunity to renovate Newton Campus, and I am also thankful for the support of the church. Newton Campus is a historical site with more than 150 years of history, recording the rise and fall of Christianity in the United

States. I remember talking to a young person from church once. I asked him what he thought about Newton Campus; he immediately responded: “Compared to other places and other churches, our church is very old and ancient.” That conversation made me think about how building up the church for the next generation is an important topic. Although the church does not need to lead the trend, it cannot be out of touch with the times. I believe that history does not mean to stay in the past, but it gives us valuable lessons and experiences to bravely face the future. In the Bible, God shows us His power and faithfulness and how He shows love and mercy to his people across generations. Although the pandemic has brought many difficulties and challenges, the God of the past, present, and future still leads us. Pray that God will help us to walk into the future with faith in Him. The Newton Campus renovations connect the past, present, and future. On one hand, we cannot forget the grace of Jesus Christ on the cross and the victory of the empty tomb. On the other hand, we pray that the Holy Spirit will help us to ignite our passion for God in order to face the changes and challenges of the era and to fulfill the Great Commission of Jesus Christ from generation to generation.



Newton Children's Ministry



WeTalk 800

NEW COMMUNITY CONGREGATION (NEWTON ENGLISH)

PASTOR KEN LIU

This past year has been a year of restarting. Certain ministries picked up right where they left off and got moving. But like restarting a dead battery on a cold day, it takes quite a bit to recharge and crank things up again.

To get a little more mileage from the car metaphor, the student ministry restarted their Friday and Sunday ministries without a key cog in the mix. Saul Lee's presence and leadership were certainly missed, but thankfully we were able to restart Friday and Sunday morning programming. Personally, it was great to get to know the students a little better, as I dusted off my youth minister hat and allocated more of my time supporting this vital ministry. Vince also took on the bulk of teaching on Sundays, along with Vicky and Andy. We also welcomed Sophia Lam, Hailun Li, and Peter Kwok to the Friday team,

which has been an incredible blessing to the students. I am also grateful to the Servant Team members consisting of Olivia, Justin, and Enoch for the ways they stepped up, whether through leading games and groups or organizing different activities. They were even able to pull off restarting the Summit Retreat after three years. We had 50 people attend, which was the highest attended retreat in recent memory. Our guest speaker was Chris Horte from First Baptist Church in Amherst, which is the same church that Saul used to serve on staff with. A few weeks after the retreat, Chris applied for our open position, the Director of Student Ministries. Up to that point, we had not received a single applicant, since we first posted the job opening back in November. After prayer, discernment, and interviews, we are so thankful that God has led Chris to be our



Welcoming Chris and Ariel Horte

next Director of Student Ministries for the Newton Campus.

With Chris on board, we are fully staffed except for the Director of Children's Ministry position. I am truly excited for our pastoral team and the future of our ministries at the Newton Campus. Please continue to pray for our staff, as we hear God's leading and work as a team to accomplish his purposes together.

Junior worship elementary also restarted last fall. Although it has taken a while for children to come back, we are thankful to see more children and families return. We were able to reopen preschool during the summer, and the nursery at the beginning of the school year. It is also great to see the return of some of our previous volunteers, although we continue to pray for more teachers and assistants. Please also pray for a new children's director. Thus far, we have not received any applicants since opening the position almost a year ago.

God also opened new opportunities to serve our community and beyond. We were able to support a local non-profit called, "Welcome Home," which helps underserved families with basic household items. We thank BCEC for providing a vanload of blankets and sheets for their blanket drive. A BCEC alum also connected us with an Afghan refugee family. We were able to connect

them to Welcome Home, as well as provide other items they needed to settle in. Bob Lee, Steve Liu, Jay Leung, and I were able to visit the family several times to deliver items as well as spend time getting to know the family.

This past August, we sent a team comprised of youth, college, and adults from both campuses to Washington, DC to serve with Little Lights Urban Ministry. Our team supported their summer camp across four different public housing sites. It was an eye-opening and enriching experience to see God at work in a different context than ours. We are so thankful for your support through prayer and giving. We praise God for your partnership in the gospel and feel blessed to be part of the BCEC family.

As the Newton Campus' 20th-anniversary approaches, there is much to be thankful for. God has been forming and shaping us to be who we are today. As the renovations finish by the end of the year, we are in a great position to build upon the foundation that has been laid to be a greater blessing to our community and future generations.



NEWTON MANDARIN CONGREGATION

MINISTER JAMES SU

"See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland." Isaiah 43:19 (NIV)

As the pandemic approaches its end in 2022, the Newton Mandarin congregation has not stopped to count our blessings. The pandemic has had an enormous impact on our church, but God never forsakes His people. He paves new paths during difficult times, and He provides peace during urgent situations.

We are thankful for God's abundant blessings, leading my whole family to safely arrive in Boston on July 1 to wait for my start as a new member of the pastoral staff for the BCEC Newton Mandarin congregation. We were so thankful for His providence, waiting with joy for the issuance of my work visa and waiting with a hopeful attitude for this new opportunity to serve full time.

When I officially accepted the offer to serve the BCEC Newton Mandarin congregation starting from April 20, 2021, the pastoral team worked diligently for the visa application. Although I was not able to serve publicly while waiting for our visa approval, such as preaching on Sunday or leading Bible studies, I took the opportunity to visit the families of our congregation to build lovely and harmonious relationships. I thank God for giving me this time of preparation.

On Nov. 15, 2021, God opened the doors for the work visa to be approved, thus ushering the beginning of my journey of full-time ministry with the Mandarin congregation. In this beautiful BCEC family, my whole family can deeply feel the warmth and blessing from God through brothers and sisters and the pastoral staff. We also cheer for

all the brothers and sisters of the Mandarin congregation as we witness your passion and dedication, working diligently in God's work as disciples of Jesus Christ. Because of Lord Jesus, you shine as a light and give your best to Him to become His holy vessels. Even though I have served over a few months only so far, I feel as if I have been doing this for many years, creating a lot of wonderful memories such as the baptism of 14 adults and youths who have accepted Christ. God's blessings are truly beyond our imagination!





During my ministry in the last ten months, we have seen a few concrete changes in our congregation:

Online Gatherings

Compared to July of 2021 when we were having fully remote activities, 90% of brothers and sisters now attend in-person Sunday worship, as of September 2022.

Friday Fellowship Bible Study

Compared to 7-12 people who joined remotely in July 2021, we now have over 30 people joining in-person Friday fellowship at church.

Sunday Worship

When we resumed in-person worship, there were 25-30 people; as of September 2022, we now have 60-70 people joining Newton Mandarin Sunday worship in person.

Friday Children Ministry

Compared to the 5 children initially, we now have over 20 children participating in Friday's children fellowship.

Hallelujah, praise the Lord!
With God's grace, we will continue to offer our best to our God. I would like to share a praise song as an encouragement in our lives. May our lives become this beautiful song, and may we sing our praises until the day we see the face of our Lord.

“Live Out Love” by Amy Sand

A measure of love from heaven has come.
Like the height of mountains, like the depth of the oceans.

The mind cannot understand it; the hand cannot grasp it.
Because there is you, because there is me,
Willing to give, and diligently love,
Holding in one's heart, a measure of love.
Jesus' love encourages me to open wide my life,
Letting myself turn into someone else's blessing.
Jesus' love sets me alight in my heart, a fierce love's fire.
We can together, toward the world, live out love.



CHURCH OUTREACH

PASTOR STEVE LIU

Because God has blessed us, we strive to be a blessing to the Chinese/Asian community and to our neighbors by sharing the love of God and the Gospel of Jesus Christ. I'm grateful to see the spirit of this core value in every quarter of our church. BCEC brothers and sisters outreach through cross-congregation programs, as well as within congregations or even fellowship level initiatives. We are blessed to have dedicated and faithful leaders in long-standing ministries, such as ESL Classes, Local Evangelism Department (Cantonese), Project Destiny, Social Responsibility Committee, and VBS. We are also blessed by the creativity that led to new engagements, such as the Bible Robotics Kids' Week in Newton and a short-term missions trip to Little Lights children's program Washington, DC's public housing neighborhoods.



For ongoing ministry programs, the 2021-2022 ministry year marked a return to in-person outreach. Saturday ESL resumed some classes in person, but mostly online. There has been a greater interest in our citizenship classes, and we pray for students to also desire heavenly citizenship as well. Local Evangelism Department in Chinatown continues to run quarterly street evangelism, as well as their mamas weekly support group. The SR Committee also revived our bimonthly meal services at that Boston Rescue Mission this year. Praise the Lord for the new believers who came to know the Lord, and for the opportunities to be salt and light amongst our neighbors.

After an 18-month hiatus, Project Destiny Autumn to Spring resumed serving 35 youths after school, despite some COVID interruptions. We pray for their spiritual growth of 8 seniors who graduated out. PD's summer outreach also returned to in person for the first time since 2019, with 22 Chinatown area students enjoying field trips, classes, and bible skits once again. We praise God that the some of the youth continue to show interest in our regular Chinese and English youth discipleship ministries. We have had difficulty recruiting especially college-aged mentors in recent years, so we pray for more workers.

BCEC also came together across congregations in several ways to bless outward this year. Responding to Haiti's many natural and economic disasters, we collected \$31,676 for World Relief and Habitat for Humanity to build and repair homes in Les Cayes. We also partnered with our Haitian brethren at Boston Missionary Baptist by purchasing a shipping container to send supplies. In May, we walked the Global 6K for Water and 111 of us raising \$25,000 for water projects in communities that lack clean water. On a local level, we built Provision Ministry care packs for people experiencing homelessness and for children in Title 1 schools. We also served together with others to do clean-up and pantry projects through Love Your Block Boston (Chinatown) and Newton Serves. This year marked the conclusion of our weekly pandemic meal distribution site with Boston Public Schools, where 55 brothers and sisters served 340,000 meals to combat food insecurity in Chinatown.



Provision Ministry care package assembling

with Boston Public Schools, where 55 brothers and sisters served 340,000 meals to combat food insecurity in Chinatown.

Praise God for the generosity and service he has inspired among our church, and may we continue in that spirit together!

Some other outreach engagements this year:

- \$85,000 Charity fund supporting local and global ministry partners.
- August Moon Festival Booth (Chinatown)
- Evangelism Explosion III (Newton)
- Alpha Course (Newton)
- Joining Boston Local Missions, winter and summer
- Quincy Bible Study outreach
- Home visitations
- Handing out homelessness care bags at Boston Common
- Christmas Banquet for homeless community with St. Mary Orthodox Church
- Partnership with Chinatown Respite Care (restarted September 2022)
- "Chosen" Honduras Child Sponsorship Campaign (October 2022)

I pray that in every congregation and fellowship we will continue to look outward to proclaim Christ in whatever way God has gifted us, and we will strengthen, support, and follow the leaders in our outreach ministries, so that more people may know the good news of Jesus.

NEWTON RENOVATION

PASTOR KEN LIU

Recently, during an interfaith clergy gathering, a pastor introduced herself and shared that during the first week of her new call earlier this year, the bell tower of their historic church fell apart. Consequently, the church had to close its sanctuary and front lawn. It will cost the church over two million dollars to restore. What a way to start a ministry!

Stories like these put things in perspective, especially as we go through our renovation journey. There are always twists and turns along the way, especially when dealing with a historic building. Thankfully our bell tower seems to be ok, but whenever you dig around old buildings, you'll always come across some unexpected surprises along the way. Some come in the form of obscure coding requirements like separate drainage for "sacred water" from our baptismal pool. Another issue included something simple as cutting into the stage for our baptismal only to find concrete underneath, which necessitated an excavation effort. There were many more examples of these types of issues that came up along the way.

Despite these unexpected issues, we did see progress in the new chapel and sanctuary over this past year. We were able to complete the infrastructure, including raising the

floors, installing the new baptistry, erecting soundproof walls, and updating the electrical work. We are now at the finishing stage of the chapel, which includes new paint, carpet, and installation of the AV system. We hope to see the chapel completed at the end of October. In the sanctuary, the pews and stage were removed, walls repaired, and a fresh coat of paint applied to the walls, wainscoting, and beams. We are waiting for the permit from the city, but also future funding in order to continue the work in the sanctuary and start work in the kitchen.

Although there were many unexpected costs, there were other considerations including what work is better to do now than later. Since we are acutely aware of how disruptive renovations are, the thought of embarking on another project in 3-5 years when we could do it now seemed unappealing. One significant addition is an upgrade to the HVAC, which will bring fresh air into the sanctuary. Currently, all our HVAC systems draw from other parts of the building, which means we are recirculating old air. For the sanctuary, the air is drawn from the lower-level multifunction room next to the kitchen. The new ductwork and relocation of the make-up air unit will ensure that the fresh air will be drawn from outside. The upgrade was not originally part of the FY21-22 budget, but the

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renovation team felt it was essential to do it now rather than later. There are also other minor scope changes and additions we made along the way to make our spaces more worshipful, welcoming, and conducive for community and mission.

I'd like to mention one more unexpected surprise. When we first broke ground, the contractors removed one of the pews from the wainscoting along the wall. In the cavity of the wall, they found a church bulletin from Central Congregational Church dating back to April 9, 1933, on Palm Sunday. On the back of the bulletin, there were over 60 names listed for their choir, as well as an additional 30 names for their children's choir. According to the Congregational Church archives, the 1930s and 1940s were the most vibrant times in Central Congregational Church's history with over 1000 members!

Unfortunately, since the 1940s, the church steadily declined until the congregation dissolved in 2003. Like many other churches in New England, it seemed like the church was destined to be yet another luxury condo complex, office space, or art studio. Thankfully, they passed the baton to us and 218 Walnut St. continues to be a church where gospel ministry continues. These historical nuggets remind us of the sacrifices of the generations before us and how crucial it is for churches to pass along the gospel to the next generation. It's a

reminder to us that all that we do, including renovations, are to serve not just ourselves, but to serve our community and future generations.



Newton Chapel baptismal pool



Newton sanctuary under renovation

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