

Youth/English Ministry 2012 Annual Report

2012 has in many ways been the most exciting time in the 11 year history of CCCGA's Youth/English Ministry. It began with the request that the Woodrow's stay on as the part-time leaders of the Youth Program, recognizing that a Plan of Succession was well underway to secure a candidate to lead this program on a full-time basis. We have enjoyed this extended opportunity to serve at the request the Search Committee, assisting in every way possible. In the meantime, the Youth Ministry continued according to the established plan that involved the hard work and spiritual gifts of many volunteers. For this we praise God and are delighted to present the following overview of these activities.

Worship (Phil Woodrow)

Sunday Worship remained the highlight of our week, a time when the youth, some parents, and an increasing number of visitors joined to worship God and enjoy the sweetness of His presence.

We began preaching from the Gospel of John in March 2011 and completed the final lesson in the 21st Chapter on the last Sunday in August 2012, focusing in particular on verse 25: "Now there are also many other things which Jesus did which are of such a nature that if they were written, each one, I do not suppose that the universe itself could contain the books that would be written." To emphasize the Apostle John's point, we brought attention to the estimated one billion, trillion stars that occupy the outer atmosphere; and this is only one part the creation for which Christ was responsible – an amazing ending to an amazing Gospel.

Since then, we have been preaching on the theme, "Equipped for Every Good Work", focusing upon The Sermon on the Mount, beginning with the Beatitudes, found in Matthew, Chapter 5. The richness of Jesus' teaching these amazing 8 lessons is best described as "sweeter than honey and drippings of the honeycomb."

The first Sunday of the month is also observed as "Persecuted Church Sunday". We have worked with the Voice of the Martyrs and established a core of volunteers who prepare current reports delivered at the conclusion of our youth worship time. This gives us the opportunity to identify different countries, groups or individuals each month who are suffering directly because of their love for Jesus Christ. It should be noted that, because of their leadership CCCGA, both youth and adults contributed \$1500 in December to aid and encourage our Nigerian brothers and sisters in Christ. It is obvious that the Spirit of God is at work among us – may His name be praised!

Praise Team (Ivan Yu, Joyce Tseng). Praise Team ministry has truly become a spiritual force within our congregational worship each Sunday. The evidence of the Holy Spirit's presence is

on display as these committed servants come each Sunday prepared and filled with the joy of the Lord as they lead, both in music, Scripture references and prayer.

The leadership is shared each week among the veterans, while the younger members are provided constant training and encouragement, with the recognition that they are the leaders of tomorrow. May God continue to bless each member of this team as an amazing example of selfless love!

Education

Senior Sunday School (Blossom Woodrow). The Sunday School classes for High School and College students have followed the theme taken from Hebrews 4:2, reminding us that God's Word does not profit if it's not accompanied by faith and obedience. They studied many biblical examples of this, confirming that God's grace is always abounding to the faithful.

During Blossom's absences, she received much assistance from the well-grounded college students who sometimes provided their own materials to encourage this age group.

Junior Sunday School (Caiyun Chen, Tracy Zhang, Huiping Zhang). The Sunday School classes for Middle Schoolers continue to follow the Junior High School Curriculum from Regular Baptist Press. We started off the year with 13 lessons on Essential Bible Truths, followed by another 13 lessons studying Books of Judges and Ruth to help students know that God blesses obedience and those who trust Him. We closed the year with the theme on Growing Spiritually, which provides the framework for studying fundamental areas of spiritual growth, such as Bible study, church attendance, understanding God's will, and overcoming temptation. We praise God that students have become more and more open to sharing and discussion during the course of the year, and we continue to pray that they could apply what they have learned during the class to their everyday life in school and at home.

There were also occasions during the year when joint classes were held dealing with topics of common interest (i.e. the "persecuted church" and the terrible tragedy that took place in Newtown CT in December).

Baptism Class (Phil Woodrow, Eric Ting, Eunice Ting). What a privilege to report that the visible fruit of this past year has resulted in four of our youth being baptized on Thanksgiving Sunday. This was followed by their personal testimonies, boldly declaring they had received the gift of faith in Jesus Christ as their Savior and Lord. There is no greater joy than to recognize the love and labor of their families and so many others within this Church who were used by God to touch these young lives for all eternity. This is the best possible example of what Jesus spoke of in John 15:16 – "You didn't choose me. I chose you. I appointed you to go and produce fruit that will last."

May our prayers of thanksgiving be expressed as we continue to teach and encourage them as newborn babes in Christ. By His grace, they will become the leaders of tomorrow to carry the torch of Christ in reaching yet others!

Christian Nurturing (Eric Ting, Huiping Zhang)

Bible Study/Fellowship. In April 2012, Eric/Huiping, together with Eunice/Tracy sensed a burden for the youth in CCCGA, and responded to God by reorganizing/reinvigorating the English/youth Bible study on Friday nights. After much praying and seeking consultation from fellow brothers and sisters, we decided that Eric/Huiping were to lead the studies on the Book of Acts. Since then, we have been meeting weekly in church. The attendance have been somewhere between 15 and 20. It is our desire to reach out to the unsaved young people with the love of God, to equip them in the Biblical truth, and to disciple them to follow, to serve and to love God all the days of their lives. Our weekly studies usually start with a 20-30min. of praise/worship, led mostly by our college/high school/middle school students, followed by a Bible study of 1-1.5hrs, in a question/discussion format to encourage everyone's participation. During the Christmas season, this group of students participated in a Nativity Play offered at the CCCGA Christmas Eve service. It is our desire to reach out to more young people from our church families and our community, and provide a solid foundation in God's word for them, and develop closer relationships with them to be able to help them address their specific need in their family/school/church life.

Retreat. We had our first retreat together with the Chinese congregation this April. Eric, Eunice and Tracy led the discussions among high schoolers, and Ivan, Joyce and Huiping led the discussion among middle schoolers. There was a second retreat for the Youth/English congregation during the Labor Day weekend. The guest speaker is John Heflick, a candidate for our Youth/English pastor. The theme is on "Abiding in Christ – Through Life's Washing Machine".

Other Ministries

Prayer Meeting (Ivan Yu). This ministry began couple years ago, and has been held each Sunday following our lunch hour. It was once attended by mostly college students and adults, but things changed in recent months that some high schoolers also joined in regularly.

Youth/English Pastor Search

Search Committee: Huiping Zhang, Pastor Hsia, Qi Tan, Xuming Wang, Eric Ting, Zewu Chen

Invited Members: Ivan Yu, Sophia Hsia, Joyce Tseng

The Search Committee has received more than twenty inquiries and applications, six out of which has gone through extensive reviews. Mr. John Heflick was brought in for an interview at the end of June. He was invited back again along with his family to lead a retreat for our Youth/English congregation during the Labor Day weekend. The feedback from the parents and youth was fairly positive. The Committee also held an open discussion with the CCCGA congregation in September. After many prayers, the Committee eventually recommended Mr. Heflick as our Youth/English pastor first to the Deacon Board and then to the church congregation. The recommendation was passed in majority during our second annual meeting in November. However, Mr. Heflick declined as he was also offered a Mission Pastor position from his home church at the same time. The committee then resumed the search effort and received five more inquiries, although one declined later. We have conducted one phone interview, and will follow up with a second phone interview. Please continue to pray for “the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into His harvest field”.