



基督工人中心

CHRISTIAN WITNESS CENTER

P. O. BOX 700, WARSAW, MO 65355

TEL. 660-438-7710

E-mail: cwc@cwcnnet.org

Home Page: www.cwcnnet.org

VICE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: CINDY CHIANG

TEL. 660-438-7710

August 2024 Prayer Letter

Dear Brothers and Sisters, Peace to you in the Lord!

When you receive this letter, we have just finished August Bible Camp, Discipleship Training Camp, and are getting ready to leave for the 10-day mission trip from August 16 to 25. Before setting out, I would like to take this time to share with you a news, which is: This year's Winter Conference will be held at the Embassy Suite Hotel in Rogers, Arkansas.

Last October, unlike in previous years, the Sheraton Kansas City Hotel did not ask us to renew our contract with them for another two years before the contract expired. And during the Winter Conference, we also noticed their indifferent attitude and ineffective service. We sensed that their "attitude, that it is not {friendly}... as formerly" (Gen. 31:2, 5), and figured that it might be the time to say goodbye to each other! Not surprisingly, in January when we took the initiative to contact them for the new contract, we found out that not only did they raise the room price drastically, but more importantly, they will no longer allow us to use their kitchen to prepare Chinese food! Price adjustment because of inflation is understandable, but not being able to use the kitchen means we have to eat the expensive hotel food which might also not satisfy our Chinese stomach. These two challenges are indeed put us in a difficult situation.

So from mid-January, we started proactively looking for other venues. At first, we thought: "If there is no place for us here, there must be somewhere else", we definitely will find a place suitable for us. Our goal is clear, the hotel must meet the following five criteria:

First: Must have two large ballrooms; one for meetings and one for dining.

Second: Have at least 400 sleeping rooms.

Third: Have at least 14 to 15 breakup rooms (5 for adults, 3 for teenagers, and 6 for children and infants).

Fourth: Very importantly, we can use their kitchen to prepare Chinese food.

Fifth: Not being too far from the center, because we need to rush back immediately as soon as the Winter Conference is over for the December Discipleship Training that starts that evening.

There are large hotels in the radius of a few hours' drive, but only one hotel at St. Louis (MO) fits the five criteria. But they charge us huge money as their compensation just because we did not eat their food and beverage. By mid-February, we found that the biggest problem was that there were no hotels with two ballrooms, and none of them will allow us to use their kitchen to prepare meals. After hitting a wall everywhere, I suddenly felt anxious and scared, my faith also fell into a pit. I felt that I am in complete darkness, and kept meditating on the scriptures about faith in the Bible trying to encourage myself, such as:

"Faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen" (Hebrews 11:1). God knows that we are looking for a suitable venue, but with the uncertainty and unknown, we do not know where we should go. God wants us to have faith in Him, but after more than a month of searching, we still could not find a suitable hotel. This is truly a test of our

faith. I have, in the past, shared impassionedly and eloquently about Romans 4:17, 18: Abraham “in the presence of Him whom he believed, {even} God, who gives life to the dead!... In hope against hope he believed”, but now such a great test of faith has come upon us. O God, for more than a month, we have inquired all hotels within a five-hour drive radius, but are disappointed, such a big Winter Conference, will we have a place to hold it this year? I then realized that although God had tested me in the past, it was all about my personal affairs, and was insignificant. But now it is about a 1,000-people large meeting, yet we still cannot find a suitable venue. The path of faith, if has not literally gone through the difficulty of "seeing no future, seeing nothing, and seeing no hope", is not truly being tested.

Before the March Gospel Camp, with no anticipation, we inquired the Embassy Suite Hotel in Rogers, Arkansas, a three-and- half hour drive away from CWC, which has its own ballroom with a large Convention Center. The hotels we have asked about in the past, although some of them may not have two ballrooms, but have a large Convention Center next door under the local city government. But apart from signing a separate contract with the city government, none of the hotels allow us to prepare our own meals. Embassy Suite Hotel, although the room rate is twice as much as Kansas City Sheraton (but they said: this is because their rooms are all suites), and we will be allowed to use their kitchen. During Gospel Camp, I brought up this option (and another possible hotel in St. Louis) to the CWC coworkers and the board members who came to the camp. And they unanimously chose the Embassy Suite Hotel in Rogers, Arkansas. When I shared my worries about the budget, one of the board members said very well, “Do not worry about the budget. Actually, offerings comes with need!” So we proceeded to discuss the details with Embassy Suite Hotel and also have some coworkers visited the Hotel. And the contract was signed at the end of June.

For me who have been a believer for decades, this journey of faith has been unforgettable, and the lessons I have learned are:

- (1) "Faith" is not a request for God to exert His power to fulfill your expectations, but to believe that God is able even when your eyes have not yet seen! Timing is in God's hands.
- (2) "Faith" is: Even when standing on the rough shores of the Red Sea, " "Do not fear! Stand by and see the salvation of the LORD which He will accomplish for you today " (Exodus 14:13). Wait quietly for God to strike! Don't be in a hurry as no clue.
- (3) Allow God to intervene in our lives and allow Him to continually exercise and hone us so that our faith "is more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire" (1 Peter 1:7).
- (4) The path of "faith" should not be walked alone, but should be with spiritual companions who share the load and support each other (during this time, the brothers and sisters around me have given me a lot of encouragement).

This year's Winter Conference we will have many new speakers and new topics. And with my own faith journey, I would like to begin the invitation process of the meeting, please reserve your time and prepare for the meeting.

This year's prayer letter messages have been focusing on the theme of “Turn to God for Revival”. This topic needs to be approached and understood from different angles. As the short-term mission teams are coming for sharing the gospel in August and September, we have invited one of our board members, Brother Robert Kao, to share “Return to God and Look Forward to Christ”.

Return to God and Look Forward to Christ

As autumn approaches, many short-term missionary groups will come to the Midwest of the United States to carry out gospel missions. Some are from the East Coast and Texas, but most are from the West Coast. They come here faithfully for evangelistic missions, visiting churches, Bible study groups, student and family fellowship groups, Christian worker centers, and individuals in at least thirteen states across the central United States. Their main targets are first- and partially second-generation students, parents, immigrants, and entrepreneurs from Asian countries. After the epidemic, many U.S. campuses saw a significant decline in Asian students and immigrants due to changes in some political and economic landscapes. However, the mission of the gospel remains important and cannot be ignored. Therefore, many short-term mission teams will continue to come to the Midwest to preach the gospel of the Lord.

The needs of the gospel remind us of Jesus' compassion toward the multitudes. Matthew 9:35-36 describes clearly this, “Then Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people. But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd.” In Luke 4:17-19, Jesus again quotes from the Book of Isaiah to explain the importance of the gospel. “The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me because He has

anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed; To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord." These illnesses, the critical situation of exhaustion, dispersion, poverty, loss, captivity, blindness, and oppression, are just as many people suffer today due to plague, war, weather, and many dangerous environmental conditions.

Outsider - No hope without Christ

When we are in this situation, if we do not know Christ, we are like outsiders, have no relationship with Christ, and live in hopeless, fearful situations every day. Ephesians 2:12 describes this situation, "that at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. "When we are lonely and suffering, we often want to find a way out on our own or blame others. If we know Him and turn to Him, God has the sovereignty and truth to provide us with comfort and hope during times of suffering and despair. "Fear not, for I am with you; Be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, Yes, I will help you, I will uphold you with My righteous right hand." (Isaiah 41: 10) After we know and accept God, He reminds us "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways," says the Lord. "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, And My thoughts than your thoughts." (Isaiah 55:8b-9) This is what a beautiful hope.

People of Peace - Christ Makes Us One

As we search for the path to take, make critical decisions, and live the right life, Jesus once reminded us, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." (John 14:6) Jesus suffered greatly to express the love of the cross, thereby ultimately be able to end the suffering of His children forever. He endured and fully accepted the suffering of the cross, determined to fulfill the will of His Heavenly Father and redeem those who were bound by sin. Jesus' experience helps believers understand God's power, presence, and purpose. Today our loss and suffering draw us to turn to God and experience His mercy, love, and faithfulness. Unless we turn completely to Him, we will limit our source of hope to a world full of trouble. " But now in Christ Jesus, you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ, For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation," (Ephesians 2:13-14) When we accept Him as our Savior, we have a big turning point that gives us new hope and faith in our lives, because the wall of separation between man and God has been Dismantle, Christ becomes our peace.

People of the Family of God - New Man and Intimate Relationships with God

When we open our hearts and accept the Lord Jesus as our Savior, who is our peace, we can become children of God and enter into a new and intimate relationship with Him so that we belong to the family. As Ephesians 2:15-16 describes, "having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace, and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity."

Christ came to preach the gospel of peace. He is not only our peace but also preaches this gospel through His word and His body, the church. This gospel brings good news that preaches peace and glad tidings, and proclaims salvation, both to those who are far off and nearby (Isaiah 52:7 and 57:19), including Gentiles and Jews. Ephesians 2 says salvation is based on the Father's election and predestination, through His Son's atonement and preaching, and complete the inspiration by the Holy Spirit, which enables people to "have access to the Father." The result of Christ's peacemaking is that not only did the Gentiles who were far away from God come close to God and be at peace with each other, but they also became one family and called God Father together, and even the "sons of disobedience" and the "sons of wrath" can repent and be brought together. They can also call God their "Father" and have a close relationship.

God's dwelling place - The place where God dwells by the Holy Spirit

As we become new people, we continue to be built up in the church with other children of God. It is a building with Christ as the chief cornerstone, and we are built into a temple of God. "So you are no longer strangers and aliens, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God. And you are built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the chief cornerstone, in whom every building is joined together becoming a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit." (Ephesians 2:19-22) We are also built together by Him, which means that all believers will be brought into the church by God, connected, and built together in Christ.

In the Old Testament, when David wanted to build a temple for God, God declared that He did not need a temple made with human hands (1 Chronicles 17:4-6); Later when God allowed Solomon to build a temple, God revealed that the temple was a

place for the people to enjoy His presence (2 Chronicles 6:18-21). But in the New Testament, God declares clearly that he wants the church to be his “dwelling place by the Holy Spirit.” The Holy Spirit indwells the hearts of every believer (John 14:17; 1 John 3:24), so every believer is a “temple of the Holy Spirit” (1 Corinthians 6:19); the Holy Spirit also dwells in the community of believers; hence, the church is also the “temple of God” (1 Corinthians 3:16; 2 Corinthians 6:16). The church is the resting place for those who are “humble and a contrite in spirit and tremble at My word.” (Isaiah 66:2b) In the new heaven and new earth, the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb will forever make the New Jerusalem his residence in eternity (Revelation 21:22).

To sum up, God’s gospel is prepared for all mankind. We need to be sensitive to the current environment and circumstances. The people who surround us daily or the people God occasionally sends may live comfortably and peacefully, or they may experience stressful and difficult lives. Yet, all people need to receive eternal life from God and be able to turn to Christ as their hope. God invites everyone to receive His fresh, merciful, and sustainable grace. The Holy Spirit will also reveal His power and God’s unfailing love to them. As Romans 15:13 describes, “Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.” Amen!

August & September Short-term Missions

Praise the Lord! In the past few years (even in 2020 and 2021 when the pandemic was severe), God have continued to move churches in the East and West Coast to send mission teams to the Midwest. That’s why when we mentioned “short-term mission teams”, it was natural to respond: “short-term mission teams are from California”. But it has a big change in past two years. More churches from Texas start involving in the mission to student ministry. We thank the Lord for all the mission team members that they came to share the gospel at their own expense and in their 10 precious vacation days. This year we have two tiers: one from August 16 to 25 and one from September 6 to 15. So far, seven churches will send teams for August, and four churches in September (could be arranged into 5 teams). August teams will be going to “the near” states such as: Missouri, Kansas, Iowa, Arkansas, Illinois (also Kentucky, Alabama), etc., And in September we will go to “the farther” states. Since the number of students in various places is decreasing, our goal this year is not limited to students or new students, the short-term mission team will reach any gospel seekers. I often use 3 John 5-8 to encourage those churches in the Midwest who team up with the mission teams “ For they went out for the sake of the Name, accepting nothing from the Gentiles. Therefore, we ought to support such men, so that we may be fellow workers with the truth.” Their itinerary will be posted on the August and September prayer calendars. Please remember their footsteps in evangelism in your prayer (Romans 10:15).

Future Meetings

(1) Winter Conference (12/21 evening to 12/25 noon)

As mentioned above, this year Winter Conference will be held at the Embassy Suite Hotel in Rogers, Arkansas, please reserve your schedule early and invite brothers and sisters and your gospel friends of the church to attend the meeting. God has prepared many new speakers for us: Pastor Mingpeng Gong of Canada, whose burden is to evangelize gospel friends from mainland China. Pastor Larry Wong of SAGOS Institute of Preaching & Bible Exposition will share the Bible exposition messages. Another feature of this year is that we have specially invited Teacher Joshua Peng, who led our Holy Land Study Group last year and has been in Israel for decades, to speak about the Holy Land and the Bible. Pastor David Lu will still preach his specialty: the message of eschatological prophecy; In addition, Pastor Andy and Hilary Tso from the Brooklyn Pastoral Church in New York, who emphasize parent-child relationships and home schooling, will talk about family workshop. Elder Daniel Luan of the Rutgers Community Christian Church in New Jersey will also come and share messages. The speakers in the English group are Pastor Paul Sin and others, so please do not miss out this opportunity. Detailed information will be posted on the CWC website and monthly newsletter and prayer letters in the coming months.

(2) December Discipleship Training (12/25 evening to 12/29 noon)

As soon as the Winter Conference is over, December Discipleship Camp will be held at the center that evening. Due to the schedule of the Winter Conference and January Bible Camp, we have compressed the December Discipleship Training to four days, however, it still requires full-time attendance. Thank the Lord that Pastor Mingpeng Gong and Teacher Joshua Peng will come to teach. Detailed information will be posted on [CWC website](#) soon. Please not only reserve time for yourself, but also invite other brothers and sisters of your church to participate in the training.

(3) January Bible Camp (12/29 to 1/4/2025)

This time we will study “the Book of Acts and Life of Paul”. Praise the Lord, 44 brothers and sisters have already handed in

the registration form after the August Bible Camp. Pastor David Su and Sister Grace Lee will come to teach. Assignments on how to read the Book of Acts and mapping Paul's four missionary journeys will be given to the applicants according to the syllabus. The deadline for registration is 11/15. The application form and syllabus have been posted on the CWC website, [please click here](#) to start preparing early.

New Online Donation

In the past few years, brothers and sisters have asked whether they can make donation online. However, because the Christian Witness Center is located in a rural area. The local bank we have is small and do not have the advanced fund transfer systems. Now we finally opened an account that allows using Zelle to make donations in a larger bank in Kansas City (Missouri) so that we could save brothers and sisters the trouble of writing checks and mailing them. For how to do this, [please click here](#). In the past two months, not only we have seen brothers and sisters donating with QR codes from their cell phones when they came to the meetings, but also using Zelle transfer from their homes. Please make good use of this channel of contribution if your heart is burdened to support the CWC financially.

Past Meeting Reports

August Bible Camp (7/28-8/3) and August Discipleship Training (8/4-8/10)

Thank the Lord that Pastor Daniel Shen and Sister Grace Lee had come to teach the "Life of Christ/Four Gospels". Nearly 60 brothers and sisters and co-workers with their 27 children attended the camp. Four Gospels seem familiar, but there are still many things we don't know about which we thought we had already known. Thank the Lord, with the speakers' thorough teaching, everyone has learned a lot. In the following Discipleship Training, 30 brothers and sisters and co-workers brought their 22 children to participate. All were edified especially were much impressed by one subject- Spiritual Formation - confession of sins and spiritual devotion. Thank the Lord that He would surely speak to us when we desire to be equipped. If you have missed the August Discipleship Training or the Bible Camp, please do not miss the December Discipleship Training or January Bible Camp for we know that God will always grant us grace when we pursue deeper spiritual growth.

Sunday Online Bible Study & Prayer Meeting

During the pandemic, many churches' meetings were held online, that was why Pastor Ko started this Sunday evening Bible study and prayer meeting to lead brothers and sisters continue to have a life of Bible reading, prayer, and spiritual sharing. After the August Bible Camp, CWC coworkers have decided to utilize this platform, not only to help brothers and sisters to prepare for the next Bible Camp (we will teach how to study the Bible, how to do the outlines, and how to write the assigned topic reports), but also spend some time to pray for the need of CWC ministry. We will shorten the meeting to one hour (7:00-8:00PM CT) so that it will not affect your next day schedule. We will study "the Book of Acts and Life of Paul". Zoom ID is: 85888709271, passcode: 567482. Please come and study the Bible together that we will be equipped in the Lord.

Thanksgiving and Prayer Requests

1. After half a year of prayer and searching for a venue, with your prayers, God has provided a venue for this year's Winter Conference, the Embassy Suites in Rogers, Arkansas. Please mark your calendar and reserve time (December 21-25) to attend. This is a new change. Please continue to pray for the adaptations we have to the new venue, and for a good working relationship with the hotel.

2. Pray for the August and September mission teams that the Lord opens the way of evangelism and add numbers of saved to churches.

3. For Coworkers:

* Mrs. Ko: Thank the Lord for allowing me to participate in the August Discipleship Training. This is the first time in many years that I can sit in class for the whole time, what a refreshing experience. Please continue to pray for the healing of my sciatica pain. Also pray the Lord to help me find a suitable person to fix the flooding of my house basement.

* Sister Cindy Chiang: Thank the Lord for the two meetings in August that were filled with God's grace. Pray that the Lord continue to bless the teamwork with August and September short-term mission teams in various places. Because of the meetings and short-term missions, many of the office works have also been delayed. Pray that the Lord grants me wisdom and knowledge from above dealing with all office works and make good use of the time.

* Brother Qinglong Liang: Pray that the Lord will increase my willingness to love Him in participating the August short-term mission; a heart that is willing to be blameless in the Word; Serve God's church with brothers and sisters in Columbia according to His will; a heart of willing to take on more responsibilities that God has for me in the family. Continue to pray for the green card application process.

* Pastor Charles Huang: Please pray for the church outreach in the new semester; good teamwork with the California short-term mission team to edify each other and prosper the gospel. Pray that the Lord grants me with His Word shepherding the church in Champaign, bless Mrs. Huang's serving in the worship ministry, and bless the study and growth of the three children in the new semester.

* American coworker Scott Jerome: Continued prayers for healing of Becci's arm and shoulder in range of motion and to rebuild the strength; and for Scott's dad, who is having a biopsy on his lung.

4. Pray for the CWC monthly financial need (General fund, Building fund, Training fund, etc.) asking the Lord to manifest His abundant provision and allow more brothers and sisters to experience the blessings of giving.

5. For CWC: Pray that the Lord will bring more co-workers to the CWC ministry for the furtherance of the gospel ministry in the Midwest.

Emmanuel

In the Lord,

Sister Cindy Chiang