

Rochester Chinese Christian Church

ECHO

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Rochester Chinese Christian Church
羅城華人基督教會



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English Sunday Worship
9:30 am

中文主日學
上午九時三十分

English Sunday School
11:15 am

中文主日崇拜
上午十一時十五分

Call the church for other
**fellowship, bible study
& youth group meetings**

欲知其他團契聚會
查經班，請電教會

Rochester Chinese Christian Church West
羅城西區華人基督教會

Located at
Life Stone Wesleyan Church
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主日崇拜
Sunday Worship
下午 4:00 - 5:15 pm

主日學
Sunday School
下午 5:20 - 6:15 pm





Mediating Life

Pastor Mitchell Herring

"Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. These words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your sons, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up."

Deuteronomy 6:4-7

This passage from the book of Deuteronomy is one of my favorite passages in the Bible. *"Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is One"* is the creedal truth that defines the core of Judaism. It is recited and sung numerous times during a typical synagogue worship service. What follows are also some of the most important words in the Bible. When asked by a scholar which is the greatest commandment, the Lord Jesus Christ quoted him this passage.

Although to love the Lord, the Giver of life and the breath of life, our Sustainer and our Savior, is the greatest command of Scripture, we fall far short. One area where this shows is in our speech and thought life. For right after this greatest command, Moses goes on to say that "these words" should *be on our hearts and the subject of our frequent thought and conversation*. After all, we think and speak about what we love. But reflection in and conversation on God's Law and God's Word is not only a barometer of our love for our Savior. It is also a means of grace that He has given us to come to better know His ways, His perfections and His love, and so to better *love Him back*. *"We love, because he first loved us..."* (1 John 4:19).

Reflection and conversation on God's Word is in decline in much of the contemporary church, and in the lives of many professing Christians. Perhaps this is partly a function of our pursuit of instant gratification, convenience, multi-media, preoccupation with fast (-food, -service, etc.), diminished attention spans, and

diminished capacity for thoughtful listening and analytical thinking. All of this contributes to a decrease in active brain function and cognitive ability. From this it follows that there is less internalization of precious truth, and increasingly superficial and hollow faith and life. This in turn results in an inability to think about the issues of our lives in truly biblical terms, to integrate biblical truths into our daily lives, to live genuinely Christian lives, and therefore also to relate biblical truths to others in an honest, meaningful way.

Along these lines, recently I have reflected on what makes an effective Sunday school teacher. This is a challenge for me too. An effective Sunday school teacher is one who is learning to reflect on and internalize the truths he is conveying. His students like to listen. He is not merely teaching a curriculum or presenting teaching points from a lesson plan. Rather he is *mediating life*; he is imparting the eternal truths of Scripture, which through his study and reflection coalesce with his own spirit, and result in a "composite entity"--"life," the truths of Scripture mediated through his life. What the students see in the teacher is his life, heart, and soul. They see what these truths mean to him, how he himself interacts with them and expresses them. It resonates with the hearers because they identify with it--it touches real life.

My seminary president Dr. Timothy Lin used to say that the objective Word of God without study and reflection is like uncooked rice. Uncooked rice cannot benefit us because it is not easily digested. We need to cook it first, and then we can digest it. Through our thoughtful study and reflection on the Word of God, aided by the Holy Spirit, we "cook" it and are able to "digest it," to take it in so that it becomes our subjective blessing, integrated into our souls, powerful and life-changing.

May God help us to recapture the art of reflection--first reflection on the Word of God (this presupposes that you are reading it in the first place!) then reflection on our lives, events in our lives, on the world, and on events occurring in it. For those in the arts, in literature and music, and even in scientific investigation, this capacity for *reflection* and *wonder* is essential. Modern science began several centuries ago with men like Newton, Galileo, Copernicus, Boyle, Pascal, and others who *reflected in wonder* upon the natural world and the universe. They considered that if

God thought the universe worth creating, then surely for us it is worth studying. Reflection on the ordinaries of everyday life also becomes the inspiration for writers and musicians. Many of the Beatles' songs, for instance, were inspired by the news, by events, and by the people they ran into in everyday life. The most mundane occurrence or object somehow strikes a chord, becomes a topic of reflection, and produces a song or work of art.



Reflection means we don't take anything for granted, but that we *notice* things and reflect on them. Anything is fair game. To paraphrase the Deuteronomy passage... when you're out walking, when you're mowing the grass, when you're taking a shower, when you're waiting for the bus, when you're washing your face, when you're lying in bed before you go to sleep or after you wake up, and so on. When you reflect on the gospel, the world, and your life in this way, it will help to open your understanding, and to *internalize* and *personalize* the eternal truths of the kingdom of God and of life.

They will become your possession forever, and it will be your great joy to share them with others, as mediating true life itself to them, a mediation of life through you.

Worship Disorder

Pastor Peter Ho

The November 25, 2013 edition of TIME magazine features an article on Society and Mental Health entitled *The People Who Answer the Phone*, and subtitled: Suicide Rates Are Rising in America. Can the Voice on the Other End of This Line Help? In this article, we the readers are presented with staggering statistics, such as 1.2 million number of calls to the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline are expected this year; there is a 49.4% increase in the suicide rate for U.S. men ages 50-54 from 1999-2010; the amount lost to suicide-related medical bills and work-loss each year costs \$35 billion.

Some people may immediately see how these statistics are reflected in the country's budget deficit and how the country's taxpayers unnecessarily bear this huge financial burden. What attracts me, though, is the story of how they developed an awareness campaign for the national lifeline in the state of Wyoming, where the suicide rates is the highest of any state: 45 suicides per 100,000 people in 2012 compared to the national average of close to 12 suicides per 100,000 people.

As the Wyoming Department of State gathered information for the campaign, they reached out to men who had attempted suicide and were willing to talk about it. A technical consultant hired to work on the campaign related how they reached out to such men, "We said, 'Tell us your story, and go way back.' We discovered that if you're going to effectively get to them, you need to go upstream in their life, at a point where things are going wrong but they're not yet thinking about suicide." In other words, they tried to trace the problem to where things went wrong. Where did it go wrong?

Interestingly, the cover story in this same edition of TIME is on the assassination of JFK half a century ago, which has been explained with different conspiracy theories. According to the writer, the search for theories to explain this brutality has blossomed into a "conspiracy industry" as various investigators come up with books, videos, websites, and conferences on different aspects of the assassination. It has even felt like a game in perfecting their respective theories.

The writer is convinced that the rise of this industry is motivated as much by faith as by forensics. He defines faith as "that set of beliefs that frames our approach to data and mystery," and suggests that "each of us must have some sort of faith because we can never have perfect knowledge, no matter how much information we accumulate. Faith fills in the gaps, and those whose faith tells them that monstrous event imply monstrous causes will never accept that a weak little man [Lee Harvey Oswald], acting alone, murdered John Kennedy."

How does these two stories relate to each other? I suggest that we string them both with the thread of faith. If faith keeps the

murder investigation going for all these years, faith, or the lack of it, also affects people's suicidal thought when things are going wrong. Faith acts as gap-filler that prevents people from falling into the abyss of the unknown when things do not turn out the way they are supposed to be. Faith keeps people from accepting others' explanation as to who might be behind the murder. Faith also keeps people from seeing the possibility of fixing what goes wrong in life. The lack of faith also keeps people from seeing where things go wrong.

In a non-Christian setting, to have faith is to believe in something, or anything, as the object of faith that will deliver what is expected of it, such as "I have faith in this 20-year old car," or "I have faith in the weather." After you become a Christian, however, you will immediately notice that "faith" in Christian *lingo* carries a different nuance. The object of such "faith" is rarely spelled out, such as when people tell you to "have faith," not being clear whether it refers to faith in yourself or some unknown entity.

Faith is indeed a tired word in Christian terminology, sometimes with unclear reference. This brief article aims at sharpening the focus of faith through the stories above while tying it with the corollary idea of worship. The connection between the two is that "you have faith in that which you worship." If you worship material possessions, you have faith in the ability of those possessions to bring you pleasure, comfort, satisfaction, recognition, admiration, respect, acceptance, praise, etc., so much so that your life is all about amassing a huge collection of material belongings. When you fail, and run up a huge amount of debt instead, you are doubly hit and feel powerless to achieve the goal. Therefore, life loses its purpose and meaning.

Material possessions were presented to Jesus as bait when Satan tempted him. After taking Jesus to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory, Satan said to him, "*All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me.*" Then Jesus said to him, "*Be gone, Satan! For it is written, 'You shall worship the Lord your God and him only shall you serve.'*" (Matt 4:8-10). By saying this, Jesus is saying that when you worship the Lord, you have faith in his ability to fulfill the desire of your heart according to his sovereign will.

More than a millennium before Jesus' time, Joshua had affirmed before the people he led into the land of Canaan, *"And if it is evil in your eyes to serve the LORD, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your fathers served in the region beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD"* (Joshua 24:15). Joshua's affirmation rings so true in today's context.

More than three millennia after Joshua has spoken those words, today some of us continue to serve the "gods" of our fathers beyond the Pacific Ocean; some have made the shift to serve the "gods" of the American people in whose land they dwell. In today's term these are all "worship disorders," worshipping what we should not worship and not worshipping what we should worship. This results in putting our faith where we should not put it, and not putting our faith where we should put it, or "misplaced faiths."



*Come let us
worship
the Lord*

Incidents of "worship disorders" or "misplaced faiths" have resulted in the inability of many households "to serve the Lord." Some couples are living separately for extended periods of time, because each spouse has a different career to pursue, or because either of them has to be with the children who are pursuing education in another location, or other reasons specific to the household.

Some couples leave their children with their in-laws while they pursue their vocations elsewhere. All of these have weakened rather than strengthened the marriage or family bond.

In Christianity, the object of our faith and worship is Jesus Christ. The leader of the household, like Joshua, should be determined to lead the entire household to serve the Lord, because Jesus says, "Him only shall you serve." The Lord who joins the husband and the wife together, shall he not also provide a living for them in the same locality, so that what the Lord has joined together is not separated by career or other things in life? Worship disorders have wreaked havoc on all of life, including the one flesh marriage relationship. Let us worship only the Lord!

Mission Trip Reflection

Jeff Guo

Brothers and sisters in Christ, today I write to you to reflect on a wonderful service opportunity that the Lord had allowed me to participate in over this last summer. In early August, a group of brothers and sisters and I went to Changchun, China to serve the Lord by proclaiming his name and teaching young students English. Our team, totaling of 9 people, were both young and old from the Rochester area as well as New Jersey. Upon a bit of a rushed, but spiritually inspiring long-distance preparation, we set off to Changchun with the Lord watching over us all the way.

Allowing the Lord to send me on this short term mission trip was not an easy thing. At first, I did not know if this was what He had in store for me. It was only after a lot of praying and devotions and I was finally able to decide to go. Going on this mission trip was also no easy task. To carry the Lord's word and to preach it to those who may or may not accept it can be intimidating, but I think this experience was fulfilling through all successes and failures. When we arrived at Changchun, life definitely was not as comfortable as we had it in America. To say the very least, all of us were put out of our comfort zone, but it is just like the Bible says, we should rejoice to endure sufferings for the Lord. The group of kids we taught ranged from ages as small as 12-13 and all the way up to high school and college kids. With a mission in our mind not just to teach English, but also to help them grow in their faith and establish long-lasting relationships, we reached out to these kids and bonded with them, overcoming cultural and language barriers. Together as a congregation of brothers and sisters we worshipped every morning, we learned every day, and we grew in our faith through lessons, discussion, and prayer. However, this was not only a learning experience for them; it also was a profound learning experience for me. I was so blessed to have had the chance to go on this mission trip and everything I learned can be summed up into four main points.

The first point I have is displayed in the verse 2 Timothy 2:15, it states, *“Do your best to present yourself as to God as one approved, a worker who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth.”* In preparing for this mission trip, I struggled a lot with not being ashamed with my faith. There

were times in my walk that I wasn't proud of being a Christian and I hid it from my peers. During preparation and in our time in China, I had to become more and more extroverted with my faith. I couldn't keep it to myself anymore; I had to be prepared to share my joy and faith with anyone around me at any given moment. Now that I'm back in Rochester, this verse has rubbed off on me and I am more proud with my faith. I carry it with me wherever I go and am less ashamed of what I believe in.



My second point to share would be in verse Galatians 6:9, *“Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.”* In China, the going was tough. I found myself exhausted at the end of every day and ready to crawl into my stinky bed, as uncomfortable as it may be. There were times when I was idle, when I wasn't “in the mood” to talk with the kids or participate in activities, but this verse tells us to persevere.

We should not become weary in doing good, and as our stay there lengthened, I tried living this verse out through my actions. I came to have many meaningful discussions with the kids about their faith, and I left satisfied that I had done what the Lord had planned for me to do and I was also thankful that the Lord gave me the strength to continue doing his work. From this mission trip, I continually remind myself, even when I'm not surrounded by my Christian peers, to never grow tired of doing good.

My third point of what I learned comes from the verse Isaiah 6:8, *“Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, “Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?” And I said, “Here am I. Send me!”* What this verse is saying is that we should always be willing and prepared to do God's work. We must be sensitive to his calling and respond to it when we hear it. When I was presented with this opportunity, as I stated before, I was unsure. What this mission trip has really taught me is to always be prepared for opportunities, not necessarily large opportunities such as this

one, but even small everyday chances to talk about your faith or shows God's love to those around you. I feel like this is something really important and a factor of my life that has been missing recently and after this trip, with the Lord's support, I am striving to change this.

My fourth and final point from this mission trip comes from verses 1 Timothy 1:5-7 *"The goal of this command is love, which comes from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith. Some have departed from these and have turned to meaningless talk. They want to be teachers of the law, but they do not know what they are talking about or what they so confidently affirm."* and Acts 20:24 *"However, I consider my life worth nothing to me; my only aim is to finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me—the task of testifying to the good news of God's grace."* What these two verses said to me when I read them was when we do the work of our Lord, we cannot do it blindly as in the 1 Timothy verse. We must do it while knowing the purpose of what we are doing, to testify to the good news of God's grace as stated in Acts 20. This is the most important part of service. It matters not all the good deeds we may do for us, or all the spiritual words that come out of our mouth. If we do not know our own purpose, or if we are doing it with the wrong motives, will we be filled with the Holy Spirit? Absolutely not! This is the final thing and the most important thing to me that I have learned during this mission trip. Sometimes I forget why I am serving. Sometimes things get so difficult or monotonous that our motive and purpose is forgotten. This should not happen, in all that we do, whether we eat or sleep, we should do all for the glory of God! Never forget your purpose! Not just on mission trip or doing Christian work, but in all that we do. For we know that the chief end of man is to "Glorify and God and enjoy him forever." So with that in mind, we should strive to live our everyday lives with this purpose.

I truly hope that what I have written here has touched you or even inspired you to make similar changes to your life as I did. In all, this mission trip to China was an eye-opening experience and I grew in my faith significantly and I also established life-long friendships as well. I hope that all of you who read this will also have a similar opportunity and that you take advantage of it as I did!



Our Mission Sharing

Flora Y. Szeto

Soon after I accepted Christ, I read an autobiography called “The Life of Hudson Taylor.” He dedicated his life to serve the Chinese people and bring the knowledge of Jesus to them. I was very touched and I responded to God that, “One day I too will return to China to serve.” As I look back on the many years that have passed and recall all His grace and guidance in my life and how He has blessed and given me a straight path for my life, I know I have to take action to respond to God’s love.

In 2010 I had the opportunity to join CCHC on an exploratory trip to visit the China Children Village. I was captivated by the children; I could not forget about them. Since I have always served the children in the church, I told the Lord my heartfelt desire and prayed for Him to prepare the way for me.

During the past two years I successfully received the Hong Kong permanent identity card and the China pass card after a long and difficult process. These cards allow me to stay in China in the future, since I left Hong Kong more than 30-years ago. During this waiting period, God gave me peace and faith and trust in Him that He would lead the way.

After I returned to America, I was involved with the Children Village ministry for two years, mainly to participate in planning and development. As I learned more about God’s will for the Children Village ministry, I soon desired to be there myself; to give love and hugs to all the children. My prayer is that they can grow up with a healthy attitude and loving heart.

After my volunteer experience at Hechi Children Village last year, God enabled me to have a better understanding of the need of the children. God also put the same burden in my husband’s heart, for he is willing to go with me to the Children Village and respond to God’s calling together. I thank the Lord for He has heard my prayers. Hallelujah!

Chi M. Szeto

I still remember how I dedicated my life to serve the Lord during a church summer conference in 1977. In the past 35 years, God has given me so much grace and blessing, as He led me in my life journey. One by one, His amazing grace unfolded in my family, my career, my children, in my health, in serving the Lord, in my spiritual life, and interpersonal relationship. He has woven a beautiful tapestry of my life, much like the song entitled “His Grace Is So Beautiful.”

I didn’t realize it then, but God has used all my experiences in serving the Lord to equip and train me, to build up my faithfulness, and to put my trust in God. He also taught me to learn and to apply His truth in my daily life.

Now knowing the need at the China Children Village, God has touched my heart and has called me to fulfill my pledge to Him back in 1977.

I hope that God will use the remaining years of my life to repay His wonderful grace, to proclaim His message, and to help shape the lives of other people. I pray that God will use me.

My Appreciation for Pastor Matt

Pastor Herman Tang

Pastor Matt is a servant of God. It is God’s blessing that our paths have crossed in life’s journey. It is an honor for me to share my fond memory of this wonderful man. When Georgina informed me about the changes that are taking place in the Life Stone Wesleyan Church (I formerly knew it as Henrietta Wesleyan Church and we simply call it HWC), my mind immediately went back to the years when we served the Lord together with Pastor Matt. We, the people from RCCC and RCCCW have been blessed tremendously by Pastor Matt. He gave us all the support that we need at that time. I am going to organize my remembrance of Pastor Matt into three points by using the acronym **JOY**, representing **J**esus, **O**thers and **Y**outh.



JESUS: Pastor Matt loves Jesus. In Matthew 6:24, Jesus said, *"No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money."* Pastor Matt is an intelligent man. He probably could have made more money if he was not pastoring a church. But he loves the Lord. He chose to serve his Master Jesus Christ. I admire Pastor Matt for his love for the Lord.



OTHERS: Pastor Matt loves God's people. Looking back to the past thirty some years of ministering with Christian workers, I would say that Pastor Matt is one of the best ministers I have known. He is a man of integrity. He cares for others, not himself. I do not remember Pastor Matt saying no to me when I asked him to help someone. Through the years, Pastor Matt and I had coffee time at Tim Hortons again and again. He shared with me how he wanted to build up the church. I am touched by Pastor Matt's love for others.



GOING: When we started RCCCW at HWC, we desperately need someone to speak to our children. Pastor Matt was so willing to assist us with the children ministry. He loves the children. His creativity in teaching captured the heart of our children. I remember how he would take a bag filled with different objects. No one knew what was in the bag. He then asked the children one by one to reach inside the bag and brought out an object. One kid would pull out a rock. Another kid would pull out a tennis ball. Then Pastor Matt would use that object to tell a Bible story. This is fascinating! Now all these kids have grown up to be young men and young ladies. They still love the Lord. Pastor Matt's labor is not in vain.

Pastor Matt, we love you. We love your family! You have been a blessing to all of us in RCCCW. No matter where you go, may the Lord continue to bless you wonderfully!

RCCC Youth Group

Tesia Zhou

It is strange to walk into youth group now as a senior in high school because I still remember my first Friday night as a measly seventh grader. I remember being terrified of all the older kids, who seemed infinitely cooler and wiser than me because even though I had not grown up in the church, I always knew that youth group was the place to be. Now, as I reflect on the past six years of my time here, I see how impressionable youth group has been in my life.

Originally, I walked into youth group with the intention of meeting all the cooler older kids. Sadly, I did not realize the true value that youth group; I instead saw it as a fun time of snacks and games with people whom I genuinely adored. However, a few weeks in, youth group began to drastically change my viewpoints. The words of each praise song began to represent more than a time of showing off my singing skills and the wisdom of each lesson become more than a boring sermon-like speech. The seeds had been sown in me, and I found my hunger and passion to learn more about the Christian lifestyle and to learn more about the true meaning of a Christian faith.

I began to explore the Bible with voracity, soaking in all the knowledge that I could. Eventually, I felt a calling to serve as a part of the Toronto Mission Team in my 8th grade year and took my first leap of faith into what would be an entirely new experience. Every moment leading up to the mission trip, I was reluctant of my decision to join. Not only was I the youngest member of the team, but I was also the youngest person to ever go on a mission trip. Therefore, I constantly asked myself if this was the right decision, or if I had messed up big time.

Thankfully, I committed to the trip, which became a pivotal moment in my life. I experienced and learned so much about myself, the others in my youth group, the presence of Christ, and the roles of Christians in a community. My mission team, my brothers and sisters, protected me as the youngest member of the group and showed me a Christ-like love that made me realize the significance in fellowship between believers. The trip

also showed me God's provision in any and all circumstances, which I often reflect upon during times of trials and challenges. It also really shaped my role as a leader in our youth group because I was inspired by those around me--Jack, Boaz, Olivia, Spencer, Dan, Jakin and more--to take a more active role in serving. Thus, upon our arrival home, I began to serve on vocals for worship, signed up for discipleship group, and lead lessons during the summer.

From then on, the youth group has been one of the most important constants in my life. It has shown me the importance of living a Christ-centered life and has also given me great opportunities for growing, for learning, and for leading. Through my time in the youth group, I have become who I am today. I am truly blessed to have found such a wonderful group of people whom I consider family, and these past six years of fellowship have molded me in ways that I cannot even fathom. I praise God for all the wonderful opportunities that he has given me in my time here. The youth group is--and always will be--my family, and I am proud to say that my time here has yielded some of the best experiences of my life. Even as I leave this year, I have faith in the Lord that the youth group will continue to prosper and touch the lives of all those who join.



And the Lord Went Before Them

Eric Hui

"And the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of cloud to lead them along the way, and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, that they might travel by day and by night. The pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night did not depart from before the people."
Exodus 13:21-22

Wet Snow. The roads were covered in several inches of it, and more was falling steadily. The snowplows had already made their rounds by 6 AM, but the white stuff was still winning. A few drivers were out braving the elements, but you could tell from the wavering tire tracks that most were still guessing where the lanes were.

I was one of them.

"I can't believe I let Peter (Yim) talk me into coming out at this hour," I mumbled to myself. "We shouldn't be out in these conditions," I protested further. But, secretly I was happy to be meeting my brother for a nostalgic tradition that a few youth and college fellowships had started years before: a hot breakfast at a local diner named Jim's Restaurant. The thought of crisp hash browns with sizzling ham and eggs interrupted my audience-less complaints, and I focused back on the road with renewed determination. I had navigated through worse snowfall before: After all, I am a Rochesterian.

A mammoth snowplow veered on to the road just ahead of me. My new, Heaven-sent friend began clearing a fresh path for me, and I breathed a sigh of relief as my tires started to securely tread asphalt once again. I smiled and murmured my thanks.

Suddenly, a warmth passed over me as I was reminded of a similar image: an image of the Lord going before the Israelites in the great pillar of cloud by day and fire by night. How terrifyingly awesome it must have been to behold that pillar, yet how secure they must have felt knowing that the Lord was with them and did not depart from them.

My wife Jocelyn and I had been presented with a timely opportunity to move to Portland, Oregon to be closer to her family. We were torn because of Rochester had finally become home to both of us, and we both had a love for serving our church family at RCCC. Leaving meant saying goodbye to our home, which had been filled with warm memories of college, youth fellowship meetings and happy reunions with old friends. We were so blessed. We were also so "comfortable".

After much prayer, we felt that the Lord was indeed leading us to Portland. It is a new adventure for us, and there are exciting opportunities and challenges ahead. But I am a worrier by nature, and I struggled with guilt about leaving my parents behind, as well as ministries that I was involved with. I was fearful at times about venturing into new and somewhat unfamiliar territory. When we began the difficult process of sharing the news with family and loved ones, and we heard a lot of people ask us "what will happen to (fill in the blank ministry) after you leave?"

I responded with the answer that God had comforted me with: "The Lord is forever faithful, and He will provide."



And I've already witnessed His faithfulness in many ways: seeing new brothers and sisters stepping up to help with outreach, teaching and transportation needs in the church; and our youth testifying their faith and challenging their peers to read the Bible and memorize Scripture. God also provided for us personally with a quick sale of our home in a challenging market. Praise The Lord!

Moreover, when we abide in Him, He will be our strength in weakness. His light will overcome the darkness. When the Lord goes before us, we need not be afraid.