



Hills Christian Alliance Church Newsletter

2013 Theme: Missional Life

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Pastor's sharing

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To have a chance at Hills Christian Alliance Church Mandarin Service to serve our Mandarin-speaking brothers, sisters, and friends with my wife is something that I have never thought of. It has been twenty odd years since I came to Australia chasing my career and dreams. Due to harsh experiences, and under Pastor's guidance, I came to know God and accepted Jesus as my saviour and the Lord of my life. After believing in Him, I just wanted to do something simple at church, such as sharing the gospel and my own testimony with others. As for all the other things, we have pastors and reverends. Occasionally, Reverend Li, Pastor Tan and Pastor Xu encouraged me to study theology so I could serve in the pastoral ministry. As always, I responded that I would wait for God to prepare for me.

This ended at church camp. When Reverend Chan called out to those who were willing to serve full-time or part-time, I had a very special calling and was determined to serve God, to serve those brothers and sisters in need, and to serve those who are Mandarin-speaking. Once I had made this decision to follow God and let Him use me, I was faced with unforeseeable hardships. Through these hardships, God had allowed me to learn some important lessons. These include faithfulness, obedience, and waiting patiently for God's guidance. God had also used 1 Corinthians 4:2 to remind me:

"Now it is required that those who have been given a trust must prove faithful." In the midst of all these, I had witnessed God's blessing and care. He had prepared for the Mandarin congregation Pastor Leung and a few Christian couples when Pastor Xu went to America to further his studies. They were all joined together in heart and had placed themselves down for the sake of the gospel. They served in unity. The evangelistic programs had also led to increases in God's family. The lives of our brothers and sisters had also matured. May the Lord continue to use Hills Christian Alliance Church Mandarin Service. Let it be a light to the hills and may more people be touched by God.



English Translation: 李佩恩 Carol Li



The Bald Tyre Testimony

Pastor Tony Hall

I want to share with you of how the Lord led me during a period of my life without a paying job through an unwise decision. In early 1967 I was sure the Lord was asking us as a family to help at a Beach Mission. I had been working at Waltons as a department manager for about seven years and over time had been promoted with greater responsibility that caused me to take work home but with no increase of salary. Consequently asked for an increased salary. It was refused, so in November 1967 I resigned but foolishly without another job in sight. I still believed God wanted us as a family to go to Canton Beach for the Mission. I had been involved several years before I married, but Margie had no idea what the whole activity was like but willing to try even though being a busy Mum with young children and feeling rather uncomfortable being pregnant. Now without a job, how could we possibly go to pay our way to Canton Beach and the cost of camp food provided for us? The Lord had it all in hand but I was yet to find out.

Three Christian men knew of our predicament so offered a proposition to help us. They gave me \$300 to buy and sell any goods of my choice and after the Christmas period I was to reveal the profit with them and they would give me what they thought was a fair amount for my effort. The first move I made was to give to the Lord's work my tithe of \$30.

I had previously sold toys throughout country NSW so went to my old boss and asked if I could purchase wholesale \$270 worth of toys.

Margie and I set up shop at Northbridge in an unused area adjacent to where Woolworths is located now. Sales of the toys were progressing slowly with only a few days before Christmas. While Margie was alone as I needed to shop for a short time, she was approached by a rather rough, unshaven man wearing grubby overalls an unlikely customer.

He asked her "Selling toys, lady?" "Yes" was Margie's reply. He looked around and started to say "I'll take that and that and that and that" was his response while pointing to many different toys, just about buying everything. To Margie's amazement, he took from a pocket, a wad of rolled up notes and proceeded to count out the amount of his purchases. Margie's hands were shaking with excitement by this event and as I returned she was wrapping the toys up in brown paper. (No plastic bags in those days)

We really believed this customer was sent to us by the Lord. We had been praying very much because it was the last weekend before Christmas.

We celebrated Christmas and was able to survive the expenses, but I was faced with the problem of a bald tyre on my Holden Station Wagon. I could not really touch the money from the sale of the toys for a tyre, so asked the Lord for a replacement and also keep us safe as we travelled to Canton Beach.

We were now looking forward to this adventure and a good place for the family to holiday.

At Canton Beach we set up camp with tent and stretcher beds to sleep on, which were rather difficult for Margie especially with the disruptions during the nights by the youngest son. We knew the cost to be at the Mission had to be paid before we left after 10 days so all we had was the profit from the toy sales. It was decided that we had to use it and explain to our friends. We did know a portion of the money to be ours.

On the second day at Canton Beach, Margie and I met a Christian guy who was visiting beach missions who saw our car with the bald tyre? He excused himself and left our tent only to arrive back a few minutes later carrying a car tyre, and said, "I believe this is for you as the Lord told me to put a second spare tyre in the boot of my car, before I left home, and I know it is for you." I had the tyre fitted at a local garage being extremely thankful to the kind stranger who was used by the Lord in meeting our need and our family saw again that our God answers prayer.

While I was busy with the children (including our own) attending the programs, Margie had a wonderful time sharing with some teenagers and a few put their trust in Jesus. It was surprising to us that they lived very near our home in Sydney, as people go to Canton Beach for holiday from all over the state. We were able to have them visit us for further Bible study.

We now had to meet with our Christian "investors" to see what the outcome would be from our business venture.

We shared in detail how we had seen the Lord work for us. Now what do they want from their investment? The amount was enough to cover our expenses at the Mission and we were left with six cents.





I worked for a friend for a couple of months as a builder's labourer until I found my next full time sales

job. So our needs were again met by the Lord.

Chinese Translation: 黎慶玲 Janet Yu

My thoughts – Sunday School

柯麗芳 Connie Or

“Blessed is the one who does not walk in step with the wicked or stand in the way that sinners take or sit in the company of mockers, but whose delight is in the law of the LORD, and who meditates on his law day and night. That person is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither—whatever they do prospers.” – Psalm 1:1-3

After studying “Nehemiah” at Sunday school, this bible verse came to mind naturally. Nehemiah’s life had been an example of what the psalmist had described as a spiritual life. His character and leadership skills are undeniably worth my admiration and desire. In addition to these, he was loyal, faithful, vision-filled, compassionate, calm, quick-thinking, a role model, and



not afraid of hardships and those in power. All these are just way too perfect. Without a doubt, there are many people out there who are smart and able. The difference is their motive. Humans plan and do things for their own benefit. This is the nature of sin in all humans. Even

for those who have been Christians for years, it is still a lifelong battle for them. As the verses depict: “for out of the heart comes...” “better...one with self-control than one who takes a city”.

Nehemiah’s last verse: “Remember me with favour, my God.” – 13:31. This concisely sums up the theme of the book of Nehemiah (1:8, 5:19, 6:14, 13:14, 22, 31). He served simply with a single purpose, and that was to serve and please God. God’s praise was his only reward.

His pure motive was what drove him to live a life that glorified God.

In life, there are so many things to plan and contemplate. I have learnt from Nehemiah: what ought to be unrelenting and what ought to let go; am I harbouring a God-fearing heart to live out the



rest of my days? Are all my thoughts pleasing to God or are they purely pleasing to me? How can I be of a pure motive that is pleasing to God during His entire ministry, from beginning to end? For me, I reckon that only if we are like Nehemiah and the psalmist, and allow God’s truth to fill my heart and thoughts. Then, I can live out a beautiful testimony.

May the Lord bless me with a heart that desires His Word often; like a deer pants for water.



English Translation: 李佩恩 Carol Li



Pastor Tony and Margie's Thanksgiving Party

李劉德麗師母 Marianna Li

Praise the Lord for bringing Pastor Tony and Margie to HCAC-English at the time when we needed an English Pastor to continue the growth and development of the congregation. It was 'by chance' we found them to join the team but their promise to serve here at Hills is purely out of their self-sacrifice.

They love our young people and see them like their own grandchildren. What I appreciate most about them is how they would use their iPad to take a picture of every one of them, write their names down and pray for them. They truly have the heart of a Pastor.

Pastor Tony and Margie felt they are aging and because the church is able to employ a younger pastor, they asked for a resignation. But we, including the Deacon

Board, felt that it would be ideal if they could stay and nurture the young people together with the younger pastor.

The 31st March is Pastor Tony's birthday so we thought it would be great to hold a thanksgiving birthday event for him.

That night, Tony's family – a total of 27 members – came to celebrate with us. The sharing from brothers and sisters, pastors, and Tony and Margie was warm and loving. Afterwards we had a big feast. Thank you to all the brothers and sisters who brought food to share.

Pastor Tony and Margie, we will always love you. May God continue to bless you with health and strength to serve Him till we see Him again.



English Translation: 李樂恒 Rachel Li



Eastern Lightning (Wikipedia)

Eastern Lightning or *Dongfang Shandian* (东方闪电) is a cult offshoot of Christianity in China. The official name for the group is the **Church of Almighty God**. The Protestant group China for Jesus has estimated that Eastern Lightning adherents may number upwards of 1 million. Provincial security officials in China have characterized the church as "a social cancer and a plague on humankind."

Alternate names

It is also known as Seven Spirits Sect (七灵派), Second Saviour Sect (二次救主派), New Power Lord's Church (新能力主教会), True Light Sect (真光派) and True Way Sect (真道派).

History and beliefs

The group was founded in 1989 in Heilongjiang Province by Zhao Weishan. They believe that God has returned to earth as a woman, "born to an ordinary family in the Northern part of China" to guide mankind for the third and last time. According to the group, the first and second times of active guidance of mankind were as Jehovah of the Old Testament and as Jesus in the New Testament.

The group teaches that a woman self-styled "Lightning Deng" (邓闪电), from Zhengzhou, Henan, is the second Christ. Her most widely distributed book, *Lightning from the Orient* (《东方发出的闪电》) proclaims itself the Word of God. The book claimed the first coming of Christ was to redeem humanity, while the second is to conquer men's hearts and defeat Satan. Those who do not accept her words would die a terrible death or receive severe punishment.

Doomsday prediction

The belief is expressed in Eastern Lightning's literature that the world will end on [December 21, 2012](#), a date used by other [eschatological](#) religious and spiritual groups. This [doomsday apocalypse prediction](#) had

wide popular traction in China where the film [2012](#) was popular and a few entrepreneurs have made cash building and selling "[arks](#)" to survive the event. The church exploited the [meme](#) by holding outdoor prayer meetings and passing out pamphlets asserting that joining up would save believers from the apocalypse. Immediately prior to the "doomsday" date of December 21, the Chinese government arrested 400 members in central China, and as many as 1000 across China, characterizing the organization as "evil cult". The church has also [prophesied](#) the end of the "Great Red Dragon." China has a long history of revolutionary activity by [heterodox](#) religious movements such as the [White Lotus](#) Buddhist sect which contested the [Yuan Dynasty](#) and the [Taiping Heavenly Kingdom](#) which fomented the [Taiping Rebellion](#) of 1850–1864.

Cult accusations

Most of the information available on Eastern Lightning comes from human rights organizations, the Chinese government, and international Christian groups with connections to Christian communities in China. The Chinese government lists the group as a "cult" and has actively tried to suppress it, especially since its millenarian theology tends to take an explicitly anti-government stance. They are known to employ extreme methods to attain converts targeting Christians. They have been cited kidnapping, torturing, and brainwashing their victims into conversion. In 2002, for instance, they kidnapped 34 of the leading members of the China Gospel Fellowship and held them for two months.

Christian groups tend to be among the best-informed of all Western reporters on the movement, though they, like the government, regard the group as a heretical sect that deserves the label "cult" due to the radical differences that separate Eastern Lightning teaching from orthodox Christian doctrine.

Source:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eastern_Lightning



Chinese New Year 2013 Celebrations



Church Camp 2013

Rev. Li has seen the lack of male leadership in today's society. We want to encourage our brothers in Christ to serve and regain their masculine status in the home, so praise the Lord that this year's church camp is led by a group of men. They have not disappointed us. Everything from the preparations to organisations exceeded our expectations.

We are thankful for great weather on the second day and we all had a great time doing outdoor activities.

During the camp, Rev. Jim gave us a great message, which encouraged us to reflect on these points:

1. What kind of church reflects God's family?
2. What it means to be in a deep familial relationship.
3. New relationships with brothers and sisters in Christ.

We gained much from Rev. Jim's animated and deep talks.

In this camp, the accommodation and caring from one another was great, but unfortunately it was shame that we did not have enough time to share about our thoughts and reflections from the camp. Hopefully we can do better next time.





Corner of Newsletter Team

The church newsletter is to provide a place for brothers and sisters to share. This is not what our weekly bulletin or church website can achieve. The continuation of newsletter is solely relied on your support. We hope to see your sharing in our next issue. All articles can be sent to admin@hillscac.org or to Ronald, Grace, Juanita, Lincoln or Simmy. Articles can be either in English or Chinese. We'll translate your articles so that your sharing can reach every member of the Church family.