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Citation for English references: *Tian dao qiao* 天道橋 [Tyndale Link] (Tyndale University College & Seminary), Issue 30, March 2014.

Citation for Chinese references: 天道橋 (天道大學學院/神學院), 30 期, 2014 年 3 月。

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天道大學學院 / 神學院 華人事工通訊
A NEWSLETTER OF CHINESE MINISTRIES

ISSUE 30 / MARCH 2014

北美華人教會

YLM

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事工牧養模式的需要

2013年10月19日，天道神學院戴德生事工中心舉辦YLM事工諮詢會，目的是喚起眾教會對YLM事工的需要及對年青下一代的栽培。YLM是指Young Life Ministry，包括兒童事工及青少年事工。

聖經

聖經中多處提及我們要教養下一代，父母的責任更不容忽視。「教養孩童，使他走當行的道，就是到老也不偏離。」(箴 22:6)「以色列阿，你要聽，耶和華我們神是獨一的主。你要盡心、盡性、盡力、愛耶和華你的神。我今日所吩咐你的話，都要記在心上，也要殷勤教訓你的兒女，無論你坐在家裡，行在路上、躺下、起來、都要談論。也要繫在手上為記號，戴在額上為經文。又要寫在你房屋的門框上，並你的城門上。」(申 6:4-9)「讓小孩子到我這裡來，不要禁止他們」(太 19:13-15)。新約保羅也說出兒女與父母關係的重要(弗 6:1-4；提後 1:4-5)。若父母不好好教導養育孩子，後果只會自招咒詛(撒 3:13-14)。



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現實

聖經雖然如此教導我們，事實上，我們卻在多方面遠離了神的教誨：

父母 — 有一些父母帶了小朋友來教會，或鼓勵了青少年兒女到教會，便覺得盡了父母的責任，卻沒有在屬靈上親自教導兒女，作他們的榜樣。事實上，身教比言教更為重要。例如有些父母主日放下兒女於教會便自己去飲茶，只當教會是提供免費看管兒童的地方。

孩子 — 現實生活中，不是每個兒女都自動自覺喜歡主日早上到教會去，往往父母要費不少力量才能帶他們準時到教會。但當兒女踏入 12 歲，可合法自己留在家中，或有不進教會的祖父母，父母為了不想與兒女爭吵，使漸漸容讓兒女不去教會了。

青年人 — 朋友對青年人的影響很大，在未信主的朋友影響下，加上繁忙的功課，不少青少年很易便會放棄了恆常去教會的習慣。

大學 — 現實中不少青年人踏進大學後，便疏離教會，甚至不再回教會。除了功課的壓力，也會受新環境，開放的社會風氣，反傳統的社會價值觀的影響。資深的青年工作者李道宏牧師經多年的觀察及調查，留意到青年人入大學後，若在數週內找不到基督徒朋友，參加教會聚會，他們失去對信仰追求的機會非常之高。

教會 — 很可惜，不少教會沒有兒童牧者或青年牧者，可能教會細小，或有其他原因。但兒童事工，青年事工及英語事工是相輔相承的，教會必須刻意發展兒童及青少年事工，否則到教會發覺斷層時，為時已晚。

神學教育 — 今天北美洲普遍缺乏兒童及青年牧者，原因很多，除了蒙召委身的人少之外，神學教育課程也未注重栽培這方面的工人。

研究

2010 年一月，加拿大福音團契 Evangelical Fellowship of Canada (EFC) 舉行了一個重要的圓桌會議，出席者包

括多個層面的青年事工領袖。會議中討論到「教會青年人的流失」問題。會議結束前議決開展一項事工調查，研究青年人漂離教會，對主失去信心的原因及環境，怎樣使他們留下或回轉。這份「信仰漏血」報告 (Hemorrhaging Faith Report) 發表後，影響深遠，也引起不少迴響，引發其他有關的研究。這份報告頗為詳盡，主要指出有兩個時期青少年的流失率特別高，一是從兒童進入少年的過渡期 (Gr. 6 to Junior High)，另一關口是青年進入成年的過渡期，包括入大學及進入社會工作。除了詳



細分析原因及修補建議外，報告中更指出家長的參與，他們屬靈生命的成熟程度，影響他們對子女的關心、栽培及支持。

由於那份報告是以白人教會為主要調查對象，沒有顧及華人教會「兩言三語」的文化，故引發數間華人福音機構及神學院，開展類似的調查工作，盼望於 2014 年啟動。

重要

為何在教會中推動 YLM 如此重要？因為我們下一代在信仰上的流失已不容忽視了。不但一方面要文迅速止血，也要為了長遠的需要，從基本上入手，要治標也要治本。

兒童及青少年的成長階段雖然只有短短 17 年左右，他們將來變好變壞，視乎信仰及屬靈上的薰陶而決定。

兒童及青少年的培育過程的模式，要有一貫性 (廣東話是「一條龍」的牧養栽培模式)，使進入青少年的過渡期更為暢順。事奉人手上的調配更能互相配合，不用競爭。在課程及栽培上的安排上更易連貫和配搭。

這種「一條龍」的牧養栽培模式，對教會作為神的家的觀念，推動更為有效。青少年人是兒童的大哥哥大姐姐，兒童長大了，也會成為後來兒童的大哥哥大姐姐。在這模式的栽培下，青少年人會對自己更有信心及承擔力，對教會中的弟弟妹妹也會義不容辭的支持與關心，因他們年

少時也曾是受惠者，得到大哥哥大姐姐的照顧。

教會若希望有強健的英語事工，其中一關鍵是要做好現有的青年事工；同樣，要有強健的青年事工，關鍵是要看重及做好



目前的兒童事工。若教會能全面的兼顧，不但能吸引和接觸更多新家庭，也會為教會中的家庭提供全面的牧養，使他們更為穩定。

原則

在教會中發展 YLM 模式的基本原則：

要先醒覺及認同 YLM 的理念，看重這種「一條龍」的牧養栽培模式。

領袖們要一同領受這異象，並且踏實地把這異象傳遞。若得不到他們率先帶領，前路便會困難重重。

要強調父母參與的重要性。教會領袖必須與父母並肩去牧養及栽培，不但在教會，更要在家庭中栽培下一代。

要肯為下一代費財費力。無論是教會與父母也當如此。若可行，教會當致力聘請兒童及青少年牧者，不然，兒童及青少年事工主任也是折衷上策。若教會細小，則成立如 YLM 的部門，並要撥出資源，包括人手及經費，去策劃及推動「一條龍」的牧養栽培模式。

策略

若教會中落實推動 YLM 事工，應如何入手及有什麼策略與步驟？

首要是禱告，為這需要及下一代逼切禱告，求神感動領袖同心領受 YLM 的異象，教會牧者及領袖要認同。

透過不同渠道把異象傳遞，例如講道，文章，個人見證分享等。

教會可組織一行動團隊，關注及推動這異象，這團隊當有牧者及領袖參與。若教會已有兒童部，也有青少年部，這兩部門當一同研究，或由這兩部門成立一特別工作小組，研究發展 YLM 事工的聖經基礎、理論、事工哲學、原則策略等。

當作多方諮詢，包括向父母及其他信徒領袖諮詢，也向其他教會及機構搜集資料和意見。

透過行動團隊或負責部門詳細計劃、組織、推動、聯繫、宣傳及檢討 YLM 事工的發展，並當定期向長執會及有關部門匯報。

例證

多倫多區目前最少有兩個教會有發展 YLM 牧養模式。其一是城北華人基督教會，另一間是麥城華人浸信會。以下簡略以麥浸的 YLM 發展作一實例參考。

麥城華人浸信會於 1990 年六月開堂，1996 年五月成立。教會開堂後三年聘請了第一位英語牧者，牧養當時以青年人為主的英語會眾，也要兼顧兒童工作，但如一般教會，兒童工作自然會較被忽略。

經過數年租用小學、中學、商業樓宇作聚會地點後，教會於 1997 年遷到目前新社區。因發覺該社區將興建大量中型及小型房屋，看到將有不少較年輕的家庭搬入，也意味將有不少兒童來到這新社區。於是憑信心聘請第一位兒童牧者，並把原本附屬英語部的兒童事工改為另一獨立部門及會眾。

後來，英語部增加了不少成年的英語會眾，遂把原本屬於英語部的青少年事工也分開，聘請第一位青少年事工牧者。

最後，過了三年，時機成熟，透過祈禱，討論，研究和安排，把兒童事工與青少年事工合併，成為一個全新的 YLD (Young Life Division) 部門，與其他英語部門，粵語部門，國語部門並列，由兒童牧者及青少年事工牧者兩位共同帶領及牧養。

結語

當青年人不斷流失，我們不能再視若無睹，要立刻止血，要治標也要治本。YLM 事工牧養模式是主給我們的方向與禮物，當好好探討及推行，致力栽培他們，信主及成長，成為教會未來的接棒人。



黃廣顯牧師為麥城華人浸信會主任牧師

Sam Chan

DEEP & WIDE

Some observations & reflections on “Hemorrhaging Faith”

(The transcript of the seminar, proofread by the speaker)

There is a story about a mother waking up her son and telling him that he needs to go to church. The son asked, “Why do I need to go to church?” His mother replied, “There are three reasons that you need to go to church. Firstly, today is Sunday. Secondly, you are forty years old, you need to get up and go to church. Lastly, you are the pastor of the church and you have to go to church.”

We have to agree that it is not easy to make people go to church and sometimes even we have the same struggle ourselves. Indeed, people need to be motivated to go to church.

Andy Stanley once wrote in his book: What helps Christians mature and what makes you continue to stay in church, and offer yourself to serve God? After collecting responses from the leaders of his church, he listed five key factors that a church must have for young people to stay in the church, grow to be mature Christians, and eventually devote their lives to Christ and serve Christ full-time.

I believe the key purpose of Young Life Ministry and the purpose of the article “Hemorrhaging Faith” is not focused on how to keep the children and young adults in the church. Instead our main concern should be how to minister to them so that they will become true disciples of Christ. How can we help them to follow Christ? How can we build our church in such a way that we can disciple our young people? This is one area that we should address.

In Richmond Hill Christian Community Church, we call this the Young Life Development (YLD) Ministry. Young life development is the modern term for discipleship. We want to disciple the young people in our church.

So what are the five key factors to build a ‘deep and wide’ church? What makes a ‘deep & wide’ church? How deep is our love for God? How wide is our heart for people, especially the young people?

Key Factors in building a 'Deep & Wide' Church

1. PRACTICAL TEACHING ON AUTHENTIC FAITH

A. Meaning of the Gospel

We have to tell our young people that the gospel is good news. Why is it good news? It is not just personal salvation, or personal life change. The good news is that God accepts us and God is bringing us to His kingdom which is the new world. The good news encompasses not just today or just me, but the whole world. We need to explain the meaning of the gospel to them.

B. Teaching to change life: Information & Transformation

Information is important, but after we teach the truth of the Bible, we need to see life transformation. We need to tell them God's perspective on different things. From information to perspective and to conviction, life is transformed.

C. The Essential & Non-Essential

If we want to build up the faith of the young people, it is essential for us to go into theology. There are essential doctrines and there are also non-essential doctrines. Authentic faith is built on essential doctrines which are the core values. We can't simply build our children's faith on non-essential things - things that we can debate about, e.g. children baptism or women role in ministry. When our young adults hang on to these things as the foundation for their faith and when they step out of the church, their faith will be challenged by others and their faith will be easily shaken and demolished. On the contrary, we need to teach the core values which are built upon essential things...the things that will not change and everyone agree upon, e.g. God Himself, who Jesus is, the Bible, how to receive salvation, how to get eternal security as well as eternal life.

There is an old saying: "In essential doctrines, we have unity; in non-essential doctrines, we have liberty, but in all doctrines, we have charity." When we teach, we need to have this understanding. Having said that, I am not implying that non-essential things are not important as most of the times, non-essential things are the practice of our church or the lifestyle in our church, they are not what authentic faith is based on. Young people need to be taught to differentiate the essential from the non-essential.

D. The Absolute & the Non-Absolute

Some young people may say that they do not want to be Christians anymore after they study geology in university. They would say that their church and all parachurch organizations believe that the earth is young. (Young earth theory believes that the earth is only 6,000 years old.) The Bible does not say that the earth is 6,000 years old; it only tells us that God created the earth. However, when we say that it is absolute that the earth is 6,000 years old, the faith of the young people will be shaken when they look at science and it seems they can prove otherwise. As a church, we should not teach something as absolute if we are not certain that it is indeed the biblical absolute. In the 16th century, Galileo was persecuted by the church because the church held that the planets evolved around the earth while this mathematician figured that the planets evolved around the sun instead. Again, it is significant to build our young people on the absolute that leads to authentic faith. When something is not

absolute or if we are not certain about it, simply say that there are different ways to discuss it or admit that we do not know.

E. An openness to discuss difficult questions & challenges

When there are special things going on, we need to help our young people to discuss it, or offer special seminars to address the issues. Children or junior high students watch too much TV these days, they tend to mature sooner than we expect them to be. They also know about things happening in the world faster than we do. Therefore, it is important that we have the openness to discuss difficult questions like: Is Christ the only answer? Why do we have sufferings? etc. We have to teach them how to understand these things and live wisely. In the past, I thought that a pastor needed to have authority and have the answer for every question, so for some answers that I gave, I treated them as absolute answers even though they are not. I now realize that it does not need to be so. For things that we know it is certain, we can say that the scripture says so, yet for things like how to deal with certain issues, I think we should allow room for discussion. Honesty and integrity will impress the young people. Even pastors who seem to be very knowledgeable, there are still things that they do not know.

2. PERSONAL DISCIPLINE & FAMILY COLLABORATION

A. Hearing the Spirit through the Word & Prayer

The Bible tells us that when we become Christians, our sins are forgiven and we will receive the Holy Spirit. It is through receiving the Holy Spirit that our lives can be changed. It is important that we learn to hear the Holy Spirit through God's Word and prayer.

B. Parents who are 'nosy' about their spiritual life

We need parents who are "nosy" about their own daily devotions. Christian Smith, a sociologist from Notre Dame University, wrote a number of books. After interviewing many kids, he found out two things: First of all, a lot of kids remain faithful to their faith if they were taught how to do daily devotion when they were young. Pastors usually want to impress children by preaching a good sermon without teaching them how to do daily devotion. The problem is that once they are not with you, they do not know how to study the Word of God by themselves. Their faith will eventually fade away. Secondly, Christian Smith said parents who are "nosy", i.e. checking on their children's devotion and discussing about it during dinner time or family altar time help tremendously. Regis Joyner, the author of the book *Orange*, said it is extremely important that parents are nosy because their kids want to hear from their parents and other adults about what they believe in. It is important to have people of older generation to help them, especially their parents.

C. Counsellors/ Mentors/ Older Adults that care

After I was baptized, for three years I was fortunate to have three counsellors to help me after I became a Christian. One counsellor was especially nice to me and cared a lot about my spiritual growth. After I moved to Toronto, the founding pastor of my church, Rev. Dr. John Kao, showed a lot of interest in me and wrote to me even when I was working elsewhere, informing me of what was happening in the church and encouraged me to keep following Christ. When we have people who love us, care for us and build us up, it is not that easy for us to falter.

3. PURPOSEFUL MINISTRY

A Church that focuses on practical teaching and authentic faith, as well as provides spiritual discipleship and mentors, will help to build up young people in their faith. However, they also need purposeful ministry in which children or young adult are taught to serve in a purposeful way, not just doing something for the church without a purpose.

A. Love God, Love Others & Love P.E.A.C.E. (Mission) – Gracious, Generous & Go!

RHCCC has been using this theme for a number of years and it is helping young people to know what it means by loving God and loving others. To love God is to serve God; to love others is to serve others. We love God by serving people; through serving people, we are actually serving God. In missions, we teach them to be gracious, generous and to put love into action. We are convinced that all these are helpful to build up our young people to serve God in a purposeful way.

B. Unselfishness & Submission can be learned and modeled

The Hemorrhaging Faith report finds a significant number of young people leave their faith after going to Junior High. My understanding is that in Chinese churches, more young people will leave after going to university. It may be because they are afraid of their parents or their parents would not allow them to do so in junior high. Some kids are angry and complain that no one from their junior high fellowship cares for them. They are developing in many ways and they need people to love them and accept them. We need to help them to accept themselves and one another. The key is to help them build friendship and learn to listen. When we want to build true friendship, we need to listen to people. There is a book called "Irresistible Evangelism", it teaches about how to listen. It will be helpful to teach our young people to build friendship, listen to friends and to find out what their friends laugh about, cry about, fear about, and dream about. When you begin to learn these things about a person, you begin to love that person.

We need also to teach our children submission. Freedom and authority are not opposite concepts, but rather, they go hand in hand. Someone used an example and described freedom as a train. A train is built to run on rail, if you build a good train and a good rail, the train will run like a bullet train. Authority can actually give us protection and a smooth way in which we can zoom along.

C. Vision & Mission of missional church – Vision-led, Team-based & Missional-directed

Young adults and adults want to stay in a church that has vision. They want to know what they and the church are heading in the near future if they stay in this church, where the pastors are leading them in the coming years. Even for deacons and leaders, we need to understand that each ministry has a purpose. Having a vision and mission in a missional church which is vision-led, team-based & missional-directed is important.

4. PROVIDENTIAL RELATIONSHIP

A. Community – Friendship, Mentor, Small Group,

Inclusiveness, Youthfulness, Camps

John Bowen, author of *Growing Up Christian: Why Young People Stay In Church, Leave Church, and (Sometimes) Come Back To Church*, did researches and wrote about how to minister to the kids. He agrees that community will help young people to remain in the church. Friendship, mentoring, small group, inclusiveness, camps and youthfulness are all significant for them to stay in the church. Leaders ministering to young people should be youthful in how we dress.

B. 3M – Multi-Cultural, Multi-Lingual, Multi-Generational

Multi-Cultural signifies the acceptance of different cultures and ethnicities. If we have a congregation with Cantonese-speaking, Mandarin-speaking and English-speaking congregation in our church, we are already multi-cultural. Build the church on the base that we are all equal in the house of God and let everyone know that the church is a house of all nations. We may line up all the flags of the nations to remind people that God wants the Chinese to start a church, but He does not want it to remain that way. The church should welcome everybody.

A lot of studies have shown that it is a dangerous thing if we separate the kids from older generations and do not give them opportunity to relate to older generations. Rev. Alvin Lau talks about five adults ministering to one kid. If the Youth Pastor goes away, the kids will not be affected as much since there are other adults taking care of them. If our church is multi-generational, the kids will gain by seeing things with more perspectives. The church should seek to provide opportunities for them to serve adults or vice versa, so they will build relationship with other adults.

C. Longevity of church leadership – Consistency, Stability & Familiarity

If the pastors, leaders and volunteers can serve the group with a long period of time, it will help build consistency, stability and familiarity for the young people. When we talk about all these things, we have to pay attention to the structure of the young adult ministry. If the structure is not right, a lot of the things we have been talking about will not work. You may ask when the children ministry should merge with youth ministry. About 12 years ago, RHCCC changed its structure. The Children Ministry was led by the Cantonese-speaking group back then, whereas the youth ministry was looked after by the English-speaking group. We realized that the Cantonese-speaking people brought the children up in one way which was more conservative and the English-speaking congregation taught them another way once they moved up to be juniors. The church then decided to scrap the two systems to create a department that would see the children into youth. We called it the Young Life Development (YLD). The YLD overarches the ministries for children and youth. The pastor for this department is like the principal for a private school who oversees both the children and youth ministries. It will be important to form this kind of structure so that everyone can contribute and serve each other for the glory of God. This structural change has enhanced the building of relationship among people.

5. PIVOTAL ENVIRONMENT, CIRCUMSTANCES & DEFINING MOMENTS

There are important and vital environments, circumstances, even

defining moments where people's lives are changed. We need to look for these moments if we want to build a deep and wide church.

A. The style & content of worship service/ Not ashamed to bring friends

We start by looking into the content and style of our worship service. Many young people said they left the church because they could not stand the worship service of their church any more. There may be different reasons, but when kids said that they are ashamed to bring friends to the worship service, that tells why they leave too. We need to humble ourselves to talk to the young people and find out how we can design a worship service in such a way that we can honor God. I do not mean that the service has to be entertaining, but every service, including the preaching, need to have biblical theology in it, because biblical theology is the true redemptive interpretation of the gospel. If we do music and everything right, it will be exciting for people and they can sense God's presence. Just imagine that if the kids are saying that they are proud of their worship service, you know they will also bring friends and they will remain in the church.

B. Understanding why young adults are leaving church truthfully

The Hemorrhaging Faith report has identified four special spiritual types in young people: engagers, fence-sitters, wanderers and rejecters. It talks about the reasons why they are classified as such. However, we need to ask why young adults leave the church truthfully. When we do a survey with them, they may express that they do not like certain leaders, or they want to bargain with the church for something and they are granted, but these may not be the real reasons. We need to understand the real reasons for their leaving. I suggest that we do not just look at our church, but look at it from the outside as there are influences from outside that are shaking their faith. Here are some examples:

01. The Postmodern influences

With that influence, they start to question the Bible story when they go to school. We called the metanarratives, the big story on which everything is built. If they do not trust the big story, they are not interested in knowing the proof of creation or resurrection, etc. They will say that they have their own thinking. Therefore, instead of always telling them the biblical story first, we need to tell them other stories of our life, and then we relate it back to the Bible story, the biblical facts. After my children went to graduate school in the States, I realized that they have changed. The way of their thinking has changed because the teaching of the school has influenced them. Though they still go to church and still love the Lord, they have doubts that I need to discuss with them.

02. The Hurtings

Some leave the church because they are hurt. We cannot simply tell them that God loves them. C.S. Lewis once said something like this: When you court a virgin, and when you court a divorcee, you have to love them, but you speak your love differently.

03. The Modern "Dawkins" disciples

Richard Dawkins, Christopher Hitchens and Sam Harris are the New Atheists. They have much influence on the young adults because they read about their new atheist books. They are not the postmodern,

they are the modern people. We need to know what to say to the young people and how to answer their questions.

04. The New Age & Neo-Pagan spell

We have to be aware of the New Age and the Neo-Pagan spell which belong to the new movement that worships nature. It is a type of spirituality that goes on in the world today.

05. The Moral & Spiritual Rebels

They are the ones who want to party, so they leave their faith. But because of their parents and the mercy of God, they may eventually turn back. Both Billy Graham and Louis Palau lost their sons and got them back eventually. Therefore, do not be disappointed if your kids seem to be leaving church, do not condemn them with the Bible, but continue to love them and pray for them. When they come to their senses, they will want to return. Spiritual Rebels are those who are very proud in their hearts. They do not want God to govern their lives, they are like the tenants in the parable that Jesus told. The tenants rented the vineyard, but did not want to be controlled by the landlord.

06. The Moralistic Therapeutic Deism (MTD) drifters

Christian Smith defined the MTD people as drifters. A lot of our kids are drifters. They did not sin vigorously, but we have pushed them in such a way that because we ourselves have not followed Christ wholeheartedly, they become MTD. We believe that there is God, but we don't need Him until we are in trouble. We believe that everybody will go to heaven, nice people go to heaven and God wants us to be happy. A lot of time, Christians in the church portrait our faith to be like that. This is why our kids believe that way. They think that it really doesn't matter if we sin a little because we can always repent. Therefore, some people drift away when they grow older because they misunderstand what it means to follow Christ.

C. Not defensive to help young adults & the church to make changes

Not being defensive, but to help our young people to understand the following: David Kinnaman commented that Christianity has a bad reputation in the world. He is the President of Barna Group that did many researches about Christians. He said that in the outside world, there are six critical perceptions of Christianity by the outsiders:

01. Hypocritical

Christians say one thing, but do another thing.

02. Too focused on getting converts

Not just focus on finding converts, Christians need to learn to be more loving and love people genuinely.

03. Anti-homosexual

Is God anti-gay? What does it mean by accepting and giving approval? Can we accept without approving or vice versa? The world and the young people see that we are anti-homosexual. We need to make it clear to them that we do love them even though we do not approve homosexuality.

04. Sheltered & out of touch with reality

We may need to leave the four walls of the church and get involved

in different things, e.g. community events, politics sometimes, in the right way. We need to express our care for the community by getting more involved.

05. Judgmental

The world always see Christians as not gracious nor generous, this is why we teach our young adults to be gracious and generous.

06. Too political

They want to use legislation to change people. The world will not love us as they see us as too political. Pastors need to be bold enough to answer these questions if they are raised by our young people.

D. Pray & look for the defining moments of “heightened receptivity”

“Heightened receptivity” is the moment when the young adult who have left the church and found themselves ready to talk to us about their challenges and issues. We need the Holy Spirit to help us to understand and affirm them, to discuss with them, and to bring the gospel of Jesus into their lives. Pray that God will grant us those “heightened receptivity.” Finally, it says in John 10:10, “The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.” A lot of time, we only talk about the second part of this verse. We often forget about the first part: the thief comes only to steal, to kill and destroy. Satan destroys our first love for Christ, it takes away our young adults. Let us pray that God will restore the things that Satan has stolen from us, our love for God, our love to serve, our energy to be zealous for God, our kids and young people. We need to pray to Jesus and continue to believe that He is the one that gives us life.

These are the things that we can build in our church and make it a deep and wide church. How deep is our love for God? How wide is our heart for the church? Do we care for the children and young people in our church? By the work of the Holy Spirit, may God change us and make us a shining light that other people will be attracted to come to know Him. Those who are drifted away will come back, and those who are not here before will be attracted to come. When we truly pray and devote ourselves to do it, God will send people and resources to help us.

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ALUMNI ASSOCIATION CHINESE CHAPTER

“Be still, and know that I am God.” (Ps 46:10a)

As people in ministry, we have learnt how important it is to slow down, relax and just let His presence wash over us. Only then can we find the love, patience and power that we need to sustain us through the heavy demands of ministry.

Seeing that, some twenty of us - alumni from recent to remote years — gathered together in the morning of Monday, Sept 30, to just “chill out”, encourage and support one another.

The plan had been for us to start with a time of fellowship around some coffee and snack, and then head out for a walk along the trail between the Bayview and Ballyconnor campuses. However, wet weather got in the way. Just when the organizing Committee were pondering what to do after the coffee time, Warren Li (Development Officer of Tyndale) took advantage of the opportunity to share with us some encouraging updates on the progress of the new campus. We even got to see the magnificent chapel that is part of the Bayview Campus!

That morning we learned something: God's plan may not be the same as ours, but His is always better.



編者話 杜伍麗芳

『……承受那從上帝而來立約的祝福，並將之傳遞至世世代代。』以上的立志目標是節錄自編者所屬教會的家庭事工使命宣言。相信也是眾教會和基督徒父母對屬靈生命能得以承傳至下一代的深切期盼。可是，從不同的研究報告，或從所聽到的眾多個案分享中，我們也不得不承認，下一代的信仰追尋路和教會生活，的確與上一代的經驗和期盼有一定的距離。更令上一代掛心的是下一代在教會生活中流失的情況，也意味著他們最心愛的下一代，可能會最終在信仰中失落，不能承受一代傳一代從上帝而來立約的祝福。

雖然離開教會不等於他們放棄追尋信仰和經歷神，神也必有祂的恩典和憐憫，會再叫喚他們回到神的家。但教會要回應青少年和成年初期從教會流失的現狀，也是不能逃避的責任。本期兩篇主題文章，是兩位資深牧者以深入淺出的文筆，帶領讀者反思這流失現況，和提供教會領袖和家長們好好反省和思想的角度。他們也分享了他們教會中的 Young Life Ministry 事工模式及其重要性，以回應下一代從教會中流失的問題。

當然教會要在事工的建構上，以活潑和適切的事工策略來回應問題，但編者在參與一個事工策進會的學習中，被黃乃基牧師提醒，唯有『愛』是解決問題的總動力。但願父母和上一代能以基督犧牲的愛來愛下一代，下一代也學效基督謙卑順服的愛來承接教會和上一代傳遞給他們從神而來立約的祝福。

華人事工部

1. 隨著北美華人教會領袖訓練需求的加增，以英語授課的 Pastoral & Chinese Ministry (PCM) 現有兩個學制：一年制的 PCM Graduate Diploma For Ministry Foundations，兩年制的 Master of Theological Studies (MTS) 及三年制的 Master of Divinity (MDiv)，為有意進修並在北美華人教會事奉的弟兄姊妹而設。對以上課程有興趣的肢體請與課程主任 Dr. Barbara Leung Lai (梁薇博士) 聯絡：電郵 blai@tyndale.ca 或致電 416-226-6620(x6714)。
2. 請記念學院將於今年內完全搬遷至 Bayview 的校舍。求主賜予所需的智慧和資源，讓各部門及同工們能儘快在新校舍中安頓下來，繼續為主裝備時代工人。

戴德生華人事工中心

1. 感謝神，去年秋季開辦的主日學教師裝備課程，首兩課程已順利完成。今季將繼續舉辦兩個課程，包括三月一日開始，由何俊華博士教授的「箴言」及五月開始，由高彼得先生教授的「加拉太書」。歡迎教會推薦現任或儲備主日學老師參加。詳情請與中心聯絡。
2. 中心與加拿大國際差傳協會 (SEND International Canada) 除了合作舉辦信徒訓練課外，今年更將開設「烏克蘭教牧同工神學文憑課程」，幫助裝備當地華人教牧和領袖。首科「牧養神學與實踐」將於四月底在首都基輔舉行，由中心主任黎惠康牧師教授。請為當地政局並各樣安排代禱，求主使用課程，叫參加者蒙造就。

同工足跡

1. 去年十一月，黎惠康牧師及梁薇博士被邀請到蘇州探訪該城的教會。其中包括了富有歷史的『使徒堂』(建於1925)，在鬧市中深入人群的『宮巷堂』及『約翰堂』，更有政府新建的『獨墅湖堂』。見到各堂同工之間同心合作，弟兄姊妹與群眾的渴慕，及教會不遺餘力的設立福音站。又有機會在『使徒堂』及『獨墅湖堂』證道。



2. 張周翠嫻姊妹與夫婿在新年期間，透過一位天道神學院校友的安排，探訪在廣東省某市的教會，並參與主日學的訓練。與當地肢體相交之中，深感神的恩典和工作浩大。祂使用宣教士和弟兄姊妹的委身，不斷傳遞福音信息並建立信徒生命。



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出版：天道大學學院/神學院—華人事工部

顧問：黎惠康牧師、梁薇博士

編輯：黃力行、杜伍麗芳、張周翠嫻、蔣黃心滙