

2004 ANNUAL REPORT



Celebration Church
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN CANADA

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CHURCH ORGANIZATION



Elders

Inducted

Judy Soong

1999

Paul Yee

1999

David Chu

2000

Charles Snelgrove

2000

Chuck Ma

2000

SuMing Lee

2005

Board of Managers

Term

Lisa Mah

1997-2004

Henry Ning

2001-2004

Irene Wong

2003-2006

Eric Lee

2003-2006

Andrew Chan

2004 - 2007

Rebecca Ko

2004 - 2007

Church Staff

Peter Ma

Pastor

Auditor

To be announced

VISION AND MISSION

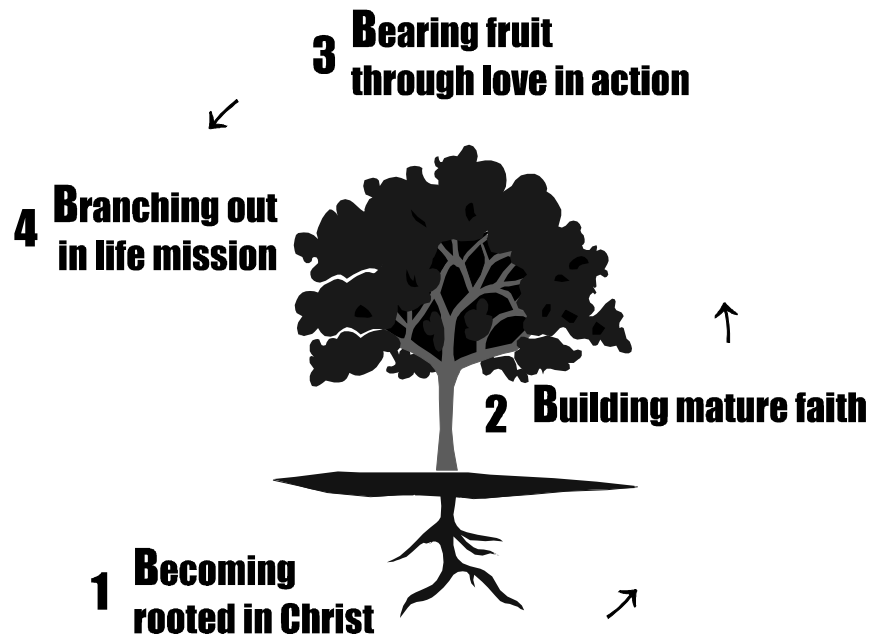


VISION

Celebration Church exists to help friends and family discover Jesus Christ and his power to change lives.

MISSION

We celebrate Jesus by



RELATIONSHIP MATTERS

We want to be open, authentic, inclusive
and approachable people.

CHARACTER MATTERS

We want to treat others as well
or better than ourselves.

MINISTRY AND SERVICE MATTERS

We want to serve others
in response to grace we have received.

FAITH MATTERS

We look to Jesus Christ as the foundation
for new life and inspiration.

Looking Back and Looking Ahead

At the beginning of 2004, I gave a couple of sermons on where we were going in the year ahead. The challenge was a kind of kick in the pants, for all of us including myself. We've got to get on with what's really important. Otherwise life will pass us by and we won't have much to show for it.

...it's not that we have "done good" but that God has truly been good to us. My prayer for the year ahead is a focus on humility.

Thankfully, 2004 was a year of rebuilding. We're in the early stages of coming out of a spiritual complacency. Our ministries are starting to mature. We have renewed energy.

There were many wonderful moments when God came through, ministered to us, and blessed us.

- Our Noah's Ark Ministry Children's Program has become more effective, where teachers are supported and kids can be challenged in their faith.
- Worship singing has become more passionate, personal and excellent.
- Our church has become better connected and more caring with wonderful times of fellowship: Winter Retreat, Anniversary lunch, Penny Carnival, Golf day, potluck lunches and dinners, fund raising raffle, and ice-skating.
- There are many volunteers helping out in many different areas: Noah's Ark Ministry, worship teams, small groups, fellowships, Children's Choir, Sam and Linda Missions group, Greeters, Board of Managers, and Elders.

- There are people who serve behind the scenes cleaning up and helping out and watching out for people. The church has become a better place because of their hard work.

- We've been able to pray with people and for people. We said goodbye to Perry and

Grace as they moved down to Pennsylvania. We've been able to support our missionaries quite significantly through finances and prayer.

- We celebrated the baptism and confirmations of some of our young people. It's amazing to see how much they've grown in their faith.

From this list of blessings above, it's not that we have "done good" but that God has truly been good to us. My prayer for the year ahead is a focus on humility.

With humility, we'll become a much more attractive community, a place where people can settle down in order to explore and discover faith. We'll find greater harmony in our friendships and relationships. We'll even be ready to receive teaching from God and as a result, we'll grow in our faith. And this will have a domino effect on the next generation, on the kids growing up in our community of faith. We could be known as the greatest most humblest church in all of the Greater Toronto Area! ;^)

Peter Ma

It is that time of year again, a time to reflect on events over the last 12 months and what they mean for us, both today and for tomorrow; a time to scrutinize our successes and analyze our failures. A number of things have been happening over the year and it is encouraging to see our congregation develop and grow (spiritually, if not numerically). Last year, our children's program had recently undergone a major re-organization and there was a lot of energy and enthusiasm. This year, the program is well established and going strong - praise God for the ways in which He has blessed this ministry and thanks to the leaders for their service.

It is so much easier to stay connected with God when you are in the habit of spending time with Him every day.

The worship ministry also underwent significant restructuring and, with a number of the youth signing on with both vocal and instrumental talents, it too is a vibrant, growing ministry. Thanks to Peter for his tireless devotion to the worship ministry.

We are still trying to discern God's intentions for our congregation's long-term residence - please ask for His guidance among the elders and ministry leaders.

We embarked on another 50-day Spiritual adventure, which I found was good in challenging me to work on my relationship with God. What I liked about it most was that it encouraged you to develop one spiritual habit and did not necessarily expect you to do everything it had to offer. For me, it was the simple habit of spending a few minutes of devotional time with God on a daily basis - usually as part of my bedtime preparations. I hope that others were able to reap similar benefits from the Adventure.

It has also been very encouraging to see a number of our youth coming forward to be confirmed. I had not previously had an opportunity to talk with any of them, but as an elder, I did participate in some pre-Confirmation interviews and was also selected for a meeting as a mentor. I was

very impressed at the spiritual maturity and commitment to Christ that our youth are showing.

On a personal level as well, it has been a good year both spiritually and otherwise. As I mentioned above the 50-Day Spiritual Adventure has encouraged me to develop the habit of

daily devotional time with God and I believe that it has made a big difference in my relationship with Him. It is so much easier to stay connected with God when you are in the habit of spending time with Him every day. It also makes you more conscious of the decisions you make and the spiritual consequences they may have.

Our children continue to be a blessing to us despite the challenges they pose to our patience and even our temperament (it's amazing how exhausting it can be sometimes just getting them to sit down and eat a meal or to get them dressed to go outside - even when you don't have a schedule to keep). MacKenzie continues to be helpful with Connor and is doing well in her daycare, although she is starting to develop a bit of a hearing problem - funny how it is only our voices (Susan's and mine) that fail to penetrate her hearing system. Connor is becoming quite adventurous and usually manages to scare Susan at least once a day. At 21 months, he is also developing a rather mischievous personality, intentionally disobeying us to see our reaction and running away with MacKenzie's things while looking back to see if she is chasing him. I am sure that many of you parents can relate. We continue to pray for guidance in our parenting efforts.

World events continue to cause concern and hardship for many people. We must always remember to be grateful for our freedom and personal security and to pray for those who are not as fortunate as we are. And remember also, that our hope does not rest in this world, but in He who reigns above.

CHUCK MA - ELDER

It's hard to believe that another year has passed! It seems like only yesterday that we were getting settled into the Church of the Annunciation and meeting in the Fellowship Hall. Now, we meet regularly in the sanctuary and we have the whole church building. Many of our ministries have seen

God's hand of blessing! I have noticed the continuing growth of the Noah's Ark Ministry, Worship, Worship Jam, Children's Choir and the Footprints and Mustard Seed Fellowships, just to name a few! I believe that last year was a major step forward as a church as you helped out and participated in our programs and ministries. Whether you were leading, teaching, attending or ensuring your family attended, your efforts have been appreciated.

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I am deeply thankful for the faithfulness that the many members of our congregation have shown in leading and helping out in the many ministries of our church. I am also grateful for the after-service times as there is lots of great fellowship and conversation. Thank you for being part of this church!

What does the God hold for us in the future? I don't know! But I am confident that He wants to bless our church in more ways than we can imagine! We just need to take the steps forward and let Him!

Jeremiah 29:11 (NIV) "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."

In last year's annual report, I wrote that I felt the church had "turned a corner" towards a stronger spiritual presence in the lives of its member. As I reflect on 2004, I am encouraged that we have been able to stay on that path.

The events that are most significant to me in 2004 were the winter retreat, the improvements made to the Noah Ark children's ministry and the baptisms/confirmations of the youth in our church in December.

To see those youths so full of love and potential in front of the congregation publicly proclaiming their faith was indeed a memory that will be with me a very long time.

The winter retreat provided a refreshing escape to Jackson's Point where we could focus on God's presence in our lives. In addition to the great program, the most encouraging aspect was the fact that it was so well attended when previous retreats had not been.

The Noah Ark children's ministry went through a transformation in 2004. The composition of our church is unique due to the high number of young children that we have in attendance every week. I have been to many church meetings where we have expressed how crucial the children are to our church. This year we have been able to put those words in to practice by making great improvements and enhancements to the children's program. This vision was realized through the excellent direction provided by the program leaders as well as the

commitment from the teachers and helpers.

And finally, what really captured my heart was seeing the young men and women devote their lives to Christ in December. To see those youths so full of love and potential in front of the congregation publicly proclaiming their faith was indeed a memory that will be with me a very long time. I hope we can all reflect on our own baptism/confirmation and draw inspiration from them.

On a personal note, I began a quest in 2004 to find out more about the Christian faith and Jesus. The quest began when I had a discussion with an old friend who had lots of questions about what is Christian faith and why we believe in Christ. In order to answer his queries, I myself had to explore some of these questions more in depth. Through discussion with other Christians and reading the bible and books about our faith, I was able to learn even more about my faith. From my search for truth, I was able to see even more clearly Jesus' ultimate perfection and it made my faith even stronger. So what started out as quest to provide answers for someone else, became a personal journey of discovery and enlightenment.

I thank the Lord for continuing to bless our church and pray that He will guide us in the years to come.

“God is not unjust; He will not forget your work and the love you have shown Him as you have helped His people and continue to help them.” (Heb. 6:10)

I read this verse one morning in the summer of 1988 as I sat in my room at a church in Hamamatsu, Japan. I had come to Japan on a short-term mission (approx. 2 months) to teach conversational English at the church as a means of outreach to the Japanese people. It was nearing the end of the summer, and the team I was with had been planning an English camp to which our students could be invited, where they would have an opportunity to hear the Gospel and to make a personal decision to accept Christ. Unfortunately, none of my students were able to come and I was very disappointed. I think only one other team member did not have students coming to this English summer camp. It was in the midst of this disappointment that God encouraged me with these words. It was a reminder, too, about what was really important in the work that I was doing, not so much that they should come to this English summer camp and perhaps become Christians. This was important but not something I really had control over. It was to remain faithful in the work I was doing there, even without the result I was hoping for, and to continue to love God and help His people as He had called me to.

As I was thinking about what to write for this year’s Annual Report, the experience that summer of ’88 kept coming to mind. It reminded me again of God’s promises and continued faithfulness in ministry and the reason for our ministry—love for God and a desire to do His will in our lives.

We, at Celebration this year have been fortunate to experience the fruits of ministry in some areas including the baptism and confirmations of some of our young people. And we can thank God that we are able to see and experience these fruits. At the same time, there may be things that continue to need our prayer and

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perseverance, whether it is another church ministry, or friends or family who have not yet come to Christ. Perhaps we have been praying for a while and are not seeing any results. We wonder if we’re doing enough or

if we’re doing something wrong. But, when I read verses like *Psalm 147:10*, “His pleasure is not in the strength of the horse, nor His delight in the legs of a man; the Lord delights in those who fear Him, who put their hope in His

unfailing love.”, I am reminded that perhaps what God cares more about than the results we achieve, is our love and faithfulness in living our lives for Him and trusting in Him. I often forget that the results are really up to God, that He works in His own time. Sometimes I am impatient and might try to speed things along but that only works to hinder God’s working in another person’s life or my own.

Our church has gone through some ups and downs over the past few years, faced difficult challenges and will likely continue to face many more. However, what keeps me going (and here, I repeat the same words that I wrote for the 2000 Annual Report), is it doesn’t all depend on me, but it really depends on God. My role is to stay close to God, to listen to Him and to do what He wants me to do. Easy to say, but not always easy to do. Nevertheless, the words in Hebrews encourage us:

“So do not throw away your confidence; it will be richly rewarded. You need to persevere so that when you have done the will of God, you will receive what He has promised. For in just a very little while, ‘He who is coming will come and will not delay. But my righteous one will live by faith. And if he shrinks back, I will not be pleased with him.’ But we are not of those who shrink back and are destroyed, but of those who believe and are saved. (Heb. 10:35-39)

“Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see. This is what the ancients were commended for.” (Heb. 11:2)

Things Aren't Always What They Seem

To each of us, 2004 meant something different. Happiness, sadness, triumphs and trials...we've all experienced one or more of these emotions this past year. We've also fallen prey to society's influences. Many of us play catch up but a few actually get ahead. Between work and taking care of our family's needs, there's little time left for ourselves, let alone for others, and God. Unfortunately that's also the priority that we fall trap to.

Due to unforeseen circumstances at work, I spent the majority of the year working 6 to 7 days a week, with only a handful of weekends off. Even though I wasn't able to spend as much time at home and attend church as frequent as I would have liked, I found myself wondering about the lives of all the people around me. At work I see people with families like me working 7 days a week and wonder how they cope with the stress. On the outside they appear as if everything is peachy and all's well. But are they really? At home, after a long and stressful day at work, I often find the need to just sit by myself in front of the television to wind down. On the outside my wife and kids seem to manage fine without me around, but in fact, being at work so much did cause much stress for Jean.

It is my prayer that we be more sensitive towards our fellow brothers and sisters in Christ who may be putting on a brave face outwardly, but are in need of support and encouragement on the inside.

I often wonder about our church family as well. We have a great pastor and wonderful friends there. On the one hand, it's great to hear that everyone seems to be doing well when we ask them. On the other hand, I wonder if we care enough or if we are sensitive enough to our brothers and sisters in Christ to discern if they may be in need of support. Are things really what they appear to be on the outside? Maybe we could have should have or would have given them support if we were able to sense their needs. Maybe we could have made a difference... if we only knew.

Jean and I are grateful to have the support and understanding of some very good friends who gave their time and a listening ear to help us in the past. The loving support and prayers from friends during our stressful times has helped Jean and I gain a better understanding towards our differences. We have much to learn about accepting, supporting and appreciating our differences. It is my prayer that we be more sensitive towards our fellow brothers and sisters in Christ who may be putting on a brave face outwardly, but are in need of support and encouragement on the inside. May we look beyond the surface for such signs, and realize that... "Things aren't always what they seem".

BOARD OF MANAGERS

2004 has definitely been an eventful year - both in terms of what happened to me personally and in the world. Lisa: thank-you very much for all your help during my maternity leave. Henry: thank-you for all your hard work on the Board, we will miss you! Eric: thank-you for your hard work all year. Rebecca and Andrew: welcome aboard!

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On May 3, 2004 my life was changed forever when my son, Matthias, was born. I didn't really know what to expect as I entered the next stage in my life. And, little did I know how poorly equipped I was for motherhood.

Throughout my life I've always been a risk adverse kind of person. I tend to do things that I can handle and avoid things that I am not good at. And, it's worked out well for me all along, in terms of studies, career, marriage, etc. Until the arrival of Matthias, anyway.

The toughest part of motherhood for me was the loss of control. As many of you know, caring for a newborn is a 24/7 job that never ends and I had no control over even the most basic things - when to eat, when to sleep and even when to use the washroom! The lack of control, coupled with a few other frustrations such as sleep deprivation, breastfeeding difficulties, etc, eventually turned into a minor depression for me. At times I would just cry for no particular reason and didn't really quite

know what to do or how to get out of it, it was so unlike my usual, sensible self!

It felt like I was stuck in a trough until I finally realized that I need to turn to God. I prayed and offloaded all my burdens to Him. I prayed for strength and patience so that I could be a good mother to Matthias. Then, somehow, God answered my prayers and gave me the strength to go on. My circumstances were still the same (still had to wake up a couple times during the night), but I got out of my depression and was able to move on with life. Not only was I able to get on with the day-to-day chores (such as changing smelly diapers), I was even able to appreciate God's gift to me through my little cutie pie.

Therefore I believe losing control can be a good thing. It helps us realize how insufficient we are on our own and how we need to turn to God. And it allows us to get closer to God. When we are too full of ourselves, we tend to neglect God. But God is faithful, when we turn to him - he will answer our prayers.

Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened. Matthew 7:7-8

Irene Sun, Treasurer, Board of Managers

FELLOWSHIPS

MUSTARD SEEDS (youth fellowship 8-12 years old)

He replied, "Because you have so little faith. I tell you the truth, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there' and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you." (Matthew 17:20 NIV)

So many times in our lives, we struggle with our faith. Sometimes, we can learn from the children in our church. We're reminded that Jesus loves all children (Matthew 19:14). we are always encouraged by the Mustard Seeds' commitment to the fellowship and Celebration Church. It gave us great joy seeing some of the fellowship members being confirmed and taking a "step of faith" last Christmas.

There were many highlights in 2004. Our participation at the North York Harvest Food Drive during Thanksgiving was especially memorable. It was wonderful to see the

It gave us great joy seeing some of the fellowship members being confirmed and taking a "step of faith" last Christmas.

children's (and their supportive parents') dedication and commitment in giving something back to the community. We all had to give up a Sunday afternoon, but it was all worth it. The Mustard Seeds did such a wonderful job sorting food we have

already been invited back! During our visit to the Ontario Science Center, it was exciting to see the kids enjoy the various exhibits and at the same time participate in a friendly "scavenger hunt". Our joint meetings with the Footprints were always fun!

We believe that it has been God's blessing that we have been able to fellowship with the Mustard Seeds for more than three years now! It has been a rewarding experience for each of us to work with the young people in our church and see them grow and mature.

Mark Tang, William and Carolyn Leung

FOOTPRINTS (teen fellowship)

Last year was filled with fun and challenges for the Footprints Fellowship. We had many fun events including joint fellowships with Mustard Seeds!

During Sunday School, we also had many of our teens prepare and present Hot Topics. We covered issues such as euthanasia, secular music and religious tolerance. We also helped with the church Penny Carnival and Picnic, and Raffle Fundraiser.

In the latter half of the year, we welcomed many of the graduating Mustard Seeders! We were very pleased to have new members and are excited for the upcoming year!

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One of the biggest highlights of the year for the counselors was the baptism of Matthew Loo, Ryan Chau, Brandon Yee, Brian Yeung, and Amanda Chan. Congratulations and thanks to Pastor Pete for holding the Class 101 for them!

Some of our plans for this year are Sports Days, Indoor Rock Climbing, Pizza Lunch, Discussions, Dinner and Movie Nights.

Interested in attending?

Please call us:
Henry Wong - 905-479-5601
Chuck and Sandy Ma - 905-875-9267

YOUTH MINISTRY

CHILDREN'S CHOIR

We are so blessed to have so many children in our church. This is what makes our church unique. The children's choir began several years ago as a pilot to see if there would be interest amongst the children to sing in a group. I felt that it would be wonderful to introduce singing to the children as a way of praising our God. As you can see the children's Choir continues to thrive, thanks to all the parents who encourages their kids and who brings them to church early every other Sunday. I must admit there are times when I wonder how the kids would perform in front of the congregation with

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so little practice, but when it is show time, they all perform beautifully with confidence and enthusiasm. I am thankful that God has provided our church with so many wonderful and talented children who are a delight to teach. I pray that our children's choir continues to grow, and I welcome more children to come and get involved. You never know, there may be hidden talents waiting to be discovered and nurtured through participation in our Celebration Church Children's Choir.

Jean Yee and Eldon Wong

NOAH'S ARK MINISTRY

Another year has come and gone. This past year continued to be a year of changes and learning; and we are so thankful to have been able to experience God's provision in all aspects of the Noah's Ark Ministry.

We would also like to thank all the teachers, and helpers who have committed their time to serve in the children's ministry.

In November 2004, we decided to change the grouping of the grades, which has proved to be beneficial for the children, teachers, and helpers. Currently, we have a nursery program; Natalia Kao from the Trinity Mandarin Church has been a great help in our nursery class. We have also divided the classes into the following: grade 1&2, 3&4, and 5&6 classes. A grade 7-12 class has also been implemented as part of our Sunday school program headed by Becky Cheung, Chuck Ma, and Sandy Ma.

We would like to take this time to say thank you to Mora Ma for all of her hard work and dedication to the Noah's Ark ministry this past year. Her term ended as of December 31, 2004. Through prayer, and God's provision, we are privileged to have Nancy Wong as part of the Noah's Ark committee. We would also like to thank all the teachers, and helpers who have committed their time to serve in the children's ministry.

We look forward to seeing and experiencing God's faithfulness, and goodness, as we continue to minister to the children in hopes of instilling enduring faith that will last.

Merry Chu, Nancy Wong, Lillian Wong

SPIRITUAL REFRESHMENT

PRAYER PARTY

The Prayer Party is held in the first weekend of the month. It has not been that well attended as of late (okay, sometimes it is only Peter and me), however, this ministry is still important and vital to our church. The Prayer Party provides a regular place and time where we can bring our burdens before God and thank Him for all He has provided. It is also a time where we can share with others some of our own struggles. We typically pray for our personal issues, issues relating to the congregation and

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events/issues outside of our church. Peter and I often receive requests from individuals in the congregation for prayer and we bring these before God at the Prayer Party as well.

I encourage you to continue to send any prayer request to Peter or me and if you are available, please come out to a Prayer Party and join us in a time of sharing and

prayer.

David Chu

WORSHIP TEAMS

Worship is to feel in your heart and express in some appropriate manner a humbling but delightful sense of admiring awe and astonished wonder and overpowering love in the presence of that most ancient Mystery, that Majesty which philosophers call the First Cause, but which we call Our Father Which Are in Heaven. (A.W. Tozer)

Imagine if we could come to church on Sunday morning and live out what A.W. Tozer described as “worship.” This is our aim each week as we use our voices, play our instruments and lead the congregation.

What a privilege it is to come into God’s presence! Enjoy!

This year we focused on improving our worship experience. We asked the leaders to share more personally. We worked harder at musical excellence. We had a well-attended worship workshop. We started the “worship jam”, a time of jamming and experimenting after service. And, thankfully we were able to expand our worship teams to three. Thanks to all those involved. What a privilege it is to come into God’s presence! Enjoy!

Peter Ma

MISSIONS

MISSIONS - RICHARD AND ALISON

The year 2004 was filled with many blessings and constant reminders of God's goodness. God's hand at work in the lives of many students and friends, and the eternal impact that we can have on their lives has helped us overcome the challenges of living in China.

We know that touching the lives of people in Beijing, especially our students, is the reason why we are here.

We are grateful that we have been able to use our gift of hospitality to reach out to our students, both local and international students. We have been opening up our home every week to the international students who come to study Chinese, and have been blessed through their friendship and discipleship opportunities. We have come to realize that we are members of our home group as well as unofficial counsellors, since some students are recent high school graduates.

The Beijing International Christian Fellowship, which we attend on Sundays, has been an enormous part of our lives. Without such a group, life here would be a desert. We have been able to offer ourselves to the Fellowship in many areas of ministry, including counselling, nursery, Sunday Service production, and the Fellowship's Elder/Deacon Board. The teaching and fellowship we receive here has definitely sustained us and allowed us to stay in China since 1997.

Looking back at 2004, we ask ourselves whether a difference has been made in the lives of people we have met. We know

that touching the lives of people in Beijing, especially our students, is the reason why we are here. But when few local students see the light of the Gospel, we tend to get discouraged. This is a

constant struggle we face, but we know that if we centre our lives on Him and live our lives accordingly, others will see the Light in the lives we lead and move closer to committing their lives to Christ. And, some of the seeds that are planted will grow. We have definitely experienced a great difference in our faith and trust in God over the years, which may also be a large part of why we are in Beijing and why we stay on.

We want to close by expressing our gratitude for your continued prayer and financial support and ask that you continue to intercede for us in 2005. Without your support, the ministry we have here would not be possible. If you would like to know more about our work here in China, please feel free to email us at richardnalison@yahoo.ca.

In Him,
Richard, Alison, Robert, and Katie

Greetings from Central Asia! 2004 was our first full year here. We have settled in quite well into our new home. Daniel, Aaron, Peter, and Ruth are enjoying school and we are especially glad for Ruth since this is her first year in school in grade one.

July marked the end of our first year here and we (Sam and Linda) switched from a year of concentrating on learning Russian to doing work and part-time language study. We, especially Linda, have begun to get a grasp of Russian and we are able to communicate with our new friends who are very patient with us. However, even with our limited Russian, God is able to use us. We have been blessed to be involved with the J Centre, which was setup up by our other Canadian family (Don and Jenny). It is located in a small village at the edge of the city. There are English and computer classes and other community activities. Although there is no religious teaching or formal outreach, Don and Jenny were able to invite people from the J Centre to a Sunday home group study that has now become the start of a small church, the first one in this village. This year they had their first summer retreat where we had a baptism service for the first members. This new church is young in their faith and we look forward to helping in their spiritual growth and development and seeing God raise leaders. Please pray with us in this endeavour.

Another highlight of this year was the J Centre Christmas celebration. The preparations for this gave us many opportunities to share with our students about the holiday and what it means to us. One of our new friends, Mihael, told us that this year at the J Centre was the first time he ever celebrated Christmas. At the Christmas celebration lunch, we concentrated on the story of the wise men from the east that followed the star to search for Jesus. We hope that as we continue to build relationships with our students and other local friends that they too will search for

We hope that as we continue to build relationships with our students and other local friends that they too will search for Jesus. Please pray for the Holy Spirit's work in their lives.

Jesus. Please pray for the Holy Spirit's work in their lives.

This coming year, 2005, we look forward to how God will continue to use our family.

Sam will carry on with computer support work and we (Sam and Linda) will continue to help with the J Centre and the new church. In the following year, 2006, we are scheduled to return to Toronto for home assignment. We look forward to being with you to share about our life here and celebrating how God is using our partnership to bring His love to people both in Central Asia and in Toronto.

As we look to this year ahead of us, it feels like we are just beginning the work that the Lord has called us to here. It is not difficult to see that if we are to have a long lasting effect that we need to be in this work for the long haul. And this is our prayer that we will be here long term. After our home assignment, we plan to return to Central Asia to serve here as long as God would have us. So during our home assignment, we will again be raising support for our next term. Please pray for the Lord's provision in this.

We know we could not be here without all of you. Your prayer upholds us and we are grateful for your love and understanding. We are thankful for you, our family in Christ. We think of you often and feel that we are really the "hands and feet" in Central Asia, of a body of believers who love the Lord and want to see those in need, coming to the Lord Himself.

*1 Corinthians 12:27 Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.
Ephesians 4:16 From Him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.*

With all our love,
Sam, Linda, Daniel, Aaron, Peter, and Ruth

SMALL GROUPS

WOMEN'S SMALL GROUP

Our study group consists of singles, married, and married with children with the common denominator that we are all women! Even with our busy schedules and the changes in our lives, we have managed to keep meeting on a fairly consistent basis, usually once every two weeks. We find it really helpful to take turns sharing the leadership.

We have been fortunate that centrally located homes, have been made available for our meetings, especially Lin's, Helen's and Bonita's places; as well as special get-togethers at Lisa's. We have also been blessed with patient spouses left to fend for themselves or to take care of babies and children so that we can meet together without distraction.

This past year, we have continued a study on the Gospel of John (the Life Change Series) started in 2003 and also started the 50-day Spiritual Adventure, which we had originally hoped to follow Peter's sermon series, but we are still working on it! We chose to study the Gospel of John as this Gospel seems to outline Jesus' life well for every level of faith.

We have found, especially this past year with everyone's busy lives that sometimes our sharing goes overtime and the evening is over before we get to our study! Although this has delayed our study schedule, we find it helpful to share, learn from each other and pray together as the need arises. Our study group has also become a support group.

We would like to share with you an inspiring story, source unknown:

A group of women in a Bible Study were studying the book of Malachi. As they were studying chapter three, they came

across verse three, which says: He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver.

This verse puzzled the women and they wondered what this statement meant about the character and nature of God. One of the women offered to find out about the process of refining silver and get back to the group at their next Bible study.

That week this woman called up a silver smith and made an appointment to watch him work. She didn't mention anything

about the reason for her interest in silver beyond her curiosity about the process of refining silver. As she watched the silver smith, he held a piece of silver over the fire and let it heat up.

He explained that in refining silver, one needed to hold the silver in the middle of the fire where the flames were hottest so as to burn away all the impurities. The woman thought about God holding us in such a hot spot – then she thought again about the verse, that he sits as a refiner and purifier of silver. She asked the silver smith if it was true that he had to sit there in front of the fire the whole time the silver was being refined.

The man answered that yes, he not only had to sit there holding the silver, but he had to keep his eyes on the silver the entire time it was in the fire. If the silver was left even a moment too long in the flames, it would be destroyed. The woman was silent for a moment. Then she asked the silver smith, "How do you know when the silver is fully refined?" He smiled at her and answered, "Oh, that's easy - - when I see my image in it."

Lin Tam and Anna Chan

We have found, especially this past year with everyone's busy lives that sometimes our sharing goes overtime and the evening is over before we get to our study! Although this has delayed our study schedule, we find it helpful to share, learn from each other and pray together as the need arises.

SINGLES AND COUPLES SMALL GROUP

We are a mixed group of individuals from all degrees of faith who meet weekly in a warm and welcoming environment. Throughout the last twelve months, our group has attracted seekers, missionaries, and others who are curious about Christianity.

As a group, we are drawn to discovering the Way, the Truth and the Life, of Jesus. We acknowledge and accept each other's weaknesses without judgment, and in turn support one another. We are open to all questions and opinions and welcome issues that challenge our faith in a positive way, especially those which leads us closer to Jesus.

In the past year, we struggled with deep issues such as discerning God's will for our lives; His tough love; heaven and hell; learning to listen and obey; and how to develop and experience a closer relationship with God.

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The members of the group have grown in their faith in different ways over the year. At times, we have brought our individual struggles to the group only to find out that other members are struggling through similar situations. These circumstances allow opportunity for the group to work through issues as one. There is a true sense of fellowship and the small group members look forward to meeting, discussing and learning the word of God.

"Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another – and all the more as you see the Day approaching." Hebrews 10:25

"For the Word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart." Hebrews 4:12

Bonnie Cai and Rebecca Ko

INVESTIGATIVE BIBLE STUDY

The consistent quality that has grown as the Investigative Bible Study group wrestled with issues around studying the 50-day Spiritual Adventure, the quasi-Existentialism in Ecclesiastes, and now with the book of James, is the willingness of each of the members to bring and hear different points of view on sensitive, personal issues that have arisen from our studies. We've gone from meeting at one home, to having three homes that welcome the group with generous hospitality. We've enjoyed an honest look at our own points of view, regardless of how "orthodox" or "correct" they might be, with individual members of the group taking turns leading

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discussions; it has been great seeing each member taking an active role in the life of the group. And, oftentimes, some of the conversations over breakfast are just as good as the ones during the more formal part of our gatherings! Personally, I have found our Saturday meetings as one of the best ways to start my weekend, and get me thinking of the deeper issues in my life. If you are looking for a place that lets you pull apart issues and help you figure out your own take on things, it would be great to have you join us.

Eric Sun

WEST END SMALL GROUP

The west-end small group has been meeting for several years now. When we first started out, we were young families, mostly with infants and toddlers. Now, we are moving into another phase. Most of the kids are in school now, and many of the moms are finding time for themselves and for taking on new challenges (way to go, Moms!!)



In looking back over the many years, we have grown together, gone on outings, encouraged one another through tough times, swapped advice on family issues and exchanged recipes. We have used materials such as Growing Kids God's Way, Class 201, and The Purpose Driven Life in our studies.

The group meets monthly and begins with a potluck dinner, followed by singing. During the adult study time, our friend Ed Hong joins the children in games, lessons and crafts.

We are beginning new materials on deepening our marriages and we encourage anyone who is interested to join us!

We have great fellowship, good food and lots to talk about. Feel free to contact any of us to find out more:

Chuck and Sandy Ma – 905-875-9267
Henry and Enid Ning – 905-502-0946
Eric and Sue Ming Lee – 905-828-9563
Don and Anita Wong – 905-897-2556
Ken and Helen Lee – 905-858-2107

FAMILY SMALL GROUP

Greetings from the couples-turned-family small group, consisting of Merry & David Chu, Phebe & Mel Hum, Susan & myself, and recent additions, Janet & Harley Yee.

As implied above, our group started out as a young couples group and much has changed over the years, most notably in the growth of everybody's family.

Membership has remained more or less the same (May & Steve Tong left a couple of years ago in favour of something geographically closer, and Janet and Harley Yee joined us last fall), which has allowed us to develop really close and deep relationships. We have seen each other at our best and our worst and yet our commitment to the group, although challenged at times, remains strong. This closeness has enabled us to support and

This closeness has enabled us to support and challenge each other, both directly and indirectly, in our faith, our marriages, our parenthood and other areas of our lives.

challenge each other, both directly and indirectly, in our faith, our marriages, our parenthood and other areas of our lives.

Janet and Harley are a strong addition to this group and I look forward to their growing contribution.

Some of the biggest challenges facing the group have been geography (Mississauga to Richmond

Hill), changing family dynamics (in a word, CHILDREN) and just generally being busy. However, with God's help we have worked through these issues and we pray that He will continue to work in our group, helping us to grow in support for one another as well as for others in our Christian community.

Charles Snelgrove and David Chu

FAMILY FELLOWSHIP SMALL GROUP

When we were first asked to write about our small group for the Annual Report of 2004, our minds were in a complete blank. Then, as we thought a bit more, we were reminded of the year's past events and happenings and it soon trickled into a flood of thoughts and emotions. How were we to express and summarize all that has happened such that others would feel it too?! Well...here it goes...

Over the course of 2004, some of us have had the most displeasure of having illnesses and/or injuries in our group. Much to our dismay, some of us and our loved ones were even hospitalized for a lengthy period of time. During the Tsunami disaster in the Asian Pacific, we've even had a lost relative to one of our members. Please pray for the lost husband, surviving wife, sons and extended family. Though these were considered our most extreme cases in which we had to endure our utmost struggles were our daily lives. Being a parent, spouse, child, sibling, and friend, we all have our own personal burden that we must carry with us. It is only through our support for one another and the grace of our Lord that we have been able to overcome and cope with our shortcomings and challenges that lie ahead of us.

One of our highlights of 2004 was the studying the book "Losing Face...Saving Grace" whereby we learned from our wonderful bible study leaders, about being

Asian in a western society. We confessed if any, of our shame-based heritage and how culture and traditions may have hindered our growth and blocked our path to God.

We have been able to open our hearts to one another without ridicule and have been encouraged to think positively in tough situations.

We have God to thank for bringing all of us together. We really consider our group to be a "Care" group because this is ultimately

what we try to do through God's help. We try to care for one another with sincere and humble hearts. We believe that God has given us a wonderful environment where we can come to him and be genuine with one another to provide a range of care and support to each other in all our trials and tribulations (as well as the yummy desserts). We have been able to open our hearts to one another without ridicule and have been encouraged to think positively in tough situations. Praise our Lord who sees and hears our prayers.

Where do we go from here? Continue to care for one another and to continue to grow in faith through love and action and to apply more of what God has taught us through our bible studies. This year we all would like to get out of our comfort zone and take that leap of faith to make a difference in someone life. We would like to encourage everyone to do the same.

We are a small group with a lot to give, if you would like to join us and check us out please give Pastor Pete a call!

Carmen and Mark Tang

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Celebration Church

Operating Income Statement for period January 1- December 31, 2004

(Canadian \$)

Revenue

Offerings - General	104,291	
Specified	<u>33,712</u>	
		138,003
GST Rebate		0
Interest		<u>923</u>
Total Revenue		138,926

Less: Specified Receipts/Non-operating items:

Specified Offerings		
Missions	30,827	
Building	<u>2,884</u>	
		33,712

Givings

Trinity Mandarin Pres *	700	
East Toronto Presbytery	1,476	
General Assembly	9,000	
Other (Daily Bread)	<u>100</u>	
		11,276
Bank Charges		205
Children Sunday School		643
Education		384
Equipments & Supplies		3,848
Events		126
Guest Speakers		1,205
Insurance		1,256
Rent		12,626
Small Groups		0
Salary & Benefits		<u>66,157</u>
Total Expenses		131,438

Surplus

7,488

* Note: Donation to Trinity Mandarin Presbyterian Church in lieu of salary to Natalia Kao for nursery help.

Celebration Church
Balance Sheet as of December 31, 2004
(Canadian \$)

Cash & Bank Accounts

Bank Account	48,713	
Celebration Church Missions Fund	29,230	
Petty Cash	200	
Coin Box	74	
		78,218

Other Assets

Receivables	0	
CIBC Wood Gundy - Building Fund	99,223	
		99,223

Total Assets 177,441

Liabilities

Payables		0
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Reserves

Celebration Church Missions Fund	29,230	
CIBC Wood Gundy - Building Fund	99,223	
		128,454
Retained Earnings (previous years)	41,500	
Retained Earnings 2004	7,488	
Total Retained Earnings		48,988

Total Liabilities & Reserves 177,441

Celebration Church
Missions Breakdown for period January 1- December 31, 2004
(Canadian \$)

Revenue

Building		2,884	
Missions			
General	2,599		
R Wong	8,215		
S Ling	19,978		
Other Missionaries	35		
		<u>30,827</u>	
Offerings Specified Others		0	
Total Revenue			<u>33,712</u>

Commitments

Building		(2,884)	
Missions			
R Wong	(7,500)		
S Ling	(30,000)		
Other Missionaries	(200)		
		<u>(37,700)</u>	
Offerings Specified Others		0	
Total Commitments			<u>(40,584)</u>

Surplus / (Deficit) (6,873)

Specified Offering Account Cash Flow

Opening Balance Carried Forward- 2004		36,103
2004 Additions	33,712	
2004 Commitments	<u>(40,584)</u>	
2004 Deficit		<u>(6,873)</u>
Closing - 2004		<u><u>29,230</u></u>

Sam & Linda Ling Account Cash Flow

Opening Balance Carried Forward- 2004		22,094
2004 Additions	19,978	
2004 Commitments	<u>(30,000)</u>	
2004 Deficit		<u>(10,022)</u>
Closing - 2004		<u><u>12,072</u></u>

Celebration Church
2005 Proposed Operating Budget
(Canadian \$)

Inflows

Offering - General	105,000	
Offering - Specified	37,500	
Interest Income	1,000	to reflect 04 level
GST rebate - 2004 & 2005	400	
Total Inflows	<u>143,900</u>	

Outflows

Offering - Specified	37,500	
Givings		
Charitable Organization	100	
Trinity Mandarin Pres *	3,000	
East Toronto Presbytery	1,579	
General Assembly	9,000	13,679
Bank Charges	200	
Children Sunday School	2,000	
Education	500	
Equipments & Supplies	4,000	
Events	800	
Guest Speakers	1,500	
Insurance	1,525	
Rent	14,800	
Small Groups	200	
Salaries & Benefits	67,000	
Total Outflows	<u>143,704</u>	

Surplus 197

* Note: Re: donation in lieu of salary to Natalia Kao for nursery help.