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To Rev. and Mrs. Liu
With love from the staff **insert**

From Generation to Generation

By Pastor John Tung

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Tom Brokaw, the former NBC News Anchor wrote a book in 1998 called *The Greatest Generation*. In the book, the "Greatest Generation" refers to those individuals in the U.S. who were born pre-1946 who endured the hardship of the Great Depression, WWII, Communism, Nazism, and Socialism. This group was hard working, sacrificed, determined and rebuilt the modern world in the aftermath of these devastating ravages. They are also known as "Builders."

But the "Greatest Generation" isn't limited to those born in the US; the same designation can be applied to all in the world who were born pre-1946. In the Chinese community, many of our parents and grandparents are also part of the "Greatest Generation."

In the Chinese church, they built the churches in China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, SE Asia, and when they immigrated to the West, built churches in Canada and the U.S. Most of the Chinese churches in N. America today are built by the "Builders."

We honor them for this effort: their sweat, sacrifice and service. We owe them a great debt for the foundation they laid in our homes and in our churches.

But each generation also has its limitations. For the "Builders" their limitation was that their "love language" was service, not words. They almost never said, "I love you" to their Boomer children. The men worked long hours outside the home and the women spent all their time inside the home caring for the children. Gender roles were very clear and distinct. The men thus were not involved in child-raising, were absent from home and aloof from their children. Relationship with their kids and wives was not a strong trait. Their family considered them stubborn.

Their children, known as "Boomers," had other traits.

The "Boomers" benefitted from the Builders' sacrifice and they studied hard, got into the best schools, earned college and higher degrees, got high-paying safe jobs, and have become middle and upper managers in the government, companies and organizations. They learned to communicate more effectively. They are now the pillars of the Chinese-American community.

Another distinction between the two generations is that the "Builders" were mostly mono-cultural: retaining their ethnic heritage and pride even as they were displaced from their mother country to other countries. For those who came to the U.S., they spoke English with noticeable accents, if they spoke English at all. Their children, however, speak perfect English, a result of their parents pushing them to become Americanized as fast as they can and to pursue "the American Dream." The "Boomers" also went through many social changes: The Civil Rights movement, Vietnam War, Watergate, Hippie movement. The Boomers are multi-cultural and many are bi-lingual.

In the Chinese church in America, the Chinese-speaking congregations have mostly "Builder" values. But the English-speaking congregations have mostly "Boomer" values. This accounts for many of the conflicts between the two groups: a product of language and generational differences.

The more we understand the larger social context of these two generations, the better we will be able to appreciate each generation's strengths and also lessen the conflicts between the two. Then we can pass on an understandable narrative to the "Busters" and "Millennial" generations that have come. And, therefore, the story of God working in us can be passed on from "generation to generation."

“Go into
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and
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Pastor Jonathan Liu Reflects on 50 years of service

By Amy Tian
Translated by Jennifer Jen

*As Pastor Liu retires as Senior Pastor of CBCM, he reflects on 50 years of service filled with God’s love and blessings.
I had the privilege of listening to Pastor Liu as we shared a meal that Mrs. Liu prepared, and sipped tea that Pastor Liu brought back from a missions trip to South Africa.*

ANSWERING THE CALL

At 19, one is full of dreams and hopes for the future. Jonathan Liu, born and raised in Korea, was no exception. But unlike other 19-year-olds, he set his sight on Jesus, not on worldly riches and fame. After graduating from high school, the Holy Spirit prompted him to answer Pastor Yu’s call to full-time ministry at a revival meeting. To “go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation” became his aspiration in life.

Jonathan planned to study theology in Taiwan and return to Korea to serve, so he applied to 3 seminaries, but the doors were closed. Providentially, he met Pastor Yu again and asked if there was any seminary he could recommend. Pastor Yu immediately sent a telegram to Alliance Bible Seminary in Hong Kong, and they accepted Jonathan right away, without even seeing his application or resume first.

However, Jonathan’s father was very against this, and would not give him any financial support. When he flew to Hong Kong with just his Bible and a few things, he felt like Peter leaving everything he knew to follow Jesus. Though he had never gone far away from home before, he was not afraid, because of Matthew 10:29-31, “Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground outside your Father’s care. And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. So don’t be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows.” Thus Jonathan began equipping himself with God’s Word, and also building up his language skills in Mandarin, English, and Cantonese, laying a solid foundation for future service. During that time, though his earthly father did not give him any monetary support, his heavenly father provided everything that he needed to finish all the required theological courses, training and various internships, just as written in the Bible, “And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus.” (Philippians 4:19)

Thereafter, he returned to Korea and became a Young Adult Minister. However, he was soon deported, because he had unknowingly lost his Korean resident status when he was away, and hence it was illegal for him to work in Korea.

He had to set aside his plan again, but he did not despair. He remembered Genesis 12:1-2, “Go from your country, your people and your father’s household to the land I will show you. I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing.” Just as Abraham believed the place God wanted him to go was the safest, most blessed place for him to be, Jonathan Liu left his country to go to Taiwan alone. While he did not know what awaited him, he firmly believed that God will guide him every step of the way.

LOVE STORY

On Christmas eve of 1968, a Christian sister Helen brought a group of people to the Zion Church in Taipei for the Christmas program. The speaker that night was Jonathan. He began his message by reminding them of the clock on the wall, how it was steadily ticking time away second by second; and as time passes away, our lives will similarly pass away. Though Helen was attracted to this young man, what made her heart flutter was the group gift exchange afterwards, when she became the recipient of his Christmas gift, a small Bible. Jonathan also noticed Helen that night, particularly her beautiful singing voice and pleasant demeanor.

A few days later, Jonathan gave Helen a hymn book, with a note stuck on the page of the song “I know who holds tomorrow.” He wrote, “I love to hear you sing, can you sing this song for me?” It was a hint to Helen that he did not know about tomorrow, but he knew God holds his hand – the unspoken yet obvious question to Helen was, “are you willing to walk this path of faith with me?” After that, they started dating, often serving in the church together. With the blessing of their parents, they were engaged in June the following year, and in October, Helen immigrated to US through her job. Jonathan also moved to New York to attend Nyack College the year after. They were married on July 31, 1971 at the Chinese church on 96th street in New York, and began serving God as a couple.

MIRACULOUS PROVISION

Helen was working as a nurse at the time, and they planned to raise a family on her income alone. During a maternity checkup, the doctor asked her about Jonathan’s occupation and learnt that he was a seminary student. When she returned to the hospital for a follow-up visit after the baby was born, and inquired about the bill, she was told that the doctor had noted that her husband was a seminary student and therefore the hospital waived the charges.

After giving birth, Helen was on maternity leave without pay for 3 months. How were they to pay for all their expenses and Jonathan’s tuition? Amazingly, several churches in New Jersey, New York, and New Haven frequently invited Jonathan to be their guest speaker or temporary minister. Sometimes he would deliver as many as 5 messages over a weekend. When it was time for Helen to return to work, she suddenly realized she had no idea how they had actually managed financially while she was out of work. When they added up all the honorariums Jonathan had received in the past 3 months, the amount was exactly the same as Helen’s salary for 3 months, down to the penny. They were so amazed, and praised God with hearts full of thanksgiving!

After seeing how God had faithfully provided in these 2 situations, Helen realized that only God’s plan for them is good and perfect. She confessed her little faith to God, and put her trust and her future in God’s hand from then on. Her load became lighter day by day as she walked with God by faith.

One day, during Helen’s first postpartum month of staying at home, she woke up and saw Jonathan standing at her bedside with blood running down his forehead. He had a car accident because the brakes on his car had failed, so he rammed the car into the guardrails to avoid running over people, and the car was totaled. As Helen thanked God for keeping Jonathan safe, a thought came to her, and she told Jonathan, “God will give us a car.” The next day Jonathan was to preach at a Pittsburgh church and would interview for the pastoral position.

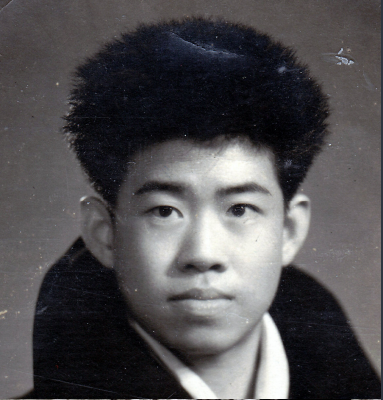
God had faithfully provided
God’s plan for them is good and perfect

“And my God will meet all your needs according to
the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus.”

Philippians 4:19

“I can do all
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him who gives
me strength.”

Philippians 4:13



After they decided to hire him, they sent him a one-way ticket to fly to Pittsburgh and gave him the church's car intended for pastor's use. That way, he could drive his family from New York to Pittsburgh. God's help came just in time!

CBCM CHAPTER

On January 8, 1982, Pastor Liu and his family came to the Chinese Bible Church of Maryland, and Jonathan officially became the Senior Pastor on January 24th that year. Before the church building was expanded, many fellowship gatherings took place at their house. Mrs. Liu was very friendly and hospitable; she had invited almost everyone at church to their home during the first year, and her young children had already learned to help out when guests come. She also tried to handle most of the housework and raising their children so Pastor Liu could focus on pastoring the church.

In addition to preaching, Pastor Liu also worked on drafting the church by-laws and lesson plans for membership class, as well Sunday school teachers' training. He has a heart for preaching the gospel to enlarge God's kingdom. During his years here, God blessed CBCM with 3 building expansions, 3 church plants, and the Gaithersburg campus recently. Pastor Liu often says, "Without me, CBCM would still grow." Pastor Kenneth Hom opined that "Despite being the Senior Pastor of a prominent Chinese church, I do not sense any pride in him. I see a man who is humble, never willing to take credit for all the wonderful things that have happened while he has been here but rather crediting everything to God."

Mrs. Liu was also involved in various ministries at church. Besides serving in the choir, in the early years she also taught children worship and children's Sunday school. Later on as more families had young children, she was persuaded to co-teach adult Sunday school with Pastor Liu on topics such as parenting and marriage, and eventually published a book on raising children. She also led marriage and parenting workshops at different conferences. Pastor John Tung said that he learned to "be giving, be hospitable, be caring, be friendly, and be warm" from Mrs. Liu.

One of Pastor Liu's favorite Bible verses is "Philippians 4:13 – I can do all things through him who gives me strength." Many people also notice his unusually full and dark hair at his age. Mrs. Liu commented, "He never loses sleep over anything in the church, because Pastor Liu knows 'the one who calls you is faithful, and he will do it.' (1 Thessalonians 5:24)" The years at CBCM are full of fond memories. "Through all these years, everything that happened at CBCM was God's providence. The brothers and sisters here all seek the truth and serve our Lord prudently, never had very serious disputes, so I had good environment and time to preach and write books," he said. So far, he had published *Beneath the Cross*, *Church Life*, *Bible Study Notes on the Pastoral Books*, and *People Like Us* in Chinese, and translated a book by Harold Lindsell *When You Pray* to Chinese.

Pastor Liu also said, "It is emotionally very difficult for me to leave a church I've pastored for so many years. But going forward, CBCM needs a new leader, a new direction, so it can be even better. If I stay, it will stay the same too. I am not retiring for myself, but for the sake of CBCM, that it can have a new life, new vision, new direction, and grow anew. Plus, after retiring from here, I can seize other opportunities open to me to serve elsewhere. My desire had always been to 'go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation.' Mrs. Liu and I had already been to all the continents to spread the gospel, except Australia. If God allows, we hope to go there next spring." When asked if he had concrete plans, Pastor Liu's reply was, "No, I am a servant of God, my plans are in His hands. I can only pray and leave it to Him, and be obedient as He leads us."



Pastor Liu and Mrs. Liu with their beloved family

As for his loving wife who had made him breakfast every morning for over 40 years, Pastor Liu hopes he can do the same for her after he retires. They not only serve side by side at church, they complement each other very well at home also. They always enjoy very much the time spent hand-making Chinese dumplings together. Pastor Liu would prepare the dough to make the wraps, while Mrs. Liu would prepare the stuffing by cutting and mixing the veggies and meat. Dumplings made with love are most delicious, and remind them to count every blessing in their lives.

Everything they experienced in their 50 years of faithful service testifies over and over again how great, how faithful, and how good our God is. Suddenly, I realized that I was here tonight not only to interview them, but to learn spiritual lessons as well!

I'd like to conclude with what our Children's Director Sophia Wong said about Pastor Liu, "He has faith in God like a child, passion for missions like a youth, energy for ministry like a young man, calm demeanor like a mature adult, and insightful wisdom like an elder." In fact, many brothers and sisters at CBCM would praise their beloved pastor in the same way.

(The author would like to thank Pastor and Mrs. Liu for their valuable assistance with this writing.)

Ten Things I Learned from Pastor Liu:

- Better to go than not go: better to be at an event than not be there
- Be careful with money that is not yours
- Allow pastors and elders' wives freedom to serve as they see fit
- Unity of leaders
- Be active and persistent in reaching the lost of the world
- On-the-job training for those who serve
- Be on time
- Plant churches
- Get lay people involved in serving
- Be generous in your giving to God

Five Things I Learned from Mrs. Helen Liu:

- Be giving
- Be hospitable
- Be caring
- Be friendly
- Be warm

~ Pastor John Tung, CBCM English Pastor

One thing I've learned from Pastor Liu is how to stay humble in ministry. Despite being the Senior Pastor of a prominent Chinese church, I do not sense any pride in him. I see a man who is humble, never willing to take credit for all the wonderful things that have happened while he has been here but rather crediting everything to God.

~ Kenneth Hom, CBCM English Pastor

Top ten reasons why I will **sorely** miss Rev. and Mrs. Liu:

10. Staff parties Mrs. Liu planned for us at Bamboo Buffet.
9. Without Rev. Liu, we will have one less excuse for birthday parties.
8. Their hospitality -- we had the best Christmas parties and Chinese New Year gatherings at their house.
7. Their thoughtfulness -- Mrs. Liu hand-picked/made presents for us every Christmas.
6. Rev. Liu's sense of humor and his heart of gold. Without him, we will be like Charlie's Angels without Charlie!
5. Rev. Liu's ministry sharing after he came back from his trips overseas.
4. The fun chats we had during staff evaluations.
3. The opportunities to learn from Rev. Liu's sermons while I work on it.
2. Mrs. Liu is gracious, generous, loving and caring; all the qualities that made her the perfect pastor's wife. Rev. Liu is blessed with the most supportive partner in life and ministries. God bestowed on our church the most awesome BOGO deal.
1. Rev. Liu is one of the most principle-oriented and godly man that I know. He is the best Senior Pastor CBCM has ever had.

~ Irene Chang, CBCM Church Secretary

To Rev. and Mrs. Liu With Love From the Staff

Dear Pastor Liu,

When I think of you, I think of 1 Thessalonians 2:7-8, 11-12: "But we proved to be gentle among you, as a nursing mother tenderly cares for her own children. Having so fond an affection for you, we were well-pleased to impart to you not only the gospel of God but also our own lives, because you had become very dear to us... exhorting and encouraging and imploring each one of you as a father would his own children, so that you would walk in a manner worthy of the God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory."

These are some of the areas I appreciate Pastor Liu:

- His heart for God and his faithfulness and commitment to serve Him
- His heart for the world, the lost and His Kingdom
- He's a man of "few words", but when he speaks people listen
- His perseverance
- He and Mrs. Liu visited me on the field several times during my 18 years of missionary service in Taiwan (one or twice they brought their children with them)
- He is generous in giving to God and to people

- He cares about Christian workers who start out and need extra help and encouragement
- He cares about small churches and desires to help them grow
- They brought me their homemade 韭菜盒子 after I came home from a surgery

And Mrs. Liu:

- Always has a positive outlook – She thinks the best of people and situation
- Very giving, generous, thoughtful
- Each time I was on home service, when the staff get together for meals, she always extend her gracious invitations to me to join them
- Hospitable: she is a 'Hostess with the Mostess'!
- Christmas gifts they prepare for the staff and their spouses each year and countless meals they host. One of the fun ones was the hotpot lunch.

With much appreciation,
Isabel Lee
CBCM Minister of Women's Ministry

These are some of the qualities that immediately come to mind when I think of Rev. Liu:

Principled - it is an obvious one: he will say and do what needs to be said and done, even if it means people will be offended.

Gracious - he gives people chance to serve and, when they mess up, chance again. He takes risks on people.

Steadfast - does anyone think it is easy to serve as a pastor in a church? And for 31 years!?

Heart for missions - why does anyone think he goes overseas so much? For fun? For vacation? No, it is to serve, out of a heart for missions. He doesn't just give money but his life. Missions is what he is going to do after concluding his ministry here. He cares about God and His Kingdom.

Generous and Caring - he does give money and time generously, and not just for missions, but also to people who are in need because he cares for their tangible needs as well.

Thank you, Pastor Liu!

~ Vitus Cheng, CBCM Cantonese Pastor

Pastor Liu is a spiritual leader with strong leadership skills, like Moses, he also cares about people, it doesn't matter who they are. I always receive Christmas gifts from him. I like his sermons and testimonies. Talking about his retirement, I think God is calling him for another adventure. We need a strong leader like him for our church. May God bless CBCM with a new senior pastor in the future.

Pastor Liu and Mrs. Liu, may God bless you with your new adventure!

~ Andrew Leung, CBCM Facilities worker



Dear Pastor Liu and Mrs. Liu,

When our family immigrated to this country 21 years ago, we were preoccupied with the uncertainties of our new life. As new immigrants, we struggled with the thought of supporting ourselves and two children.

During that time, dealing with the new environment and finding a new job was very stressful. We knocked many doors but without any success. Our future outlook seemed very dim.

However, despite the hard circumstances, our Lord and Savior sent so many brothers and sisters from this church CBCM to comfort us. They were praying for us and generously extended their loving hands during our time of needs. One day, our faithful Heavenly Father surprised us by placing you in our path as a channel of blessing by finding us a place to serve at the House of the Lord – CBCM.

Since then, we cannot THANK YOU enough for all your love, kindness, encouragement, prayers, and support. It has been a privilege and honor to have known you throughout these years. We will really miss you. May the Lord reward you and continually bless you enormously.

In HIM,

Francisco and Violeta Chang
CBCM Finance Assistant

We will
miss you!



Pastor Liu baptizing
Clement

Since my childhood days of growing up at CBCM, Pastor Liu has always been a man that I have deeply admired for his godly character, faithful leadership and sound biblical preaching (for which, in the Chinese-speaking Christian world, he is world-renown). In the handful of one-on-one meetings that I've had with him in his office over the past three and a half years that I've been on the pastoral staff, Pastor Liu has always been affirming, encouraging and prayerfully supportive of my ministry and pastoral calling. As a young minister, to have the endorsement of this legendary great has been an empowering gift from the Lord that I will always treasure. Very few churches enjoy the kind of growth, stability and consistency that Pastor Liu's leadership brought to our church. I heartily celebrate Pastor Liu's faithfulness to God's call at CBCM over the last 30+ years. I'm thankful for and greatly inspired by the way that Pastor Liu has finished well the race that was set before him at our church, and I look forward to hearing great things when it comes to how the Lord will continue to use him and Mrs. Liu in the advancing of His Kingdom, post-CBCM.

~ Clement Wen, CBCM Youth Pastor