

2016 OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD

Collection Dates: 10/23-11/20




FALL FEST

Games, Prizes, Candy, and Fun!
Invite neighbours and friends!
遊戲, 獎品, 糖果!
請邀請鄰舍及朋友參加!

Friday, October 28
7:00 pm - 9:00 pm
星期五, 10月28日
晚上 7:00-9:00
Fellowship Hall (交誼廳)



THANKSGIVING DINNER & TESTIMONY SHARING

November 19, 2016, 5:30 to 9:30 pm
(Pot-Luck Dinner, Praise Worship, Testimony)

🕒 Potluck Thanksgiving Dinner - 5:30 pm at the Fellowship Hall, please bring at least for 6-8 peoples serving portion (Turkey, dessert will be provided by church)

😊 Thanksgiving Celebration & Testimony Sharing follow after dinner at 7 pm. Please feel free to invite friends to come. (Childcare [for K-5th Grade] will be provided during the testimony sharing time)



Contents

Presidential Election Stakes High Say Christian Leaders	p.1
Alveda King, Niece of Martin Luther King, on 2016 Election	p.4
Reflections of the "Hear Our Cry" Concert Event	p.5
What This Election Means to Me: The Election of Our Life-time.....	p.8
40th Anniversary Combined Service and Installation	p.9
My Spiritual Journey on the Occasion of CBCM's 40 th Anniversary.....	p.11

"The next president will... nominate those vital Supreme Court justices...[who] will serve decades and make their judicial decisions felt for generations."

-Billy Graham Evangelistic Association

Cross talk

Oct 2016

Vol. 6, Issue No.3



馬利蘭中華聖經教會
Chinese Bible Church of Maryland

www.cbcm.org

EXALTING JESUS CHRIST
EDIFYING THE BELIEVERS
EVANGELIZING THE WORLD

Presidential Election Stakes High Say Christian Leaders

10/6/2016

This Nov. 8, American voters will decide what is arguably the most consequential presidential election in decades. Maybe ever. Two major party candidates are being offered to voters. Two distinct visions are being cast. The Billy Graham Evangelistic Association talked to leading Christians in ministry and politics to find out what's at stake.



One vision includes a nation where free speech and religious liberty are constitutionally protected, bedrock principles. The other continues along a path where such principles are quickly jettisoned with the latest turn of the sexual revolution.

One vision aspires, as a first priority, to use our nation's military as a fighting force to keep America and the world safe from bad actors. The other would continue using the armed

forces as a social experimentation lab, where the LGBT agenda takes precedence over troop readiness and morale, and where placing women in ground combat roles supercedes obvious gender differences.

One vision would seek to build a federal judiciary, including the Supreme Court, that interprets the Constitution as an enduring document for the nation, with timeless guiding principles for civil government. The other would appoint liberal-progressive judges to federal courts who believe the Constitution is a "living, breathing document" that bends with the times and with evolving moral standards. With an aging Supreme Court—already absent one justice after the unexpected death last year of conservative stalwart Antonin Scalia—perhaps four new Supreme Court justices will be appointed. The next president will be either Democrat Hillary Clinton or Republican Donald Trump, and he or she will nominate those vital Supreme Court justices. Those judges will serve decades and make their judicial decisions felt for generations. In an age in which the Supreme Court and the federal bench have trended toward an activist, lawmaking role instead of their intended task—to act as umpires of the Constitution—the stakes for religious freedom and limited government are monumental.

Continued on page 2

Being Compassionate Like Jesus

All Sessions will be held in the Chapel

11/12/2016

9:00 - 11:00 am

Mental Health - Be more compassionate and supportive to the people around us

11:00 - 12:00 pm

Bereavement & Healing

12:00 - 1:00 pm

Break

1:00 - 3:00 pm

Worldwide Christian Churches Ministries (WCCM)



Dr. Freda K. Cheung is a retired clinical professor of behavioral science from the University of California, Los Angeles. She served together with her husband Rev. Fred Cheung for over forty years until the Lord received him to glory. She is currently the president of WCCM, a cross-cultural missions organization that supports ministries in the developing world.

“...America no longer lives by an eternal moral code given to us by the Word of God.”

-James Dobson

“the leaders we elect can either accelerate that deterioration or they can stay it by giving the church the space it needs to do the fundamental work that only the church can do.”

-Tony Perkins



In fact, says Tony Perkins, president of the Washington, D.C.-based Family Research Council, the very survival of our democratic republic may hinge on the fundamental beliefs of the next chief executive.

Perkins told Decision: “America is not going to cease to exist as the land mass that it is. What is at stake is the republic as we know it, freedoms that we have enjoyed.”

Christians in the Crosshairs

Chief among those freedoms is religious liberty, Perkins says, and it has taken direct hits in the last eight years.

“It’s been open. It’s been frontal. It’s been unrelenting. ... The weight of the government is being used to quarantine faith within the four walls of the church, and that is not religious freedom,” Perkins said.

The ongoing sexual revolution, which has accelerated at mind-numbing speed, has placed more pressure on those with a Biblical worldview.

Same-sex marriage is legal nationwide via the Supreme Court’s Obergefell decision in June 2015, creating a collision of religious freedom with the law’s conception of sexual freedom. Last spring, the federal government directed public schools to allow transgender use of gender-specific restrooms and locker rooms, a direct affront to North Carolina, which had passed a bathroom protection law that still stands.

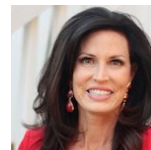
Despite some gains in the percentage of people who believe abortion is immoral, the 1973 Roe v. Wade decision making abortion legal nationally remains, with the country approaching 60 million aborted babies.

The nation hasn’t merely been “slouching toward Gomorrah,” as the late judge Robert Bork wrote, it has nearly slid past it.



James Dobson, the best-selling author and psychologist who has championed the traditional family and Christian values for more than four decades, told Decision: “The sexual revolution weakened the exclusivity and commitment required for life-long marriage. Spiritual apathy and apostasy have also been major contributors. America no longer lives by an eternal moral code given to us by the Word of God.”

“Also,” Dobson added, “the radical feminist movement, based on hostility toward men, weakened the marital bond. Related to it was, and is, the legalization of abortion through nine months of pregnancy. Raising children is what this ancient institution is all about. And, finally, the judiciary has created politically correct interpretations of the law that are destroying the traditional family unit. Uppermost among them is same-sex ‘marriage’—imposed by five members of the Supreme Court on 50 million people who voted against it.”



As Penny Nance, president of Concerned Women for America, puts it, “We live in a time when we have gone from living in a post-Christian nation to living in an anti-Christian nation. That is completely contrary to the founding principles of our country.” The cultural slide has meant that more people are sharply opposed to the Biblical worldview than in decades past. English common law, which helped in forming American law, was rooted in Judeo-Christian understandings of right and wrong. Those sturdy tethers have unraveled quickly.

Cont’d on page 3

My Spiritual Journey On the Occasion of CBCM’s 40th Anniversary

By Kevin Seto

The first leg of my spiritual journey. CBCM has been my spiritual home for 33 of its 40 years. This spiritual journey started with God using a couple in Baltimore County to bring me to CBCM, knowing that I wasn’t Christian and wasn’t looking for a church, that I lived 20 miles away and that it was a real stretch of faith for me to return the second time without them. In His divine providence, this started a two year search for answers to the sins and ills of this world. It ended with the revelation that Jesus is the answer and that He is the Savior that mankind so desperately needs (John 14:6). It was here at CBCM that I heard the Gospel for the first time, here that I was inspired to open the bible with a real desire to understand for the first time, here that one brother in the Lord spent serious time with me over many dinners to answer my many questions about Christianity and here that God used two other brothers who so cared about my eternal destiny that they would visit me and bring about the “ah ha moment” that ultimately led to the surrender of my life and will to Jesus as my personal Lord and Savior.

Building family roots at CBCM. While philosophers, psychologists, social scientists and other learned people may have their man-centered explanations for the stream of events within a person’s life, I attribute them to the sovereign will of the good and gracious God. After God opened my spiritual eyes, ears and heart, He ordained that I would marry an amazing woman and beget two wonderful children with her. Amazingly my two siblings and father-in-law would come to CBCM and also meet their Lord and Savior. It was His plan that my wife’s three siblings would move to Maryland, call CBCM their spiritual home and would all meet their future spouses here. Amongst us would be ten fearfully and wonderfully made children. What was once just 1 non-Christian would now be 23 family members in the Lord, all an integral part of the life of one local body of Christ. While some might call the development of a family commonplace and nothing unusual, I call it a blessing and am sure to thank God for it.

Serving in response to blessing. My spiritual journey doesn’t just end with being blessed with family and extended family; it also speaks of God’s design in bringing his people closer to Him by letting them participate

in his Kingdom work and seeing His mighty hand doing the real and intricate work of changing lives and saving souls. Desiring to live a life worthy of God’s calling (Eph. 4:1), God gave me areas to serve Him. To name a few: selling books and bibles, chairing church-wide retreats, washing baptismal robes, teaching adult Sunday School, picking up and serving lunches, being a spiritual guide and friend to young adults, crawling through the church ceilings pulling audio and power cables, leading people to Christ, purchasing and installing computers, A/V equipment and modular furniture, tending to the ministries of the church as a deacon, delivering sermons over 10 years mostly to young adults and youth and helping sister churches get established. While some might think of serving as something interesting to do, I call it God’s way of shaping me, drawing me closer to Him and being conduits of His will for others. After all, my life history is really not about me, it’s about His-Story.

My continued spiritual journey. My spiritual journey also took me through times when I thought that I had outgrown my church and that it was time to move on. But as God would have it, I came to see the truth of Romans 3:23 that we all fall short of the glory of God, including Christians within the Church, my own church and even myself. The thought that the grass is greener on the other side was slowly replaced by the truth that no church is perfect, that all churches are full of sinners and that it is for them that Christ established his Church. So my spiritual journey at CBCM has not ended. I see that God has placed certain ministry burdens in my heart that are current at CBCM: the ministry of being a church to those who are ethnically Chinese yet culturally Western, the ministry of being relevant to the unchurched, the ministry of disciples reproducing and caring for disciples and the ministry of saving the lost. So for me, until God clearly calls me elsewhere, I plan on serving, worshipping and experiencing God at CBCM during its second 40 year period. May God glorify His Holy Name through His universal and local Church, until He comes again, bringing Heaven to this earth and establishing Paradise as He intended from the beginning (Rev. 21).

...God used two other brothers who so cared about my eternal destiny that they would visit me and bring about the “ah ha moment” that ultimately led to the surrender of my life and will to Jesus as my personal Lord and Savior.

-Kevin Seto



Instead, left-wing activists, smelling blood in the water, are seeking to take as much ground on the moral and legal front as forcefully and as quickly as possible.

That pressure is evident when states such as Washington and Oregon punish bakers and pharmacists when their Christian beliefs collide with the secular-progressive worldview.



Veteran conservative columnist Cal Thomas, not one to put significant hope in political efforts to right the culture, says the next election will set the tone for the Supreme Court “for 30 or 40 years” and could lead to “the possible disintegration of this country.”

He says the culprit is a generation that has forgotten God, and it is reflected in our government.

“We are sacrificing our children, nearly 60 million now, on the modern-day equivalent of the altar of Molech, which God called detestable on more than one occasion,” Thomas said.

“We are mainstreaming same-sex marriage, transgender toilets. It just seems that the sewer cover has been removed and everything is now up in the streets.”

David Jeremiah, pastor of Shadow Mountain Community Church near San Diego, Calif., sees a crucial election that may determine whether or not Christians can exercise their faith freely—at church and outside the church—or under an oppressive government.



Jeremiah admits that neither major party candidate is an exemplar for evangelical Christians.

But he says the specter of the next president appointing a new slate of Supreme Court nominees should motivate believers to cast an informed vote.

“The next president will select between two and four justices who will reign over the cultural issues of our nation for the next 30 years.

The average Supreme Court judge serves 26 years. In the next 30 years, what happens in this election is going to have an incredible impact on my children and grandchildren. And the impact will be most likely felt more because of what happens in the Supreme Court than anything else that happens in the government.”

Beyond the issues of religious liberty and morality, the spread of radical Islamic jihad globally and at home has set the world on edge. Every week seems to bring a mass slaughter, such as those in Bangladesh or France, San Bernardino or Orlando.

In the last eight years, America has sent conflicting signals about its commitment to seriously confront radical Islam. Unwillingness by federal officials to call the scourge what it is—jihad carried out in the name of Allah by Muslim fundamentalists—and a lack of clear commitment to eradicate it has diminished America’s role as a world leader. ISIS has not only burst on the scene but has become a global menace.



Former U.S. senator Jim DeMint, president of the Washington-based Heritage Foundation, a conservative think tank, says to successfully wage war on radical Islamic terrorism and counter other evil regimes around the globe, defense spending must be non-negotiable, and defense policy must center on military readiness, not pushing the latest social trends.

“There’s a lot of turmoil and instability in the world,” DeMint said, “and the way the current administration has dealt with Islamic terrorism by trying to ignore it and treat it as if it’s something that it’s not, has opened us up and threatened our security as a country. “Voters must decide: Which candidate, Hillary Clinton or Donald Trump, will strengthen national security and fight tenaciously against radical Islamic terrorism? Jeremiah and Perkins agree that whomever voters choose, they must demand that the “first freedom”—religious liberty—from which all other freedoms flow, is left intact.

Perkins said that as the moral fabric of the culture unravels, “the leaders we elect can either accelerate that deterioration or they can stay it by giving the church the space it needs to do the fundamental work that only the church can do.

“It is the church—armed with the Gospel—that can fix hearts. It is the Gospel that transforms lives. It is the church through the witness of the Holy Spirit that can preserve a culture. But without the space to do that openly in public, it’s difficult. And elections in our country determine that.”

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About Cross Talk

Cross Talk is the congregational newsletter published through the Literature Dept. Materials for the December issue should be sent to the Literature Deacon by **November 16th.**

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Alveda King is the niece of civil rights hero Martin Luther King, Jr.

Alveda King, niece of Martin Luther King, on 2016 election

August 9, 2016

This Presidential election, many are saying they will vote for the "lesser of two evils". Won't it be better to vote for "what's good for America?" Voting on the issues trumps evil hearts and personalities.

A colleague writes: "We hear the phrase: 'lesser of two evils' a lot...This year, we have witnessed much voting hand-wringing with many people of faith claiming that it is evil to ever vote for "the lesser of two evils", or for any evil at all. I have concluded that this lesser of two evils phrase is really a canard; a false picture of the electoral choice. Yes, we should never ever vote for evil; only for good. Hence, in a binary election, we should only vote for the good. As for both candidates' appearing to be evil, remember that all of us are a mix of good and evil." (Jeremiah 17:9 NLT) So, let's overlook personal personality preferences; vote for the candidate with the greater potential to deliver on the issues most closely aligned with our faith and what is good for America. This choice may be uncomfortable. But remember, we're trusting God's wisdom instead of a human candidate. (Proverbs 3:5-8)



For me, it's sanctity of human life, procreation, racial justice, economic growth and stability, a positive work ethic, good health, safe borders, domestic harmony, good jobs, sustainable values based education, family stability, and a God guided U. S. Supreme Court; all biblical. Even the building of the wall; it's not a first! Ezra and Nehemiah did that. Walls aren't evil; it's the intent that's important. If the walls protect the citizens and yet have gates of legal entry

to those in need, or desirous of becoming U. S. citizens, such walls aren't evil. Note that in Nehemiah's day, the people had a mind to work. Handouts and entitlements weren't on the agenda. (Nehemiah 4:6 ASV) Let's pray and act now, and return to God; if not for ourselves, then for future generations. Finally, let's agree with Daniel in prayer: "Oh Lord our God, "lean down and listen to [us]. Open your eyes and see our despair. See how [much of America] lies in ruins. We make this plea, not because we deserve help, but because of your mercy. O Lord, hear. O Lord, forgive. O Lord, listen and act! For your own sake, do not delay, O my God, for your people and your city bear your name."

-Alveda King Alveda currently serves as a Pastoral Associate and Director of Civil Rights for the Unborn, the African-American Outreach for Priests for Life and Gospel of Life Ministries. She is also a voice for the Silent No More Awareness Campaign, sharing her testimony of two abortions, God's forgiveness, and healing. The daughter of the late civil rights activist Rev. A.D. King and his wife Naomi Barber King, Alveda grew up in the civil rights movement led by her uncle, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Her family home in Birmingham, Alabama, was bombed, as was her father's church office in Louisville, Kentucky. Alveda was jailed during the open housing movement. She sees the prolife movement as a continuation of the civil rights struggle.

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So, let's overlook personal personality preferences; vote for the candidate with the greater potential to deliver on the issues most closely aligned with our faith and what is good for America. This choice may be uncomfortable. But remember, we're trusting God's wisdom instead of a human candidate. (Proverbs 3:5)

-Alveda King



40th Anniversary Combined Service & Installation of Hugo Pheng and Zen Sun

On Sunday, September 11, 2016 the Chinese Bible Church of Maryland (CBCM) celebrated its 40th Anniversary with a special combined worship service starting at 10 AM. It was a full house as congregants not only filled the Sanctuary, but they also filled the Fellowship Hall, the Visitor's Lounge and the Chapel. A service fitting the occasion was given with special music from the choir and the IW (Instruments of Worship) orchestra.

Along with the celebration, CBCM installed recently hired Senior Pastor Hugo Cheng and recently hired English Pastor Kenneth Sun. Each man was sworn into the position by retired Senior Pastor Jonathan Liu. Following the service every congregant was gifted with a special commemorative 40th Anniversary pen and a complementary lunch.

Here are a few captured images of that day:



What This Election Means To Me: The Election of Our Lifetime

by Wai-Soo Koo

I am proud to be an American citizen. I immigrated to this country at the age of five on board the USS President Wilson. My mother and I made the harrowing three-week journey from Hong Kong to San Francisco. We arrived not speaking a word of English. It would be several years before I would be allowed to become a naturalized American citizen. My citizenship is a gift. I cherish the freedom and privilege of living in America. **Chinese people call America "Gum San", or gold mountain, the land of golden opportunity.** I grew up in New York and California and received a wonderful education and many opportunities. I've seen my family achieve the American dream. I've learned to appreciate every aspect of life here and take nothing for granted.

As a child of the 60s, I grew up amid the turbulence and violence of the Vietnam era. I was influenced by the riots and demonstrations taking place on college campuses around me. Young men who turned 18 were required to register for the draft and were sent to fight in Vietnam. They didn't have a choice. I registered to vote when I turned 18. I couldn't wait to fulfill my duty and responsibility. At 18, our generation was forced to grow up because our country was at war. I entered college and became politicized. I volunteered for my first political campaign in 1968 in California. That experience opened my eyes and changed my life.

Growing up in this country, I learned that freedom is not free, that our freedom was bought with a price, paid for by the men and women who sacrificed their lives for me. As an American citizen, I have the responsibility and civic duty to support and serve my country by voting and becoming involved in the election process.

This year, I feel it's critical for everyone to vote in the upcoming presidential election on November 8. I've become very concerned about the anger, hatred and racism in this country. Feelings of alienation, despair and hopelessness are destroying our country. We cannot listen to those who paint a despairing portrait of our country as a nation of lost souls. We are not lost. We cannot be misled by the wrong leaders. As a Christian, my faith and hope is in God. I believe that God is in control and His wisdom will guide this upcoming election. But we must also do our part. We have the responsibility to vote for leaders who will stand up for truth and integrity, for Christian values and principles. The only way for evil to succeed is for good men to do nothing. We must not abdicate our responsibility. I urge and implore everyone who is a citizen to vote on November 8. Not voting is NOT AN OPTION. No one can afford to sit on the sidelines. Vote as if your future and the future of your children and the future of this country depends on it, because it does. And if you feel

called to do so, I encourage you to become involved and volunteer to work on a campaign. You will learn what it means to be a citizen, and you will learn more than you ever expected to learn about our government and history. If you invest in your country, you will learn that you have a voice and your voice will be heard. You can speak for those who have no voice and cannot speak. As a Chinese American, it has taken me a lifetime to understand the American culture and to be part of it. I've often wondered why Asians do not seem to have the influence and clout in politics that other minority groups have. Of all the minority groups in this country, we are the most silent of all, because many are not actively engaged in politics and not involved in positions of leadership in government. This needs to change. Do you realize that Asians are the fastest growing ethnic group in this nation? My great grandfather was among the first wave of Chinese immigrants to come to America. He arrived in the **late 1800s** to help build the transcontinental railroad. He became a garlic farmer in the Sacramento valley, California, and left his family (including my grandfather) behind in China, never to return. He made the ultimate sacrifice for his family, for this country.

The upcoming presidential election may be the most critical election in our lifetime. This election will make history because we may be electing the first female president. More important, we will be electing a president who will determine the direction for this country for the next four years. Four years is an eternity. No one knows what may happen. My 95 year old mother will be casting her vote in the presidential election by absentee ballot. This election means everything to her. My mother was born in 1921, one year after women received the right to vote. From 1921 to the present, my mother is a witness to history, and a witness to the changing role of women: from China to America, women have taken the journey from submission, silence and powerlessness, to becoming a voice for women's rights, equal rights and empowerment. My mother was a **refugee** during WWII in Shanghai, China **and never went beyond the eighth grade.** She regrets she did not have the chance to go to college. But I am proud that my mother used her culinary skills, business acumen, and determination to open her own Chinese restaurant. **Through grace, dignity and tenacity my mother achieved the American dream.** She made it possible for her children and granddaughter to gain a formidable education **upon which to build their dreams in this country.** I love this country with a passion. America has blessed me greatly. My education taught me to think. I found my voice. I learned to fight discrimination and injustice, and speak the truth. I owe it to this country to serve her as best as I know how and to make a difference. If you want to make a difference, if you want to have a voice, if you want to support this country and become involved in our government and set an example for your children and generations to come: VOTE on November 8th.

EVENTS & PERFORMANCES

Reflections of the “Hear Our Cry” Concert Event

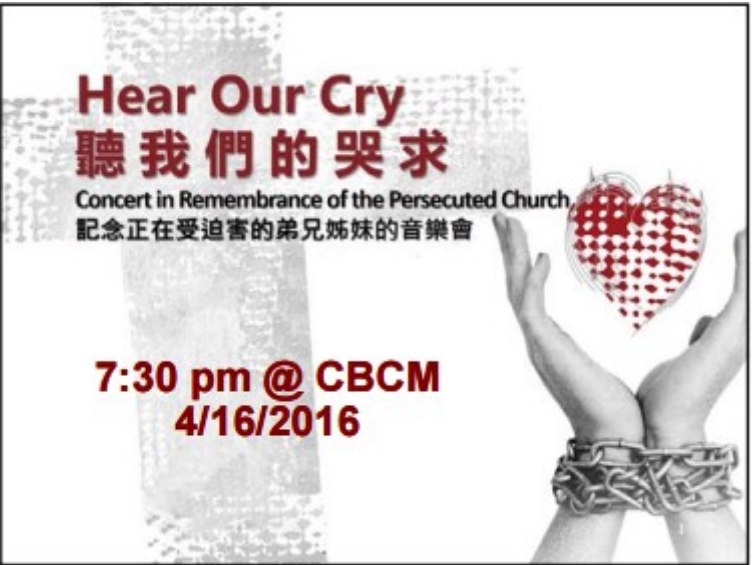
by Amy Liu

“My soul magnifies the Lord and my Spirit rejoices in God my Savior.” (Luke 1:46-47)

It is with an overflowing joy and a grateful heart to God that I am writing this article to give an eyewitness account of our recent concert event (4-16-2016) – “Hear Our Cry: In Remembrance of Our Persecuted Brothers & Sisters in Iraq and Syria.” It is a story that demonstrates the beautiful ways in which people of God can come together and use their gifts to serve Him faithfully for His Glory, our Lord will open the floodgates of heaven and pour out His abundant blessings upon us.

The concert idea began as a response to the rise of atrocities being committed by ISIS and other Islamic terrorist groups against our Christian brothers and sisters in Iraq and Syria at an alarming rate in recent years. These Christians are people of courage, and are willing to live under the constant threat of violence from terrorists and are prepared to be martyred for Jesus sake. Many of them are also the descendants of the survivors of the terrible aftermath of the Armenian and Assyrian Genocide (up to 3.75 million Christians died over a 30-year period) that was instigated by the Turkish government a century ago. The sufferings, for the most part had been forgotten by the world, and the Turkish government still refuses to acknowledge the responsibility to this day. Sadly, history seems to be repeating itself as the Christian presence in the Middle East is once again in danger of extinction; this time in the hands of the Islamic State militants.

I have to confess that I was hesitant with the idea of launching a concert event initially, for I am a disorganized person by nature, and I lack the experience, organizational skills, and training in music to accomplish this task. Considering the intensive manpower that is required for this endeavor, I also had the fear of being criticized if we had an unfavorable outcome of this concert. The Lord then reminded me with this verse, “but because you say so, I will cast down my net.” (Luke 5:15) After I had sub-



mitted to God's call to proceed in planning for the concert, the Lord had blessed this effort by bringing in many highly skilled and dedicated coworkers to serve on the team. There were times when I still had doubts and worries during the eight month planning period, but the Lord had gently reminded me on several occasions, "Do not fear for I am with you, be not anxious for I am your God, I will strengthen you and help you. (Isaiah 41:10) This concert is not about you, it is about Me (God) and my persecuted children. It is about bringing awareness and mobilizing CBCMers to action. The outcome belongs to me for my Name Sake. You do your part, and I will make things work for my Glory!!"

The purpose of the concert was to lift up our plea for God's mercy upon our persecuted brothers and sisters through our songs and prayers too heaven, so that God can “Hear Our Cry” and will bring deliverance upon His suffering people. It was also a time of eager anticipation for the Holy Spirit to stir among us and to move our hearts to action through our prayers and financial support.

Cont'd on page 6

The purpose of the concert was to lift up our plea for God's mercy upon our persecuted brothers and sisters through our songs and prayers too heaven, so that God can “Hear Our Cry” and will bring deliverance upon His suffering people.

-Amy Liu

By God’s Grace, He had been blessing the efforts of the concert from the initial planning to its implementation in ways that were above and beyond expectations. I had also experienced firsthand that God specializes in the unconventional; because He can use someone who is disorganized and lacks music training to help organize this concert is indeed a testimony of His sovereignty and compassion for His children.

A brief overview of how Syrians had first brought Christianity to China almost 1500 years ago was given by Pastor Paul at the concert. This helped the audience to connect with the Syrian Christian from a historical perspective, and reflect in gratitude the Syrian missionaries efforts in ancient China, and to remember the Syrians of our time. There were six sets of scripture and prayer readings dedicated for the persecuted church that were read out loud by three eloquent readers representing three congregations, interspersed with the audience participation in the prayers. The evening was also filled with uplifting music pieces that were beautifully performed by the various CBCM musical groups as the congregation sang along. Rev. James Beavers, our concert event speaker, had shared an inspiring message with his Power Point presentation regarding the plight of the Christians in Syria and Iraq. After his sharing, our soloist was moved to tears during the song “The Lord’s Prayer.” She later told me this was her first time experiencing so much emotion as a soloist at a concert; it must have been the Holy Spirit. She also explained to me that there was a moment during her song when she did not think she could finish singing on her own strength because she was choked up with tears on the inside, and had to tell the Lord, “I want to stop, and I know I cannot start this song over again, I am committing this song to you, and you are going to help me to finish it.” The Lord had answered her prayer, and enabled her to finish singing this song beautifully as a reminder to the audience of who He is. I remembered getting misty-eyed as I noticed the soloist in tears and saying this prayer silently, “Lord, you have to let her finish this song, especially with the upcoming verse that is all about you – “for thine is the Kingdom and the power, and the glory forever.” Praise be to God! He had answered our prayers (the soloists and mine), and perhaps those of others in the audience with the same plea, and had allowed her to finish this song triumphantly in Him.

As the audience was leaving the sanctuary after the concert, I saw many of them, being so moved by the concert

experience that they quickly formed a line to the free will offering table to make donations to help support the persecuted Christians and thanking the helpers at the table for the concert and prayer booklets that were handed out. At that moment, I realized that I had witnessed a truly rare and remarkable scene at CBCM; for I had never seen so many CBCMers getting in line so quickly except for the lunch lines on Sundays. Many rave reviews of the concert were received; there were accounts of some people being moved to tears during the Scripture and prayer readings, and most importantly, some had reported the experience the power of the Holy Spirit moving their hearts during the concert. I had also experienced rapid heart beat rate and insomnia in the nighttime, because I was so overwhelmed with gratitude of God’s Hand at work in the concert and the spirit of praise and generosity of the CBCMers. Throughout the night, my mind was continuously filled with thoughts of God’s faithfulness and the goodness of so many CBCMers.

Personally, I think the true blessing of this concert is to witness the effect of how this concert has united CBCM in a spirit of worship and compassion for our persecuted brothers and sisters. God’s favor is upon us, for I have seen the Christ-like qualities of many CBCMers during the eight months of serving alongside with them, as well as the worshipful attitude of the concert attendees. I think this concert is one of the finest moments in CBCM history (speaking as a 30+ year CBCMer), and thank you Lord and fellow CBCMERs for making this a spiritually elevating worship experience.

May we continue this passionate plea of “Hear Our Cry” for the persecuted church beyond the concert event.

To God be the Glory Forever!!!

Post Concert Notables-

- 1. Meaningful worship experience.
- 2. Many hours were put into the concert effort, and all the coworkers were serving wholeheartedly in one spirit.
- 3. Active and broad participation of many CBCM groups in serving.
 - * Musical groups included – Hand bell choir, Erhu, IW Orchestra, Children’s Choir, Soprano soloist, Combined Choir, English/Teen Praise Team, Pianists, Congregational singing.

Cont’d on page 7

- * Young Adults (YAs) were helping with setting up for freshments, and cleaning up afterwards. Teens had helped in designing some very creative posters and trifolds for promotions.
- * Other volunteers included a father and daughter MC team, Scripture and prayer readers, ushers, media and audio team, ushers, volunteers for the children’s program, etc...
- 4. Having highly skilled and dedicated coworkers.
 - * I was very impressed by the two teenage boys (not part of the co-workers team) who saw the need to step in during the concert by taking the initiative to move the microphone stands which helped the transition between the songs and readings to run smoothly. They also had assisted in audio on their own.
 - * About our concert program coordinator – One day as I was worrying and apologizing to her for the last minute changes, she gently reassured me that she did not mind and was accustomed to changes with her line of work as the “program director of Overseas Radio & Television Inc./ Ministries in Taiwan (still has a job waiting for her). Praise God! What is the likelihood of finding someone with such specialized skills for the concert, and is willing to use her talents to serve our Lord.
 - * Our music program coordinator was so dedicated that she had involved her family to help out (e.g. hand bell, audio).
 - * I really appreciated the cooperative spirit of all the musical groups for their willingness to adjust/delete part of their music pieces that they had been practicing so diligently once it was discovered that the concert program will be running overtime at one of the rehearsals.
 - * Person in charge of the Power Point is a graphic designer, and had volunteered many hours to create many beautiful slides.
 - * The translator had worked so quickly and efficiently along with her husband, that I nicknamed her our “Translator 911”.
 - * Administrative staff were helpful in editing and printing out the materials; I really appreciated

them for the times that they had stayed late after work on their own to meet the deadlines.

- * The work for the promotional materials were so well written that I had complimented them as having “cinematic effects” to our proficient writer.

5. Generous spirit of CBCMers

- * Caring Department had extended the collection of the free will offering to two additional Sundays after the concert. Praise God! \$30,587 had been collected from the concert event to help support two Barnabas Aid projects:
 - 1. Food and Basic Needs of Christians in Iraq and Syria.
 - 2. Operation Safe Havens – resettling them to safe countries and to be cared for by local believers.

¹⁷ O Lord, you hear the desire of the afflicted; you will strengthen their heart; you will incline your ear ¹⁸ to do justice to the fatherless and the oppressed, so that man who is of the earth may strike terror no more.

Psalm 10:17-18