

THE MESSENGER

CHINESE CHRISTIAN CHURCH APR 2026 EDITION

EDITOR'S NOTES

Prayer meetings are vital times for seeking God together, discerning His direction and supporting one another. As you read the introductions to the Cantonese and Mandarin Congregations' prayer meetings, may they encourage you to consider joining the one in your congregation.

The experience of a Cantonese house group shows how fellowship can lead to spiritual growth and deeper relationships. As house groups grow in the word of God and in love, the whole church is strengthened.

CANTONESE CONGREGATION PRAYER MINISTRY

Author: Rev. Nathan Chan

The pastors of the Cantonese Congregation have always firmly believed that the church exists to carry out the will of the Lord. But how can we understand the Lord's will, and how can we know it more clearly? It is through prayer—building an intimate relationship with our Lord Jesus Christ under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. It is this intimate relationship that enables us to respond to the Lord's will with sensitivity and accuracy.

We give thanks that, for many years, a group of our senior members has held a prayer meeting at the church (with an online option available simultaneously) before the Sunday service. On the one hand, they pray for and support one another; on the other, they intercede for the ministries of the church. As some brothers and sisters are engaged in Sunday service preparation and are therefore unable to attend the prayer meeting, an additional Wednesday evening prayer meeting was introduced in 2024 to allow more people to serve in prayer. In 2025, with the intention of encouraging greater participation, the Board of Deacons trialled holding an online prayer meeting once a month on the first Wednesday evenings, while on the second and fourth Wednesdays, the prayer meetings were changed to in-person gatherings held simultaneously at two locations.

This was aimed at strengthening sharing and interaction among brothers and sisters. Over the past eight months of 2025, the combined weekly attendance has remained at around 20 people; however, the in-person prayer meetings have significantly enhanced the quality of our gatherings.

At present, each Wednesday prayer meeting follows a set theme, focusing on prayer for believers and ministries across all areas of the church, including the Church Planting, the Church Renewal Project. Prayer is the driving force behind all ministry, and through prayer we are also able to better understand the will of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Indeed, the Cantonese Congregation has experienced many powerful testimonies through prayer, witnessing God's mighty works. We recall that at the beginning of 2024, the deacons prayed earnestly for the development of ministry among university students and young workers. Before long, we saw God bringing young people to the church one by one, and the ministry began to take shape.

Over the past year, we have also committed our evangelism ministry to prayer.

We are grateful to witness that God has ignited a passion for the gospel among brothers and sisters.



For example, in the “Evangelism Explosion” training last August, over ten members signed up to be equipped to share the Gospel—nearly double our initial expectation—and through them, God led many newcomers to faith during the “Evangelism Explosion” outreach. As Paul said: “I do not run aimlessly; I do not fight as one beating the air.” (1 Corinthians 9:26) Prayer enable us focus with clarity to respond to God’s given opportunities.

Come! Let us experience together the wonderful works of the Lord through prayer!

ENCOUNTERING GOD IN PRAYER - THE MANDARIN CONGREGATION'S PRAYER MINISTRY

Author: Wendy Yang

An Ongoing Prayer Ministry

The Mandarin Congregation has always placed a strong emphasis on prayer ministry. From the very beginning of the establishment of the Mandarin congregation, we have had prayer meetings. Currently, our regular prayer meeting is held on the third Sunday of every month, from 1:30 PM to 2:30 PM at church. We start the meeting with singing to prepare our hearts for entering into God's presence. Then, there is a five-minute testimony or a short message. We then move into the small group sharing. We listen to each other's prayer points and take turn to pray for one another.

Our prayers are rooted in the Bible, covering topics such as the global situation, missionary work, church development, our families and work, children's growth, spiritual renewal, and the needs of those who are weak. Every session of sharing and prayer is filled with sincerity and hope. After each prayer meeting, we can feel an invisible yet real power flowing among us—it is God's presence and blessing.

God at Work Through Prayer

Through prayer, many members have experienced God's wonderful work. Some have found peace in the midst of the difficulty they encounter, the weak have become strong, the sick have been comforted, and the church's ministry has moved forward step by step. Once we pleaded for God's mercy and healing for a sister's aunt who was in a coma in ICU. We constantly prayed for her for 2 months. Then, she miraculously woke up and her condition gradually improved. Another time, a church member's daughter and son-in-law were stranded in Thailand due to visa issues and could not return to Sydney. We prayed for the family without ceasing. While she was waiting for the reunion with her daughter's family, this sister held firmly to her faith in God. Ultimately, by God's grace, the entire family returned to Sydney. What amazed us was that her daughter and son-in-law came to Christ after this experience and were baptized. These testimonies make us realize that our prayers are heard by God, and He is right here with us.

Challenges in Journey of Prayer

Our prayer meetings, of course, also face challenges. At times, the busyness of life can prevent individuals from attending. Our faith may also be tested when we face difficulties and God seems slow to respond to our prayers. Furthermore, there are moments when we find ourselves at a loss for words when we speak to our Lord. It is through these very challenges that we have come to understand that prayer is not said to be heard by others, but to be heard by God. It is also a genuine opportunity to recognize our own weakness and connect our hearts with God. We believe that as long as we do not cease seeking Him, God will surely walk us through in all circumstances. We pray that God will give us the enlightenment and perseverance to uphold our brothers and sisters. We are also grateful for the church's support, which reminds us that we are not alone in this ministry.



Trusting God's Timing and Will

In the prayer meetings, we learn not only how to pray, but also how to rely on God in prayer. When God does not answer our prayers according to our expected ways or timeframe, we understand that he intends to teach us to trust his sovereignty and to wait patiently. As the Bible says, "God acts on behalf of those who wait for him." (Isaiah 64:4); "There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens" (Ecclesiastes 3:1); and "in all things God works for the good of those who love him" (Romans 8:28). We believe that God will lead us to accomplish His will step by step according to His wisdom and His time. All we need to do is to entrust ourselves to Him and have faith.



An Invitation to Pray Together

Every prayer is an encounter with God, and his presence is the wellspring of our strength. We continue praying that more brothers and sisters will participate in our prayer meetings, so that we can witness God together and experience His grace and power.

A FELLOWSHIP ROOTED IN SCRIPTURE PRAYER, AND MUTUAL SUPPORT - CANTONESE JOSHUA GROUP

Author: Deacon Lawrence Li

1. Establishment, Growth and Maturity

In 2010, the Cantonese Congregation experienced a baby boom. In order to better care for families with newborn children, one family branched out from the Cantonese "Family Group B" (a small group serving families with young children) and, together with the family of Anita Chan, helped establish Family Group D (now known as the Joshua Group).

At its inception, the group mainly consisted of families with young children. Over time, the Joshua Group began to welcome young single adults, becoming the first mixed-age group in the Cantonese Congregation.

Over the years, the group has gone through the COVID-19 pandemic and welcome the new migrated families with children, and the addition of individual migrants whose spouses remain overseas.

We have continually made adjustments to meet the changing composition and needs of our members. Currently, the group includes couples with children studying at university or high school, couples without children, and older couples whose children are already adults. Although our group members are at different stages of life, we are willing and accustomed to openly discuss and share during Bible study and prayer—our insights from Scripture, the challenges we face in life, and the struggles within. Through this mutual sharing, we have broadened our perspectives and grown.



2. Bible Study, Bonding and Next Generation

The group meets on the last Sunday of each month, usually for three to four hours. The first two hours are typically devoted to Bible study. Each year, we choose a theme based on the spiritual needs of the members. Topics we have studied include “The Holy Spirit,” “Gospel-Centered Family, Work, and Life,” and “Church Life.” After Bible study, we spend at least one hour sharing and praying together. Mutual support among brothers and sisters has greatly strengthened our bonds.



We have also established a WhatsApp prayer group. Every three to four days, the group leader sends out the prayer points of each family, reminding members to pray for them. Thanks to the leader’s perseverance in sharing these prayer requests, this practice has continued uninterrupted for four years. In addition, we hold birthday celebrations every month.

Every six months, we organize a special gathering—sometimes an outing, sometimes a meal together. Through Bible study, prayer sharing, and fellowship interaction, we have built close relationships of mutual care and support. We have witnessed the children of group members grow gradually from infancy to university age. We give thanks to God for His protection and care over these families, and we pray that the children will grow in spiritual health and not be led astray by worldly temptations. “Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it” (Proverbs 22:6).

3. Future Vision and Remembrance

At present, the group has about 20 members, which is relatively large and no longer suitable for further expansion. We pray that God will raise up more spiritually mature and willing leaders to care for members and lead Bible study, so that one group may grow into two, giving those in the Cantonese Congregation who have not yet joined a small group the opportunity to enter into fellowship life and grow spiritually.

I would also like to take this opportunity to remember our former member, Reggie. During his hospitalization, members of our fellowship visited him in the hospital, sang hymns with him, prayed together, and shared a period of time. Those moments remain precious in our memories. He battled cancer for more than ten years, and this passage aptly describes his life: “I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith” (2 Timothy 4:7).

