



Chan Family's Christmas Wishes 2013 & New Year Greeting 2014

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Dear our friends and families,

Christmas Celebration

The Christmas season reminds everyone that God is Love and he brings hope to us. “For to us a child is born and to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace” (Isaiah 9:6).

The blessing of Christmas is in the celebration and excitement of a family preparing and enjoying the season together. However, may we find the real “Blessing of Christmas” in the truth that for Jesus came into the world. We wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. May we all have the right perspective on our journey in 2014. Shalom!

Kenneth's Report

My mum had a mild stroke this year in Hong Kong. Grateful she has recovered but her health is not as good as before. I have to thank my siblings who look after my mum tirelessly there. I have come to my realization of guilt not able to be closer to mum whilst in Australia. I am grateful the extended families both my side and Florence's side are well in Hong Kong. Our nephews and nieces are growing into adolescence in good health and conscious mind. My work in the nursing home allows me to see a new perspective of life, a first-hand experience of humanity where grace and agony co-exist in the later stage of life. This experience gives me firm foundation of giving pastoral care as hospital chaplain.

Pastoral care to me is a ministry to care people faithfully and willingly. In clinical context, I see this ministry will be an important part of my vocation where I can serve in the community for some years in Australia with a prospect to apply the same care in the mission field when the time is ready for me to serve as a missionary overseas. Pastoral care is demanding and emotional draining, yet the training/practice has taught me to learn humbly and to serve compassionately. It has put me in a situation of meeting people’ s spiritual need in parallel with their medical care. Life experience and sound theology are required. I have realized that I should carry out the work with humility and faithfulness, being genuine in my Christian faith while respecting the religious beliefs of the others.



Florece's Report

Study

I really praise God that I completed the Diploma of Ministry in 2012. On 5th February, 2013 Ken and I had the Master of Divinity and Diploma of Ministry, respectively, conferred on us by the Australian College of Theology at Brisbane School of Theology's annual graduation ceremony. This year I have continued study in the Bachelor of Theology program and also completed the Christian Studies Award program and will receive a certificate for that. It has been a lot of hard work but I am greatly encouraged by the results.

In these studies I have not only gained head knowledge about theology, but I gained experience in practical ministry through college mission. I have also built a support group at BST. For this I am very appreciative. I give thanks to God for the lecturers and their tireless teaching; college mentor, Vivian and tutors, Graham and Ellie; prayer partners and the support and encouragement of my special friends: Ali, Kim, Susanna, Thelma and Les (Les passed away in August, I miss him). Regarding my future prospects, I have unfailing hope in God enabling me to complete a Bachelor of Theology degree. I have another 2 years to go before I graduate. Through Field Education I would like to learn more about my future ministry. With God's help, I hope to be a pastoral worker.

Support

God is truly the supplier of our needs. This year I was blessing with an Austudy grant which covered our living expenses. Also, our special friend in Hong Kong has given financial support for my full time study for the last 3 years as well as some financial support to start our new ministry at the half year. I am touched by her generosity and we are very grateful for her. May God bless her and her family! Moreover, I thank God for blessing me with the opportunity to go on a college mission trip to India from 10th -25th August this year. Our SIC church and church friends gave me full financial support. May God bless them! Through this trip I could both see and do God's ministry. After the service the poor lined up to receive prayer for their needs, especially asking for God's healing. I blessed people- especially praying for the sick and also giving to a fund for their study. It was a rough journey at times, but I learnt to adjust to different life situations (I used a bucket to wash my hair and to have a bath and in a long journey, I couldn't go to the toilet but had to hold on for 5-10 hours).

Family

It is not easy to find a job in Australia this year. However, 2 Corinthians 12:9 says: God's grace is sufficient for you. God has shown his love and care for our family. Due to the fact that Ken would like to be a Hospital Chaplain, we helped a small church at the half year. We are grateful for special friends giving some financial support for my study and church friends supporting my mission trip. Praise God that Ken has been working with the aged care community since May, and since November has started a full-time Clinical Pastoral Education training for Hospital Chaplains. This training will finish at the end of January next year. In fact, Ken is very keen on doing Hospital Chaplaincy ministry. Also, I am proud of my husband's heart to serve the aged care community at this time. I believe that God is preparing him for Hospital Chaplaincy, especially with regard to patients' spiritual needs. Pray that God will open the door for him after the training.

Also, I am proud of my son, Michael. He studies hard and works hard and looks after himself. He has another 2 years to go before he graduates in Mechanical and Materials engineering. Through UQ he participated in the Formula SAE competition in Melbourne in December this year. Through his experience in leading the team he gained experience that would prepare him for his future career. May God bless him in his life journey! However, I would prefer he spent more time with God.

I thank God for my Japanese nephew, Akitaki, who lived with us for 6 months. He has now returned to Japan. It was a real challenge for him (and us) to reconcile a Japanese and Australian culture. God showed me the sign of a rainbow, giving me peace and strength when I became stressful. This was a good life challenging experience to prepare me, possibly, for an even tougher journey when I serve the Lord in the future. May God bless my nephew and help him to have the right perspective on life.

Voluntary work

I reflected on the "NC13" program and saw God's working and blessing through this program for this church. I love this voluntary work: teaching English classes and assisting in the Easy English Bible studies (8th -22thDec). For me, I have a meaningful Christmas this year.

During the Christmas season, the NC13 program reached our neighbourhood through cross-cultural mission – especially those who came from different countries, such as: Iran, Afghanistan, France, Czechoslovakia, Belarus, Korean, Japan, Taiwan, Mongolia, China, Columbia, and Sri Lanka - including a research PHD student, a professional doctor, a professional migrant and some refugee (Muslims), and people with a working holiday visa. Families and students came to the English classes and Easy English Bible studies.

In my English classes, some students heard the Christmas story for the first time and the other students asked about the meaning of Christmas and why Santa Claus is so popular at Christmas. I explained these things to them. The true meaning of Christmas celebrates Jesus' birth and His coming to the world. He loves people, saves people, sets people free and brings joy and hope for everyone. This is a Christmas gift for everyone. A long, long time ago, Santa

Claus was a Saint and a Christian. He loved Jesus. He showed Jesus' love to the poor by giving gifts to the children. Also, for one thing, I was excited that a student joined in a discussion with me at the Bible class. He shared with me that he had been christened when he was a baby, but he did not understand the meaning of Christmas. This year he understood the true meaning of Christmas, so he decided he would be baptized.



Michael's Report

This year has been fantastic for me. I am currently in my second year of my studies of my degree in Engineering. It is going well. It has been almost two years since I have been overseas, I am planning to go to Japan to do some back country snowboarding and Hong Kong to visit relatives. I hope everyone has a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. May God bless you all.



We wish this email can reach you that you are in our thoughts. Thank you for your continual contact and interest in our well being, and we treasure each and every one of you with much love and many blessings.

All Blessings,
From the Chan's