

# February

## 《Family、Nation、World》

# Prayer Letter

*Prayer Letter - Feb 18*



Blessed is the one who does not walk in step of the wicked  
Or stand in the way that sinners take or sit in the company of mockers,  
But those whose delight is in the law of the Lord,  
And who meditates on his law day and night  
The person is like a tree planted by streams of water  
Which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither-  
Whatever they do prospers. (Psalm 1: 1-3)



基督教柏斯宣道会  
Perth Alliance Church

Become a true Disciple  
the Glory for God

Become a True Church  
Establish True Mission

English

# Monthly prayer letter

Verse to meditate this month: Psalm 1: 1-3

1 /2	T H U	The C&MA Annual General Council is being held in Perth this year from Wednesday 31st to Saturday 3rd February 2018. PAC hosted the ACACC pastors for lunch on Wednesday 31st. Pray that the Council business runs smoothly and that all the pastors and leaders who attend will be encouraged by the fellowship and devotional talks. <p style="text-align: right;">(C&amp;MA General Council meeting)</p>
2 /2	F R I	Please remember those international students who have returned to Hong Kong for the holidays, ask God to bless their time in HK, to continue to seek a Holy life, and be a living testimony for God, find a church community to belong to, and treasure the time they can have with family, and to care for their parents. <p style="text-align: right;">(Students visiting home)</p>
3 /2	S A T	South Mandarin bible study on Luke will begin from 07/02. Give thanks for the over 20 members who have signed up. Pray that members will grow in their knowledge and wisdom in the Lord. <p style="text-align: right;">(S.Mand Bible study)</p>
4 /2	S U N	New plan for a new year, please pray for the ministry north Mandarin congregation is about to start, also pray for unity in heart, so that brothers and sisters will collaborate to flourish God's work! <p style="text-align: right;">(N.Mand Ministry)</p>
5 /2	M O N	South Cantonese congregation will begin to promote devotional materials on 'Lent' in March, ask God to use this material which is put together by over ten brothers and sisters, so that each day everyone will have devotions. <p style="text-align: right;">(S.Cant Daily devotions)</p>
6 /2	T U E	Thank God for a successful Teen Summer Program in January. Pray for the Combined (North & South) English Youth Group, starting in February, that the leaders will be enthusiastic and the High School students will be eager to learn how to be faithful disciples of the Lord Jesus. (Eng Leaders serving)
7 /2	W E D	To grow and protect the relationship between brothers, there is a brother's fellowship group that is more free in structure, starting from adult and young adult groups. They meet once a month to share life, devotion, and pray together after a meal, as well as sharing in WhatsApp. Ask God to move more brothers to start small cell groups like this, to build relationship and trust between them, in hope of one on one discipleship in the future, to make a breakthrough in growth. <p style="text-align: right;">(N.Cant Cell)</p>
8 /2	T H U	Kairos youth fellowship is doing the "Alpha course" in February, ask God to help these youth to get to know God better in this course, that their life will be transformed. <p style="text-align: right;">(S.Mand fellowship)</p>
9 /2	F R I	There are many brothers and sisters coming back to Australia from overseas for visiting family, traveling, business or STM in February. The number of people attending Sunday worships is getting back to normal. Give thanks, the number in past months did not affect peoples' worship to God. May God accept our whole hearted worship, and His great name be lifted high. <p style="text-align: right;">(N.Mand thanksgiving for Worship)</p>
10	S A	Pray for the High School and College students who are returning to studies this month. Pray that they will begin to establish good study habits and set

12	T	godly priorities for the use of their time and energy. (High school students)
11 12	S U N	The North Mandarin Discipleship Training started last year in December for 2 lessons, but for a number of reasons can only be resumed again in February this year. Please pray that God would continue to lead and guide, and for the participants that they will be able to come out of holiday mode and put their focus back onto the course. (N. Mand. discipleship)
12 12	M O N	Pray that God will strengthen Pastor Leung, Catherine (Deacon Committee Chairman) and Philip (Ministry Committee Chariman), that God's grace and blessing would be abundant in their work, family, health and everyday life; that they would also have good spiritual walk and discernment to lead brothers and sisters in serving our Lord. (S. Cant. leaders)
13 12	T U E	Please pray for South Mandarin's family service on 18th February celebrating Chinese new year. May the Lord awaken and enable us, that each of the small group presenting on the day can do so in a way that glorifies His name. (S. Mand Chinese New Year Celebrations)
14 12	W E D	Pray for the newly started english university student cell group in North church. Pray for God to give wisdom to the leaders Janet Wong and Anna Tai. (N. Eng. Uni Student cell)
15 12	T H U	On Friday 23rd to Sunday 25th February the leaders in the English congregation (leaders of Youth Group, Cell Groups, etc) will be having a retreat at St John of God Retreat Centre, Shoalwater. Pray that they would enjoy good fellowship, have good sharing and reflections on their own walk with God, and have a clear sense of God's leading concerning ministry directions in 2018. (Eng. leaders retreat)
16 12	F R I	In February, North Mandarin congregation will start rostering sisters as chair person for services, who were trained up in December last year. May God use these sisters the same as the brothers, equip them with the right giftings to lead the service for His glory. (N. Mand. female chair person)
17 12	S A T	South Mandarin will start their fourth dicipleship training on 3rd February. Pray that God will give the teachers the gifts of teaching and guidance, and the 5 participating students will have humility and a heart keen to learn and grown. (S. Mand. Discipleship training)
18 12	S U N	Please pray for the marriage of Sally and Ekin from South Cantonese, their wedding date is 18th February. May God protect and guide the whole process and provide good weather for the outdoor wedding, and help them to adjust well to marriage life. (S. Cant marriage)
19 12	M O N	A new preaching series on the Gospel of John will begin in February, with corresponding studies and discussions in cell groups. Pray for faithful preaching and teaching, and humble learning of God's word. May PACE respond in faith & obedience, and our lives be powerfully transformed by the work of the Spirit. (S. Eng. preaching and cell groups)
20 12	T U E	North Cantonese is starting to develop one on one dicipling. Pray that the Holy Spirit would powerfully convict brothers and sisters to be steadfast in building up one another. (N. Cant. One on one)

21 /2	W E D	Pray that God would continue to help South Mandarin's One on One sharing life ministry, that brothers and sisters will continue to grow together, be accountable for each other with love and zeal. (S. Mand. one on one)
22 /2	T H U	Pray for unity of heart and spirit in North Mandarin's brothers and sisters, that they will love and support one another, pray for more encouragement and praise, and against negative criticisms/judgement. That both the young and old will be humble and willing to be trained up and grow, working together to spread the gospel so that the Lord's name can be lifted high, and live lives that testifies God's glory. (N. Mand. unity in the body of Christ)
23 /2	F R I	Please pray for those who have believed in the Lord for a while but not yet baptised. Pray that God would strengthen their faith and be moved to be baptised and serve together as a member of our church. (N. Cant. baptism)
24 /2	S A T	Following the amendment of the Marriage Act to allow same sex marriage, the Federal Government established a governmental panel led by Phillip Ruddock, a former attorney general, to examine the legal protections available in Australia for religious freedom and freedom of conscience. The panel accepted submissions until the end of January, and is due to report to Parliament at the end of March. Pray that suitable measures can be devised to enshrine full freedom of religion in Australian law. (Religious freedom in Australia)
25 /2	S U N	Pray that God will move our hearts to pray for those around us who do not know the Lord Jesus personally, and be willing to live a life by His grace that glorifies God and serves people. (Prayer for unbelieving family and friends)
26 /2	M O N	Please pray for our elderly brothers and sisters, that God would bring healing to their bodies, and joy to their spirits, that they would experience God's presence daily. (Elderly health)
27 /2	T U E	Please pray for all the pastors and their families: Pastor Auyeung, Rolf, Victor Tan, Kevin Leung, Duncan Tiong, and Sylvia. Pray for protection against attacks of the Evil one, for healthy bodies and to be filled with the Holy spirit and insight to continue leading our church and shepherding us. (Church Pastors)
28 /2	W e d	Pray for all the new parents settling into a new phase of life with an added member of the family. Ask God to strengthen them and enable them to develop helpful routines, and to give the parents wisdom and grace to raise their children in the ways of the Lord. (Eng. New parents)

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*Prayer Letter*  
OMF International

*February 2018*

## *The Good News in all its Fullness*

One Sunday during 2017, this writer attended a church in Changsha, Hunan Province. Both morning services were packed, and it was a surprise to find some special guests sitting in the corner each time. During the first service, these guests were blind attendees. In the second service, they were deaf and mute. I was deeply moved as I watched the signer vigorously translating the sermon while the special guests watched intently.

After the services, I asked the elders when they started doing outreach to the disabled. You may find this hard to believe: the disabled Christians started this church!

In 1898, CIM missionary Frank Keller arrived in Changsha to do

outreach and church planting work. In 1902, they rented a place for regular worship, and started a girls' orphanage to care for abandoned blind and homeless girls. In this same location - on June 3, 1905 - Hudson Taylor passed away. The building is commonly referred to as the "parsonage".



The parsonage - behind the church in Changsha - about 100 years ago.



Hudson Taylor and colleagues in front of the parsonage - June 3, 1905.



The parsonage was converted into a residence in the 1980s.



Today there is an empty lot; the parsonage has been demolished.

In 1907, CIM bought land adjacent to the parsonage and built the “Gospel Church”. In 1918, the girls’ orphanage was renamed the “Blind Girls’ School”, continuing to teach blind and homeless girls basic education and crafts. Soon after that, a “School for the Blind” was started. There was also ministry to the deaf and mute, and evangelistic outreach. In 1950, the government took over the running of these institutions. The “Gospel Church” joined the Three Self Patriotic Church, but later disappeared. The special needs folk were assigned to work in a welfare factory, but Christians among them continued to gather together for fellowship.

During the 1960s and 1970s, they not only worked together, they gathered regularly to worship and pray. But it was not until the 1980s, when Christian student groups began to spring up, that students heard about these dear believers still gathering to pray and worship in Changsha. They found them holding fast to the gospel, in spite of terrible times during the Cultural Revolution and other political storms.

In the 1980s, new religious regulations allowed the original “Gospel Church” to function again, and it was renamed “South Changsha Christian Church”. However, they were unable to minister to the group with special needs. But Christian

*(Continued on page 6)*

# PRAYER POINTS

February 2018

**1** The new “Regulations on Religious Affairs” become effective today. Compared to the 2005 version, they cast a great shadow of uncertainty over the unregistered churches. Please pray for pastors and coworkers, that the Lord will grant them wisdom and strength from above. May they trust God, the sovereign One, as He leads the church into the future.

**2** Some local workers are thinking afresh about how they should deal with external pressures. Instead of simply accepting them or rebelling against them, they want to work towards a better relationship between the religious community and the government, especially in urban areas. Thank God for this, and pray that He will direct them according to His wisdom.

**3** Some say that pastors are paying too much attention to external meetings and not shepherding their people. The new religious regulations may force pastors to focus more on discipling believers. Pray for churches to grow in their ability to provide good discipleship and pastoral care.

**4** Due to the new regulations, many churches have organized into cell group churches. This brings new challenges to leadership. One pastor said that he has to travel over 100 km to conduct worship services, which is exhausting for him. Please pray for these leaders - may the Lord strengthen them and equip them to serve well.

**5** Churches are no longer permitted to operate their own seminaries. But they cannot depend on overseas help to train their workers. Pray for the development of suitable alternative ways to access theological and leadership training.

**6** Although more Christians desire to reach out and provide services in their community, they are not allowed to do so in the name of a church. Pray that more Christian professionals will step forward to register NGOs that can provide high quality community services.

**7** Some pastors have decided to register their church with the government. There is still a great deal of uncertainty in terms of what this means for church activities. Let us pray for pastors (and their churches) that have decided to go down this road.

**8** A lot of Christian schools have been started in recent years, especially pre-schools and elementary schools. Under new regulations, these schools face



increased pressures. Pray that God will sustain and strengthen the principals and staff in these schools.

**9**The annual Spring Festival migration is entering its peak now. Please pray for the many Christian migrant workers who can go home at this time of the year and spend time with their families.

**10**This winter has been unusually harsh in the central and western regions of China. They have experienced heavy snowfall. Pray for rural churches, mostly attended by elderly believers and young children. It is very hard for pastors to visit church members in these circumstances.

**11**Pastors in rural areas may have sacrificed opportunities to earn a good living in the cities in order to serve the rural churches. Their friends who work in the cities come home for Spring Festival and are obviously more affluent. This can tempt them to move back to the city. Thank God that many are choosing the hard call to shepherd rural churches; may God richly reward them.

**12**Please remember Christian families who can be reunited at this time of the year. As parents return from the cities, pray they can have precious times with their children who have been left behind. May God encourage them all as they share life together for this brief

time, giving thanks to God and praying together.

**13**During Spring Festival, traditional Chinese families conduct many rituals. Christians returning home need divine wisdom, so that they can maintain good relationships with unbelieving family members, while avoiding inappropriate worship rituals.

**14**During the last few years, it has become trendy for singles who are working or studying in cities to bring a “temporary boy/girl-friend” home with them at Spring Festival. This is to avoid pressure from their parents to get married. May the Lord protect single Christians from this unhealthy trend.

**15**Today is Chinese New Year’s Eve. Pray for God’s blessing on Christian families as they gather; it is a precious time for them to count His blessings together. May God’s presence be very real to them.

**16**Starting today, and continuing for one or two weeks, rural churches will have many large gatherings. Christians will conduct outreaches, revival meetings, and retreats. May the Lord bless these events, and cause many more to come to know Him.

**17**Pray for blessing and extra strength for local coworkers. May they grow in their



understanding of people's spiritual needs, enabling them to serve them with love and wisdom.

**18** May the Lord soften and open the hearts of those who are seeking Him, so that they can understand the truth and put their trust in Him.

**19** The new religious regulations will affect how church meetings are planned and conducted. May God's kingdom continue to advance, whatever the circumstances.

**20** A Christian doctoral student shared the gospel boldly in his school cafeteria and received severe warnings and a shaming from officials. Pray for this young brother, and that seeds he planted will bear fruit.

**21** There are now many signs on university campuses warning people: "do not evangelize". Students and teachers receive similar warnings on their phones as text messages. Pray that God will open doors for students and teachers to share the gospel discreetly.

**22** Please pray for a professor who has declared his faith and has been trying to resign from communist party membership. Pray also for other Christian communist party members who would like to resign.

**23** Pray for those who have made a decision for Christ at recent outreach meetings. May they become true disciples of Christ, no matter where they are, what family backgrounds they have, or what caused them to decide to follow Jesus.

**24** Students are back in school after the Spring Festival holiday. However, many Christian schools are facing problems because their students are registered in a different location. This means they do not have enough students to open. Pray for these students and their families, and also the teachers, that God would guide them at this difficult time.

**25** Please pray for students who are now entering their last semester at university. They must decide whether to join the communist party or not – a decision which directly affects their futures. Pray that Christian graduates will make wise choices.

**26** Migrant workers are the main labor force in China's urbanization process. But this means that family units are broken up – relationships are sacrificed in the name of progress. Family gatherings during Chinese New Year provide an important opportunity to get together. May the Lord help Christian families have a good testimony in their communities.

**27** After the Spring Festival celebrations, the time comes again for migrant workers to say goodbye to their elderly parents and young children. May the Lord give strength and comfort to Christian families as they go through these difficult separations.

**28** As younger adults leave their villages to work in the cities, the elderly and young children are once again left behind. Rural churches carry a heavy burden caring for those who are left behind. May the Lord strengthen, refresh and bless these church workers.

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*(Continued from page 2)*

student groups and young adults worked together and continued to support this group of special needs Christians. This is the story behind one church today that is full of life and vitality.

A hundred years ago, as in many other countries, there was a deep divide in China's churches between the so-called Fundamentalists and Liberals (one emphasizing proclamation of the gospel, one emphasizing social action). This conflict has continued to affect the Chinese church deeply. In the course of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the liberals became aligned with official churches, while fundamentalists aligned with the unregistered churches. And so, due to historical and practical factors, many churches in China today are not involved in any type of social service.

China has experienced massive changes in its society and economy since the 1980s. One significant change is the revitalization of religion, especially the astonishing

growth of China's church. This has caught the attention of scholars and government officials in China, as well as the rest of the world. In the 1990s, one scholar wrote: "Of the five religions currently endorsed by the Chinese government, the growth of Christianity is the most obvious; at the same time, this growth is "unprecedented" (Li Liang, 1995). How did Christianity actually grow? Many scholars of various backgrounds gave their answers, though none touched upon one factor – the growth of Christianity facilitated by Christian professional services.

As we saw earlier, Christianity entered with a focus on professional service. Missionaries started schools and hospitals, recognizing that these are important ways to demonstrate and proclaim the gospel. Between 1860 and 1950, missionaries helped to pave the way for China's modernization. They founded thirteen famous universities in China, as well as many of the famous hospitals (eg. West China and Peking Union

hospitals). Smaller local hospitals and schools all over China were also built upon the foundation laid by missionaries. In 1910, a Christian Hospital was built in Shaohsing (Zhejiang province); the Gospel School of Bozhou, (Anhui province) was started that same year. In 1914, the Borden Memorial Hospital was built in Lanzhou (Gansu province). The missionaries of that era ministered to physical as well as spiritual needs, laying the foundation for China's modernization. At the same time, significant communities of local Christians were raised up so that the gospel could take root in China. Like the special needs example mentioned earlier, these are not only the fruit of past labors; they provide the foundation on which the future growth of the Chinese church will be built.

After China opened up in the 1980s, Christian foreigners came in large numbers. They taught English and other subjects, sometimes short-term, sometimes medium or long-term. As they used their professional skills to serve – whether teaching or caring for special needs children - they participated in the revitalization of China's church, leaving the seeds of the gospel everywhere they served.

The Sichuan earthquake of 2008 was another important milestone for China's church, because it was the first time that Chinese Christians

got involved in disaster relief and rebuilding on a large scale. From then on, the term "volunteer" became a word that was much more commonly used. However, although Chinese churches are still growing, and now have large numbers of professionally trained members, Christian professionals are not often found addressing social needs.

Looking ahead, the Chinese church cannot depend on foreign Christian professionals for her development; Chinese professionals must step forward. The church needs to develop its own culture of professional service, learning from foreigners who have served the needy in China for over a hundred years. More importantly, they need to follow the incarnational model of Jesus. When John the Baptist sent two of his disciples to find out about Jesus' ministry, He answered: *"Go and tell John what you have seen and heard: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, the poor have good news preached to them"* (Luke 7:22). When Jesus rose from the dead and revealed Himself to His disciples, He said: *"As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you"* (John 20:21).

May God's will be done in China's church in the 21<sup>st</sup> century; may His kingdom come throughout the land, in every segment of society.

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