

March

Family、 Nation、 World

Prayer Letter

Church Prayer Monthly- 2017 March

Become a true Disciple, for the Glory of God

Become a True Church, Establish True Mission

March

I lift up my eyes to the hills- where does my help come from?
My help come from the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth.

It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.

(Psalm 121:1-2)



基督教柏斯宣道會
Perth Alliance Church

English

M o n t h l y P r a y e r L e t t e r

1 /3	W E D	United Fellowship is having a youth camp in early March, hoping to unite their youth and build up the English ministry, so that they will have hearts to serve God. Please pray for the speaker Kyran Holms, the youth leaders and helpers (Logistic support, cooking, transport and other areas), as well as the weather during that weekend. (North UFCamp)
2 /3	T H U	
3 /3	F R I	All five congregations have made their theme and ministry goals for this year. Please pray that each congregation may have the means to achieve these goals, as well as a good monthly evaluation to understand how much is being achieved, and to investigate ways to improve. (Goals and practice)
4 /3	S A T	Pray for the University students who have now started their first semester of study. Pray that they will maintain a close walk with God during their studies, trusting in Him to sustain them through the difficult times and to be faithful witnesses on their respective university campuses. Pray especially for the new 1 st year students. (Uni-students)
5 /3	S U N	Please pray for the March devotion month, ask God to use this time to encourage brothers and sisters to love Him, and to be able to quieten down before Him every day, to experience Him. (S.Cant Devotion month)
6 /3	M O N	Please pray for the children's drawing class starting from the 12/03, may this not only serve families in our church, but also reach out to the local community, allowing people to get to know our church. (S.Mand Drawing class)
7 /3	T U E	Both North and South church are planning to expand and an early plan is in place. Ask God to give us clarification of our mission in each respected community, that we would develop according to God's will and vision and ask God to also give us good planning, obedience and hearts united to build up the church with generous offering, so that our church can be most effective in the local community for the purpose of sharing the gospel! (Develop a Church with mission)
8 /3	W E D	Pray for the upcoming Easter Outreach programs. PACE plans to have 2 weekends outreaching in the Belmont community leading up to Easter with door-knocking, conversations with people, and flyers being distributed in parks and shopping centres. May God prepare the hearts of PACE to be excited about loving our neighbours, that we can make good connections that will ultimately point more people to Jesus. (S.Eng Outreach)
9 /3	T H U	South Cantonese is starting a new term of baptism classes, ask God to help the applicants to understand the meaning of baptism, and to be willing to submit to God, and to serve Him for life. (S.Cant Baptism class)
10 /3	F R I	Our theme this year in the North Mandarin congregation is "Bind members up with Love and Build Discipleship with Faith". Please pray that this may be more than a slogan, that members will see the church as a family and that they will be more willing to devote time and effort, hunger for more growth, and become real disciples of our Lord Jesus and to live a life full of joy. (N.Mand Theme)
11 /3	S A T	Please Pray for South Mandarin congregation as they will be holding a family Sunday on the 19/03, with each cell group using different ways to practice what they have learnt. May God use this family day to improve the communication between brothers and sisters. (S.Mand Family Sunday)

12 /3	S U N	Please pray for the discipleship training classes - the 3 rd term started in February. Ask God to give participants hearts to follow through, to rely on the Spirit and that they will continue to learn with humility. Also pray for Elder Wilson and sister Gem, ask God to give them strength and the Spirit's intuition, that they will let the Spirit be the one who is really leading the course (S.Cant DT)
13 /3	M O N	North Mandarin is starting "Discipleship training 40: Renewal of Mind", with registration starting now. Please pray that members will be willing to participate in this training. (N.Mand DT)
14 /3	T U E	Praise God for His kindness and mercy in saving people through the preaching of the gospel. Pray that the members of the English congregation will be bold and be able to persevere in talking to their friends about Jesus and invite them to the Sunday Services, Cell Group or Youth Group meetings. (S.Eng Gospel sharing)
15 /3	W E D	Please pray for the fellowships in the North Cantonese congregation - that leaders will guide members in discussion through praying and listening, practice what is taught, and actively seek new leaders to pass on the torch. (N.Can SG)
16 /3	T H U	Please pray for the South Mandarin youth fellowship group Kairos. Please pray for the youth as they continue to practice praying to God, particularly in Chinese. Give thanks for the parents' co-operation and pray that the youth will persevere, so that they may participate in this during Sunday worship. (S.Mand Youth fellowship)
17 /3	F R I	North Mandarin congregation is re-commencing all of the cell groups in February, please pray for them: Adult group, young adult group, gentleman's coffee club and the parent growth group. Pray that these groups can unite and build up other members in fellowship. (S.Mand SG)
18 /3	S A T	Cathay Life Education Centre (CLEI) is continuing its 4 fold discipleship training program "contemplative kingdom discipleship training" overseas in April, ask God for safe travel, effective collaboration with co-workers all over the world, Godly living, and the Spirit's guidance and filling! We need you to up hold us in your prayers! (Discipleship training)
19 /3	S U N	Thank God for the leaders of the Combined English Youth Group for High School students that meet on Friday nights (North and South). Pray that the leaders and trainees would persevere in their faith and faithfully disciple the teens with joy and wisdom. Pray also for the parents of the teens, that the Youth Group leaders can partner with them in discipling their children. (N.S. English youth leaders)
20 /3	M O N	Please pray for sister Yu Hua Zhang, she is frequently experiencing dizziness. Ask God for healing, and to bless her with peace and faith to rely on God! (S Mand Member's health)
21 /3	T U E	North Cantonese is currently focusing on mentoring through the congregation, with members being encouraged to mentor each other at home or in the church. Please pray that members will find someone to mentor, and that skills will be passed on. (N.Cant passing on the torch)

22 /3	W E D	The bible study series on Psalms for the North Mandarin congregation has started on the 20/02, with more than 10 brothers and sisters attending this time. Ask God to protect the participants, to remove obstacles for them so they can finish their homework and make it to each class, so that every participant can be built up and grow in God's word. (S.Mand Bible study)
23 /3	T H U	Please pray for new friends that may visit our church, pray that they are willing to submit to our church, enjoy church life, and to get to know and accept Jesus as their Lord and Saviour (New Friends)
24 /3	F R I	Please learn to be a cheerful giver, learn the beautiful tradition of tithing, timely and proportionally, so that there may be food in God's barn, a good place to fellowship, and so that the gospel can be shared passionately. (Offering)
25 /3	S A T	Pray for the preaching series on 1 Corinthians, with corresponding studies and discussions in cell groups. Pray for those who will be teaching and for humble learning of God's word, may PACE respond in faith and obedience, and that our lives be powerfully transformed by the Spirit. (S.Eng Preaching and SG discussion)
26 /3	S U N	Please pray for the X430 music gospel night, ask the Holy Spirit to give unity to those who are organising, that they will receive guidance and wisdom from the Holy Spirit, particularly for those who are responsible for the music arrangement. (S.Cant X430)
27 /3	M O N	Please pray for Xue Ying Zheng sister who is pregnant, ask God to bless her and the baby with health and peace. (Pregnant sister)
28 /3	T U E	We will be having our first PAC Global Mission Challenge in June and have invited very experienced missionary Pastor Ben Wong to lead meetings and retreats, sharing his vision with each congregation. He will also discuss the meaning of "True Mission Alliance" with our pastors. Please keep this in your prayers and set aside time to participate. (Global Mission)
29 /3	W E D	Pray for the Mayor of Belmont, Councillor Phil Marks, and the Belmont City Council. The Mayor will continue to host the Belmont Mayoral Prayer Breakfast, which is scheduled for May 2017. Pray for ongoing good relations between the Council and the Christian churches in Belmont. Pray that the churches can be a blessing to the city of Belmont. (Belmont churches and council)
30 /3	T H U	Please remember the North Mandarin prayer meetings, ask God to raise up prayer warriors, to serve in prayer, and to up hold our church ministry in prayers. (N.Mand Prayer meetings)
31 /3	F R I	With the depression in the mining industry, ask God to keep brothers and sisters in their work and career. Pray that God will help members without work to find appropriate jobs despite the current economic downturn. (WA Economics and members looking for Job)



Prayer Letter
OMF International

March 2017



As the Chinese church has grown and developed over the past twenty years or so, its interest in world mission has been increasing. This is encouraging and exciting, because unlike churches outside of China, there has been very little understanding of, and involvement in world missions in the past.

Robert Morrison entered China as a missionary in 1807 and Christianity began to take root. In 1901, a group of Chinese Christians from southeast China (Fujian) moved to East Malaysia (formerly Borneo) in order to plant a church. In 1910, others went to southwest China (Yunnan) to conduct evangelistic work, and in the 1920s

some Chinese pastors went and planted churches in southeast Asia.

During the 20th century, China's history was turbulent and her development uneven. Decades of war concluded when Mao's regime took power in 1949, and China closed its doors to missionaries and other foreigners for almost 30 years. In the late 1970s, as the country began to open up, Chinese Christians were able to meet again in some places, and since then, the church has grown exponentially; it is a beautiful testimony to God's sovereignty in building His Kingdom on earth. After 50 years of silence, the church's focus on missions was rekindled – rural

churches began talking about taking the gospel “back to Jerusalem”, and urban churches also expressed a desire to participate in God’s mission plan.

During this last century the Chinese church has been built on a strong foundation of the Bible and sound doctrine, but it has been filled with suffering and tears. Faithful believers in each generation have stood strong and carried the movement forward. The current generation of church leaders is beginning to recognize that today’s global context is very different, and much more complex than that of their forefathers. Do they have the wherewithal to cross cultures and serve effectively in contexts different from anything they have ever experienced before? Here are some questions they must consider:

A. When people today think about the potential contribution Chinese believers can make in the cause of world mission, they usually focus on two factors: China’s enormous economic growth and the huge reservoir of manpower in China’s churches. However, China’s churches were cut off from the outside world for much of the 20th century, and they have very little experience compared with traditional missionary sending countries. They lack awareness – how can they pray for countries and people they know nothing about? They lack finances – many Chinese believers have not been taught about giving to God’s work outside their own church. They lack training – however high the numbers of brothers and sisters

willing to go, they will not survive, thrive and lead fruitful lives if they are not well prepared and supported. There is huge potential – yes; but there are ways in which the church needs to grow significantly – in understanding different contexts, in cross-cultural awareness, in their ability to partner overseas with local believers and other missionaries, to mention just three of these. It is not easy for “local churches” to grow into “sending churches”.

B. Another reality is this: some Chinese churches believe that the expansion of the gospel has been progressing steadily in a westward direction. They consider its arrival and explosive growth in China to mean that Chinese churches have a unique God-given responsibility to take the gospel “back to Jerusalem”. Western (and other) missionaries have done their part and Chinese believers should, as it were, “take the baton” and finish the task. This view of world mission is unbiblical and needs to be refuted. It overlooks the fact that world mission is now “from everywhere to everywhere” and that all Christians are called to respond to God’s grace by serving Him in mission. What is more, it is a task to be accomplished together with fellow believers of different backgrounds. The role of Chinese Christians is not “special” or “superior”; and the task is certainly not theirs alone.

C. For thousands of years, the worldview of most Chinese people has been based on Confucianism, which is atheistic. In addition, since the Communist Party has been in

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demonstrated with integrity, humility and generosity. The Chinese church needs to think carefully about the ways in which they live out the gospel. The Christian message is not just verbal; the gospel must also be expressed (and validated) through loving Christian action and godly character. How will they do this? In Africa today there are many Chinese involved in construction or business. When a Chinese Christian goes to Africa with a heart for mission, how will he or she communicate the gospel effectively through actions as well as words? How can Chinese believers avoid being perceived as profiteers only - or worse, the “new imperialists” from China?

E. As Chinese missionaries begin to serve cross-culturally, the first thing people see is their “Chinese-ness”. People will judge them through the lens of what they know about China from the media. They have heard about China’s rapid, astonishing economic growth and increasing influence on the world stage. Naturally they will wonder about the motivation Chinese missionaries have for coming to live among them. China’s “one belt, one road” agenda for economic expansion might be confused with many Chinese churches’ slogan to “take the gospel back to Jerusalem”. As Chinese believers go west with the gospel, can they cast off the economic and political baggage that comes from their government policies? In the 19th century, Morrison himself used his business platform – his position

in the Dutch East India Company – for eternal purposes. Can Chinese missionaries do the same – advance the cause of world missions - through their own “one belt, one road” platform?

The call to participate in world missions is not a call to experience other cultures, but to advance God’s Kingdom in every tribe, people, nation and language. In Shanghai a hundred years ago, western missionaries were deeply distressed about China’s hopeless condition. Millions of Chinese were destined to perish without ever hearing the good news about Jesus Christ. The love of Christ - and of the Chinese people - constrained these missionaries to give their lives in service to God in China. What will motivate and constrain Chinese missionaries who go to Africa? How will they serve God and be a blessing to Africa?

The Chinese church needs to realize that involvement in world missions is only authentic when motivated by thanksgiving for grace received – it is not an enterprise of proving how strong and capable it is. Their actions must be firmly founded on the Great Commission “to make disciples”, and the Great Commandment “to love God and neighbor”, in the Spirit of Christ. As they respond gratefully to all that Christ has done for them, and join their hands with other Christians in this immense privilege and responsibility, they will be richly blessed – and so will the worldwide church.

recently. Many are speculating – “why?” Pray that these warmer relations will bring about more spiritual freedom for Chinese citizens.

29 *The National Religious Bureau 2017 Key Working Points* was published in February. It included this sentence: “guide the China Christian Council and Three-Self Patriotic Council to hold a Sino-American Christian forum in the US”. Pray that this forum will not become a platform for propaganda and political maneuvering, but rather a time to focus on God’s sovereignty in His global church.

30 Director Wang of the National Religious Affairs Bureau recently indicated that new “Religious Affairs Policies” will be issued later

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power, education at all levels has been steeped in atheism. Generally speaking, the road to salvation for most Chinese Christians has been from atheism to believing in Jesus as the one true, living God. But many cultures outside China are deeply influenced by other religions. They may be pantheistic – believing in several or many gods. They may be animistic – believing in other spiritual forces and entities. They may be Muslim or Jewish – monotheistic but not Christian. Chinese believers have very little awareness or understanding of these realities and how they impact people’s lives – they need very thorough cross-cultural training.

this year. May God help Chinese church leaders to deal with the challenges that come from these new religious polices; to respond with grace and faith, and to act with wisdom and discernment.

31 Earlier this year, the Chinese government emphasized that “no religious persons can belong to the party”. This pits religious belief directly against the political system. It will force those party members who are Christians to go deeper underground. At the same time, this strengthens the hands of those who claim to be atheist; it jeopardizes the ideal of “harmonious society” and threatens religious freedom. May the Lord protect and prosper His Church in this difficult environment.

D. As we reflect on China’s own experience of “receiving” missionaries, we note that Morrison and his spiritual successors were accepted not only because of their dedication and selflessness, but also because they brought much needed help and knowledge in medicine and education. These expressions of the gospel – God’s Word in action – spoke loudly to their hearts. They began to understand the love of God because they experienced it; they learnt that Christians stress human dignity and the sanctity of life because these are inherent in Jesus’ teaching; they could begin to appreciate the truth of the gospel because they saw it

Prayer Points

March 2017

1 Chinese evangelists visit villages in the spring. Pray for safe travels, wisdom from above and spiritual strength to speak the truth of the gospel accurately.

2 Pray for Chinese missionaries serving in southeast Asia - for daily strength and good support through fellowship with other workers.

3 Pray for Chinese missionaries serving in central Asia - may the Lord help them to stand firm and serve diligently in a difficult environment.

4 Pray for Chinese missionaries serving in the Middle East: many are serving Syrian refugees. Pray for protection, and for God to open the hearts of the refugees to the love of God.

5 Pray for Chinese missionaries currently in Africa, and for those preparing to serve there – for their cultural adjustment, and wisdom in serving shoulder-to-shoulder with the African church.

6 Pray for mission interns serving in the Mekong region – for physical and spiritual stamina, and for sensitivity to God’s voice. May they be well prepared to serve cross-culturally in the future.

7 Pray for Chinese missionaries in Creative Access Nations – they face many challenges in terms of daily life and cultural adjustment. May they learn to trust and depend on God when they are lonely or fearful.

8 Pray for the children of Chinese missionaries (Third Culture Kids, TCKs). May Chinese mission agencies grow in their understanding of TCK issues and learn how to handle them well.

9 Pray for Chinese missionaries called to serve in Japan. They need to cross barriers created by the hostile relationship between Chinese and Japanese in the 20th century.

10 Praise God for the newly-published trilingual version of the Bible – Tibetan, Chinese and English. May the Lord use it to reach Tibetan people.

11 The government has implemented new Chinese NGO (non-governmental agency) laws, and many Chinese Christians operating in this social sector are facing new challenges. Pray that God will grant them wisdom so they can continue serving with integrity and compassion.

12 China’s new “two child” policy has been in effect for one year now, but the expected “baby boom” did not happen! Recently, many social problems have been highlighted – the high cost of raising children, the high pressure educational system, food safety, and environmental pollution.

May Chinese believers be granted grace and strength to persevere; and may their testimonies lead others to believe in Jesus.

13 According to the *XinJing Daily*, a small suburb in Tianjin hosts 40-50 underground factories producing fake brand-name spices. May God's truth shine into the hearts of those who are deceitful in business; may His Spirit constrain government officials to implement and enforce laws to prevent these kinds of crimes.

14 Due to rapid urbanization, many small villages and towns are being destroyed. In their new living situations, people frequently seek out illegal "back doors", which prevents any hoped-for progress towards being a law-abiding society. Chinese Christians can provide good examples of living with integrity, highlighting biblical teaching concerning honesty and godly citizenship.

15 Recently, a young man in Zhejiang was killed when he tried to enter a zoo illegally by climbing over a wall. Many in China do not understand or accept what it means to abide by the law; pray for Chinese Christians to be "salt and light" in this society, and a good influence.

16 Recently an older man complained to some visitors visiting his village: "Mahjong (a form of gambling) is being played everywhere, so no one is farming, no one is looking after the children, and

the general mood is depraved." Village churches have lost many members through urban migration and its influence in society is waning. May the Lord revive village churches, so that they will preach the Good News clearly and draw many to faith.

17 In recent years, many cults have begun in rural areas. May the Lord protect the village church leaders from being led astray by false teachings, and raise up city pastors who can help the village churches to grow in maturity.

18 The government is trying to increase the occupancy rate of new high rise buildings, so they are encouraging farmers to buy units in the city. These farmers cannot afford the high prices of the more desirable units, and so they buy units in undesirable places. This has caused huge problems for the farmers' families. May the Lord protect and guide village Christians, so that they won't blindly follow others, but be more discerning and careful.

19 More and more affluent urban families are going overseas to buy homes, including Christians. May the Lord help these wealthy Christians to be good stewards and use their resources wisely. May they not "lay up treasures on earth", but invest in that which advances God's Kingdom.

20 A large number of wealthy Chinese women have gone to the US to give birth. This has given rise to

a "Chinese-going-to-the-US-to-give-birth-industry", now worth one billion dollars. Women are incurring huge debts to do this; pray for those caught up in this fad.

21 In the last 20-30 years, the growth rate of China's GDP has become the most important barometer of progress. Earlier this year Liaoning provincial officials admitted that they had falsified their reports; pray that China's leaders will not make policy decisions based on false numbers. Pray for Chinese churches to have a godly influence on the materialistic society all around them.

22 During a conference of Chinese High Court presidents, the Supreme Court president Zhouqiang talked about "judicial independence and other wrong ideas that we need to abolish"; this statement created negative reactions among the Chinese intelligentsia. Please pray that Chinese society can move away from "rule by leader" to "rule by law".

23 The city of Nanjing has started using an "outsider household registration points system". This new system means many migrant workers do not qualify for household registration. In the next few years, other cities will implement this same system, which will result in even more inequality in Chinese society. May urban Christians reach out to migrant workers who are suffering hardship because of this system.

24 There are over 200,000 Africans living in Guangzhou, mostly businessmen and entrepreneurs. Praise God for churches that are being planted by these Africans. May the Lord help them partner with Chinese churches so they can extend God's kingdom together.

25 There are concerns about China's relationship with the new administration in the US. Pray for God's hand of protection to be on this relationship, and that meetings between leaders of the two countries will be constructive rather than confrontational. May they work together as a force for good in the world.

26 The election for a new Hong Kong Chief Executive takes place today. May God grant Hong Kong a smooth and fair election; pray that the new Chief Executive will lead wisely, and bring about justice, unity and peace for the people Hong Kong.

27 China's foreign reserves have fallen to less than 3 trillion USD. In summer 2014 they were over 4 trillion USD. This proves that China's economy is slowing down, and there is currently capital flight out of China. Thank God for the growth in China's economy, which has led to a greatly improved quality of life for many. However, there are serious inequalities - pray that the country's wealth will be distributed more equitably.

28 The relationship between China and the Vatican has improved