



CHINA
OUTREACH
MINISTRIES

WINTER 2022

IMPACT

Together, Giving Christ to China's Future Leaders



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IMPACT

WINTER 2022

Together, Giving Christ to China's Future Leaders

We encourage you to keep this issue of IMPACT in your favorite prayer place that the content may guide you to pray steadfastly for our work together in giving Christ to China's future leaders.

What would you like to see more often in IMPACT?

Send us your ideas!

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God Is at His Work—Always!

By Daniel Su, COM President

WE HUMANS seem more able to recognize God at work in good times than in bad times. But Jesus said God is always at his work, regardless of times or circumstances. That was how Jesus answered the Jewish leaders who questioned his healing of the disabled man on a Sabbath.

Today, we are living in different circumstances due to COVID-19. But the good news is God has not gone into quarantine. On the contrary, he's actively at work in our ministry among Chinese students—both in person and online. A silver lining we see is that the current trying circumstances have softened the hearts of many Chinese students. They are humbled to see that even this technologically advanced country can still be so vulnerable. I thank God for his sustaining power and unceasing work throughout our human history—in times of peace as well as in times of wars or plagues.

When facing trials and uncertainties, I turn to this hymn that lifts my spirits, “God Moves in a Mysterious Way” by William Cowper:

God moves in a mysterious way,
His wonders to perform;
He plants his footsteps in the sea,
And rides upon the storm...
Judge not the Lord by feeble sense,
But trust him for his grace;
Behind a frowning providence,
He hides a smiling face.

I'm grateful for the hope we have in Christ—the hope for this life and the next. I thank God for giving us the opportunity to share this hope with the hundreds of thousands of Chinese students currently studying here in America. May God's face shine upon all of us! ■

God's Work in Our Campus Connections

During the fall and the holiday season, with safety precautions in place, our staff members were able to return to many favorite activities like airport pickups, parties, in-person Bible studies, and group outings. With large numbers of Chinese students in the United States again this year, we are thankful for the creative ways God has led us in outreach.

■ The campus is back to life, and it is good to see people in person! We gave away gifts for new students, and we held a welcome party on campus, partnering with my Chinese church and another Christian organization at the university. Later in the fall, we held a Mid-Autumn BBQ picnic at a local park. Praise God for all the volunteers, financial support, and abundant food from churches and individuals. God has blessed us with good fellowship with the students!

— **Jessica Ren, Texas**

■ Golden supreme green apples became the favorite this year in our

apple-picking adventure at a local orchard. We not only enjoyed the delicious apples and pears, but also walking through the hedge maze together. Topping off the day, we visited the farm for homemade ice cream and coffee—and even amusement with the animals. It was a wonderful, beautiful day!

— **Rose Chiu, Massachusetts**

■ Our Friday Night Event is a chance for students to meet for a Chinese dinner, a variety of games, and a discussion of faith. Since we host these gatherings in the multifunctional room of the main freshman dorm, students can easily



come, even in their slippers! We hope that more Chinese students will closely connect and create a circle of friends with whom we can share the gospel.

— **Christy Dong, Pennsylvania**



■ Our Fall Harvest Party was filled with activity. We shot arrows as the bonfire was roaring in the background. People were in the garage carving pumpkins, in the basement playing ping pong, and upstairs eating. This group of 30 people, including volunteers, came and went into the night and enjoyed a wonderful time. What I observed most was people gathering and talking everywhere as they enjoyed being together sharing in each other's lives.

— **Bob Simon, Ohio**

■ Our campus ministry has a cooperative website with some other Chinese ministries at our university, so that incoming students can sign up for airport pickup before they leave China. This year,



for the first time, we were able to coordinate with a campus Chinese student organization that has resources that can be very helpful to us. They actually recommended us to a number of students!

— **Irene Moy, Maryland**

■ It has been awesome to worship and study the Bible at church! Once again, students are coming to listen and learn the Word. Many have been responsive to the messages shared from Ruth, Psalms, and Mark, and we are now studying John's gospel. A few who had never joined our online meetings have now come to hear the good news.

— **Chris Deng, California**



A photograph of three hikers with large backpacks crossing a log bridge over a stream in a forest. The hiker in the foreground is wearing a teal jacket and a large green and black backpack. The hiker in the middle is wearing a red jacket and a black backpack. The hiker in the background is wearing an orange jacket and a large orange backpack. They are all using trekking poles. The stream is on the left, and the forest is on the right.

A Disciple-Making Movement

By Nick Romanin, COM Midwest Area Director

JAMES COULD NOT STOP TALKING. He was beaming with excitement, telling me how he was using what he had learned from my wife Lydia and me to minister to another brother in a marriage crisis. He had seen God work in them in an amazing way.


James was thrilled at God's grace—how he was able, through James, to bless this couple and bring such wonderful change. I listened, holding back tears, overjoyed that James, who I had spent years discipling, was now investing in other men and bearing fruit. I was seeing this young man step out in faith and begin to lead. This is multiplication!

I met both James and John within the first year of my ministry with COM. James and I connected because his girlfriend brought him to church. John and I met at a welcome dinner. He was here because his wife was getting her PhD,

although he was not a student. Both James and John received the gospel early on.

James had a heart of fertile soil, and we began to disciple him and his girlfriend right away. It was an amazing privilege to walk with this young couple through understanding God, overcoming sin, and solving relational discord.

During much of that time, James lived with us, not only learning through teaching, but also through observation. Even so, there were times that we doubted their relationship could last. But you wouldn't guess that today. Their mar-



*“I was seeing this young man
step out in faith
and begin to lead.”*

riage is now an inspiration to many young couples!

James had become part of our family. God used us to raise him up in the Lord, and we began also to help him learn how to share this with others.

John has a different story. His heart’s soil was filled with rocks, and although he became a believer and attended church, he ended up backsliding from the fellowship of the church for years.

As he wandered, John started to get curious about Jehovah’s Witnesses. He also struggled with whether prayer could help with anything. There was a language barrier with his English skills, so it was hard for us to go very deep. However, I was persistent in loving him and trying my best to keep in touch.

Last May, I invited James and John to go with me on a wilderness trip. We went to the Smoky Mountains and backpacked for three nights, covering over 22 miles up and down mountains. We

earned blistered feet, achy backs, and unforgettable memories of bear sightings, vistas, and amazing conversations.

During that trip, in the wonderful state of being disconnected from school, work, and social media, John started opening up to James. They talked for nearly the whole trip—with no language barrier. I was witnessing my prayers being answered as I heard James removing rocks from John’s heart, and I began to hear John develop a passion for God’s Word in only a few days!

The following month, James and John and their wives went on their own trip together. It was there that James began to see in John and his wife the same things that he and his wife had previously struggled with. As James and his wife began to minister to their new friends, tears flowed, hearts melted, and the Holy Spirit was working!

We are not here to make converts. We are here to see a disciple-making movement happen—and it’s happening! ■

What Is the Source of True Happiness?

By Myrna Hines

IT'S HARD TO EXPLAIN the importance of Chinese New Year, a holiday cherished in China for more than 4,000 years. Chinese students, scholars, and immigrants in the United States often carry on their New Year traditions during their time here, welcoming American friends to share in the festivities. For COM staff and volunteers, Chinese New Year is a special time to connect with students and scholars.

Signifying the beginning of the Lunar Calendar, this huge celebration—also known as Spring Festival—is marked each year by one of 12 animals in the Chinese calendar. This February, we'll welcome the Year of the Tiger.

As the New Year begins in China, schools and universities take extended time off and businesses close. The annual urban workers' movement to and from distant hometowns to visit family has been described as the world's "largest human migration." City dwellers pack into restaurants for enormous feasts, and in homes, families gather and prepare traditional dishes.

Steamed dumplings, shaped like the elongated ingots of ancient Chinese currency, symbolize wealth. Tangerines and oranges represent happiness. Because the words "fish" and "abun-

dance" have similar sounds in Chinese, New Year decorations and meals traditionally include fish.

Mandarin speakers wish each other prosperity for the coming year, saying, "Gong xi fa cai." Red and gold lanterns symbolize luck and prosperity.

Red banners posted around entry doors evoke the legendary meaning of the holiday and offer a remarkable gospel connection. As one Chinese legend goes, an ancient Chinese villager slaughtered a chicken and painted the blood on his doorpost to fend off harm by Nian, a mythical beast. Christians who engage with Chinese friends about the significance of these red decorations may draw a parallel to the biblical story of the Passover in Exodus.

Overall, New Year traditions reflect one prevailing theme: happiness and prosperity. When we have asked Chinese students about their goals, they have usually mentioned "good jobs" and "happiness." They study intensely year after year to achieve wealth and success.

Former students have often written to us about their Chinese New Year

Would you like to be involved in a Chinese New Year celebration?

Contact a COM staff member or volunteer in your area for information about local events.

Prayers for Chinese New Year

- Give thanks for opportunities to engage with Chinese students and scholars during Chinese New Year celebrations and for COM staff, volunteers, and church partners who are reaching out.
- Pray for creative, fruitful outreach and for Chinese students and scholars to find their longings satisfied in Jesus.

dreams. Our friend Shi hoped for a big breakthrough in his job writing music. Our friend Ru wished for a girlfriend and marriage. Jia, a professor, wanted a spouse for his daughter, Pearl. Another former student took her little boy to the Buddhist temple to pray for health and happiness.

We love these men and women. Their messages are both encouraging and heart-breaking. We appreciate their friendship and expressions of love. But most are not yet followers of Jesus. We ache for them to know our Lord, the source of true happiness.

Our Chinese friends soon find out that achievements, dream jobs, and wealth do not satisfy. Biblical wisdom reminds

us, “Whoever loves money never has enough; whoever loves wealth is never satisfied with their income” (Ecclesiastes 5:10).

China Outreach Ministries helps Chinese men and women find true happiness, the joy that comes from following Jesus. Lives and values are transformed by the gospel. For example, we introduced Xu to the gospel. Since then her faith keeps growing even when facing hardships. She wrote, “I am happier than ever, believing God has a plan for everything.” Other new believers write of peace and purpose they never had before.

We pray that this year will be the year when COM’s Chinese friends discover the true source of joy and happiness, faith in Jesus Christ. ■



Families, friends, and employers give monetary gifts in red envelopes.

What Only God Can Do

*Answered Prayer, God's Provision,
and the Work of the Spirit*



■ Mae, a PhD scholar's wife, recently came to Christ after experiencing God's abundant grace in times of stress.

Last summer, when Mae was studying the Bible with me, her heart was filled with worries, and she was easily distracted. She said to me, "Please don't waste time on me. I am not a good student." I thought to myself, "I will share the truth with her and let God do the rest..."

God is faithful, and Mae is now a new person in Christ. God transformed her and opened her spiritual eyes, and she is also amazed by the changes in her life. Not only is she more interested in spiritual things, but she likes to share what she has learned with her husband, who is also seeking God. Pray he will come to Christ soon!

—**Jessica Ren, Texas**

■ Home-cooked food is one of the best ways to attract friends to join Bible studies, and Xin has the gift of preparing enough authentic Szechuan food to feed 80 people from our kitchen. We had been planning to remodel our kitchen for years due to its poor condition, but there had not been an opportunity for us to do this because we stay busy with dinner guests.

During the COVID-19 isolation, we saw the opportunity to work on the kitchen, but budget and time were issues. To save money, Xin planned to make the cabinets himself. Yet we also knew if we spent too much time on this project then we weren't being faithful to what we're called to do.

As we were hesitating about this, a Christian brother we had never met surprised us with a brand new set of kitchen cabinets! Maybe the Lord did



*“He really knows what we need
— even before we ask.”*

not like our DIY idea and provided this? He really knows what we need—even before we ask.

—Xin and Ying, Pennsylvania

■ God has been miraculously working in our student ministry as we have prayer walks at the universities. Though we cannot have any activities on campus, God has opened doors with students for one-to-one interaction at their apartments or my apartment club house. Weekend Food Delivery has also blessed the students during their busyness in exams and school assignments.

One of the pre-believers, an undergraduate student, has shown a great interest in studying the Bible with me weekly, and she wants to read the verses from her own Bible.

Another Christian student said that her heart is empty though she professes to

be a Christian. She wants to study the Bible with me.

Additionally, a pre-believer from the university showed a great interest in Jewish Shabbat and worship though she professed to be Buddhist. She will visit a Messianic congregation with me. In all of these situations, I see God at work as he answers our prayers!

—Pauline Lim, New York

■ A Christian friend who attended seminary with me is now a house church pastor in a major city in China. A couple of years ago, we discussed the potential of connecting students from our ministry with his church if they end up in his city.

Fast forward two-and-a-half years. We recently hosted a new student from

Testimonies continued on next page.

China, Peng, in our home. Soon after, the student sent me a message: “Hi Mike, do you know [name of seminary] in the US?”

“Yes,” I enthusiastically replied, “that is where I received my master’s degrees!”

“Wow, that’s cool,” Peng answered. “I know someone in [major Chinese city] who also studied there, and right now he is serving at a church in [major Chinese city].”

“Who is it?” I questioned. “Perhaps I know him.”

At this point in the conversation, Peng began a group message including me and his friend—my classmate from seminary!

The city where this student and my pastor friend met is enormous, so it is incredible that these two individuals know one another. Peng is a new believer, and we have the opportunity to begin discipling him before his return to China. Since he will be returning to this particular city, my pastor friend is the person that I would have connect-

ed him with upon his return. But they already know each other!

—Mike Reynolds, Tennessee

■ The past several months, it has been a great joy to have a Bible study with Claire. She is so eager and teachable!

In the beginning, Claire did not believe in God but wanted to study the Bible because she was attracted by Christian culture. As we prayed for her, I saw her progress in our Bible study as she concluded that God exists, then came to believe that what the Bible says about Jesus is true. Then she seemed to understand the message of salvation.

Finally, after studying the Bible for less than four months, Claire committed her life to Christ! I have introduced her to a small Chinese church I know and rejoice that her first visit there was very positive. I am leading her in our set of Bible studies for new Christians and have already asked the Chinese church to disciple her.

—Irene Moy, Maryland

Welcome New Staff

■ Erine Chen, Mid-Atlantic

After 10 years teaching English in her home country of Taiwan, Erine Chen left her career to study at Liberty University in Virginia. After earning an MA in Human Services Counseling, she connected with a local college student fellowship which grew her burden for Chinese young adults. She has continued her studies, now pursuing an MA in Pastoral Counseling, and has been partnering closely with COM staff members in Chinese student outreach.



Reaching Chinese Gen Z

Daniel Su, COM President

Just as we have seen a decrease in the number of US visas issued to visiting scholars sponsored by the Chinese government, we have seen 75,000 visas issued to incoming students from China in the last year. This represents a significant increase as the United States is opening up to international students.

What's Different about Younger Chinese Students?

As we consider both the challenges and the opportunity before us, it is vital that we understand some important characteristics of China's Gen Z. Of course these observations do not apply to every individual, but we do see some general trends. Compared to previous generations, younger Chinese students:

- Are typically not as interested in the Bible or Christian beliefs.
- Tend to be less success-driven and materialistic, as they have greater financial resources and freedom.
- Prioritize having fun along with achieving good grades.
- Care more about human values, the environment, and social justice, yet are vulnerable to online disinformation.
- Express more patriotism, eager to defend Beijing.
- View the American government as attempting to contain China's rise to a greater power status.
- Live largely in a virtual world and consume mostly Chinese language online material.
- Struggle with independence after heavy reliance on their parents growing up.
- Are more likely to experience deep, significant psychological or emotional issues.

What Does This Mean for Our Ministry?

Because of the differences in today's Chinese student population, it is important to find new ways to connect. Also, many Chinese students are advised not to associate with Christians or participate in religious activities, so they are more likely than before to distance themselves from Christians. Therefore, I've communicated the following tips and perspectives to our campus staff:

- People from all cultures respond positively to genuine love and kindness, which overcomes barriers. *Take time to build trust and develop relationships, which earns us the right to be heard when sharing our Christian faith.*
- God put eternity in human hearts, and the Holy Spirit is at work. *Remain faithful in our outreach, and leave the results to God.*
- We are ambassadors for Christ—not for any country or political party. *Avoid geopolitical issues, but focus on communicating God's message of love and reconciliation, which is meant for all peoples.*
- Even though the younger generation comes to the United States with better English, the need to improve conversational language skills and adjust to the new culture is ongoing. *Introduce them to your local area, make time for relaxed conversation, help them improve their English, and offer authentic friendship.* ■

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—from a COM donor

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Ensuring Your Legacy

Your Next Step in Preparing a Will

By Kirk Zuercher, Director of Development

Is writing a will a priority on your to-do list in this new year? If it is, we're pleased to share a new resource for simplifying the process. Through our partnership with GiftWise, you now have access to an online platform where you can quickly and easily make a legally binding will—at no cost.

How Important Is a Written Will?

If the last couple of years has taught us anything, it's that the unexpected can, and will, happen. If you do not have a will, or if your current will needs updates, it's important to take care of this as soon as you can.

A will is an important legal document that outlines your wishes regarding the distribution of your property and assets upon your passing.

Without a will, your estate goes to the state for processing. Any assets you have to pass to your heirs could get tied up in a lengthy, impersonal process, making life harder for your family. You would also miss the opportunity for designated charitable giving to carry on your lifetime stewardship commitments that are most important to you.

How Does the GiftWise Platform Work?

For many people, the idea of developing a will feels a bit overwhelming. That is where we can help. Through the GiftWise platform, we're providing this service to you for free. In just 20 minutes, you can:

- Create a will.
- Leave gifts of any size to the organizations of your choice.
- Ensure a meaningful legacy for your family.

To get started, simply go to our website, chinaoutreach.org, and follow the link found on the homepage for further instructions. We would be honored if you would like to include China Outreach Ministries in your will.

If you have questions, please feel free to email Kirk Zuercher, Director of Development, at kzuercher@chinaoutreach.net, or call 717-591-3500.

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SAVE THE DATE

Spring Celebration Events

■ **HARRISBURG, PENNSYLVANIA**

Thursday, March 31

■ **CANTON, OHIO**

Monday, April 18

■ **ERIE, PENNSYLVANIA**

Tuesday, April 19

■ **WASHINGTON, D.C.**

Friday, May 6

