2026-10-11 Thanksgiving Testimonies

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Adam · Cantonese Congregation

2026 Cantonese Congregation Thanksgiving Highlights

Hey everyone, looking back at this past year at church, there are a few awesome things that I think we should all stop and count as real blessings together.

- First off, we're now running a Communion service on one Monday night every month. This is huge because it gives brothers and sisters who can't make it on Sundays a chance to hang out, worship, and take Communion together. Our church has wanted to do this for decades, but we could never quite make it happen until now.
- Second, starting next week, the Cantonese service is trying out a Saturday morning worship time. Honestly, it's a total miracle that a church with fewer than 100 people has three different services! We actually ran out of space on Sunday mornings, meaning some of us had to switch to a different time slot just to fit. That's a pretty amazing problem to have.
  - Think about it this way: a church with tons of empty space is God's reminder that we need to work harder to bring people to Christ.
  - But a church that's running out of room is proof that God is pouring out His grace on us—and it means we need to get smarter and more flexible with how we use what we've got.
- Third, for such a tiny group, we somehow have three pastors and an advisory pastor (Pastor Emeritus). Whether you look at Chinese churches or Western churches, having that many leaders for a group our size is just mind-blowing.
- Fourth, we're actively encouraging our younger generation to get trained up, with the hope that they'll step up as future church leaders and pastors and willing to be used by God.

Lastly, I want to remind everyone not to just say thanks for the "happy" stuff. We also need to be thankful for the brothers and sisters in our church who are going through tough times right now, whether with their health or their finances. You might think, Wait, is this guy crazy? What is there to be thankful for when people are hurting? What I mean is: because some of us are suffering, it gives our whole community the chance to learn how to go through hard times together, share what we have, and truly look out for one another.

Life is full of ups and downs, and bad times never last forever. But having the love and care of your church family when things get rough. That's the greatest happiness right there.

So, let's not just celebrate the easy wins. When we give thanks, let's thank God for making us a family that sticks together through thick and thin—celebrating with those who are happy, and crying with those who are hurting.

David · English Congregation

> “Cast all your anxiety on Him because He cares for you.” (1 Peter 5:7)

- Pastor Stephen Chu asked me to share some things the English congregation is thankful for this past year.
- I can think of both good and unpleasant circumstances to be thankful to the Lord for.
- God brought many new faces to us: newborns, families, college students, foreign workers. We are thankful for all of them, because our church is about our people. The new people are our family, and their different cultures and backgrounds bless and enrich us.
- We are thankful for the many challenges, because they are opportunities to learn. Pastor Stephen challenged the English congregation to embrace his vision to mentor future leaders, and to develop pastors and licensed workers from our congregation.
- We are thankful for our Next Generation leaders, who are committed to the Lord and to each other to study, learn, and be transformed.
- The English “Bible Sharing ????” preparation group meets every Thursday to study and prepare the Sunday message. We have seven young adults (Alexander, Enoch, Tim, Joanne, Cecilia, Shiny, Nikki), plus others.
- ?????. The future is bright.
- Come to the English service, hear their messages, get to know them, walk with them, share their burdens, and we grow together.

The hymn “I Know Who Holds Tomorrow”:

> “ Many things about tomorrow
> I don’t seem to understand,
> But I know who holds tomorrow,
> And I know who holds my hand.

- Many of us are dealing with uncertainties and illness. I think of Gordon, Mike and his family, Liu Pei’s mom, Catherine’s mom, and the ??? family. We cannot fix their challenges, but we love them and walk with them.
- We are thankful that God holds their hand, and He knows their future.

Amen.

Thian-Peng · Mandarin Congregation

This is the full version of my sharing. On Sunday I read a shorter version to keep to time.

Peace to you, brothers and sisters. I'm Thian-Peng.

This week has been construction season at our church. I've been coordinating a lot of moving parts while juggling family, church, and work. So when I was first asked to share today, I'll be honest: I struggled. I already had enough on my plate. Why say yes to one more thing?

But God recently reminded me of two things. In Romans 1, Paul writes:

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> “I am obligated both to Greeks and non-Greeks, both to the wise and the foolish. That is why I am so eager to preach the gospel also to you who are in Rome.” (Romans 1:14-15)

God entrusted the gospel to Paul. That grace was never meant to stay with him, so he was eager to pass it on, even to believers who were already in Rome. What God has been doing among us is the same. If I should speak of God's work and stay silent, I'm holding back a debt I owe.

And 1 Thessalonians 5 says:

> “Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.” (1 Thessalonians 5:18)

All circumstances includes the busiest ones. So I chose not to decline.

The freshest reason to give thanks: the next generation

There is so much to give thanks for, but I want to start with the most recent, because it's still fresh in my heart.

Over the last few years, our church has shifted its focus to walking with people and nurturing the next generation: those who are young in faith, and those who are young in age. We have chosen to put our ministry and our resources there first.

Recently we've seen more clearly how important it is for young parents to bring their babies and toddlers into worship with the whole church family, instead of being set apart in a nursery crowded with crying children. We want them to stay connected with their church family and to worship God together with us.

At the same time, at Five Loaves and Two Fish, the Lord has brought us many new brothers and sisters, so that together we can reach and disciple the next generation. Through this ministry, more people are serving, and more newcomers are exploring the faith and tasting real fellowship.

The Lord brings these people to us so that we can keep practising loving and serving one another.

But that has brought a happy problem. Five Loaves and Two Fish now fills almost every usable space we have: every room, the foyer, the sanctuary, even the nursery. We simply ran out of room for more groups for seekers and young people.

Building together

So the church came together, with one heart, to build new space for young parents and for small groups. Brothers and sisters have given their time, money, energy, and resources to build something for the next generation. The two rooms still under construction in our sanctuary are the evidence.

God prepares His people to build for Him.

My little faith

I have to admit that sometimes my faith is small. When Brother Ron told me the glass windows had arrived, I didn't sleep well that night. I knew the big job was about to begin.

I was clear about one thing: this had to be the church's project, carried out by brothers and sisters who love the Lord and love His church. It could not be a commercial job or an organizational project. It had to be done the biblical way, not the secular way. I had never done anything like it.

And that raised the question: where are the workers? I prayed, and I asked Sinnie and the church to pray with me.

God answered our prayer

God answered our prayer. Many brothers and sisters poured out their time and energy in the middle of busy lives. Every day someone came to stain the wood, and every evening people came to set up, drill, cut, and carry.

There was also work no one saw. Spouses and children made it possible for their husbands or wives, their dads or moms, to come and build during a very unusual week. That meant less family time and less rest. Our church values family, and this week brothers and sisters made a conscious choice to put this work first.

Another part went unheard, yet was just as important, perhaps more: the prayers for this work. Many of our caregivers couldn't come, so they supported us with prayer and care instead. Some brought food so the crew had energy to keep building. Some simply dropped by to cheer everyone on. Others took photos and videos to record the journey. All week long, the church was filled with laughter, along with the sound of drills and saws.

Their responses

This week I had the rare chance to thank each person who came to help. I meant it from the heart, because they were the ones who helped me sleep a little better. Their answers moved me. I won't name anyone, and I can't list them all, but here are a few:

> “You're welcome. I suddenly saw the need, so I adjusted my schedule to join.”
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> “Can I come help stain in the morning? I have to leave at noon, though. I start work at 2.”
>
> “Not sure we'll finish staining today. I can find a few hours tomorrow too.”
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> “I can give the sister a ride to the staining at 1:30, but unfortunately I can't drive her back because of the kids' classes in the evening.”
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> “It's our home.”
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> “You're welcome. It's what we should do. The church's work belongs to all of us, me included, because it is the Lord's house, and even more, our home in Him.”
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> “It's only a small part. The church is the body of Christ, visible and invisible, so having a share in building it is an honour.”
>
> “No need to thank me. Being able to do something for the church is our honour, and God's grace to us.”

> “Thank you for giving us the chance to help.”
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> “I'm glad I could do my part for the church's ministry, and I learned a lot along the way. I'm thankful.”
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> “Thank the Lord for giving me this chance to do my small part in building His church. May the Lord remember what every brother and sister has offered.”
>
> “I'm so thankful to see brothers and sisters working together as one. Just being among everyone makes me happy.”

And many, many more.

Closing

Brothers and sisters, this is what I saw this week: **God's people treat the church as their spiritual home.** They are not spectators. They are part of this family. They offer what they can, and more importantly, **they offer it willingly.**

At first, I almost declined to share today. But looking back on this week, I have so much to be thankful for. Thank the Lord for bringing people to us. Thank the Lord for preparing His people to build for Him. And thank the Lord for making us a family that willingly serves one another. Even in the busiest season, we can still give thanks in all circumstances.

All glory to God. Amen.

Adam · □□□

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