

CSC NEWS

Celebrating God At Work

Centre Street Church • Calgary, Alberta

Winter 2020

“So Abraham called that place The LORD Will Provide.

And to this day it is said, “On the mountain of the

LORD it will be provided.” - Genesis 22:13 [NIV]

GOD IS OUR

PROVIDER

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centre street church
Christ at the Centre...

INTRODUCING PEOPLE TO JESUS AND HELPING THEM BECOME FULLY DEVOTED FOLLOWERS OF JESUS.

Senior Pastor	Dr. Henry Schorr
Central Campus	Saturday 6:30 pm Sunday 9:00 am, 11:00 am, 6:00 pm. Children's Ministry provided for all services except Sunday 6:00 pm. (3900-2nd Street NE, Calgary, AB T2E 9C1) Tel: 403.293.3900 Fax: 403.520.2698 Lead Pastor: Pastor Kent Priebe
North West Campus	Sunday 10:30 am. Bears paw Lifestyle Centre (253220 Bears paw Rd. NW) Lead Pastor: Dr. Lawson Brown
Bridgeland Campus	Sunday 10:30 am. (235 - 8A Street NE) Lead Pastor: Rev. Tim Hayes
South Campus	Sunday 10:30 am. St. Mary's University (14500 Bannister Road SE) Lead Pastor: Pastor Craig Murray
Airdrie Campus	Sunday 10:30 am. Airdrie Koinonia Christian School (77 Gateway Drive NE, Airdrie AB) Lead Pastor: Pastor Travis Wilkins

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cschurch.ca

Please visit **cschurch.ca** for our current staff directory.
CSC is a member of the Evangelical Missionary Church of Canada.

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CSC News welcomes comments and feedback on all editions of this newspaper. Please email: communications@cschurch.ca



Youth from CSC served at the Drop-In Centre as part of the Calgary GMT week. Photo from GMT Youth Ministry Team



GLOBAL MINISTRIES

GMT YOUTH – ALL CAMPUSES AUG. 18-23, 2019 | CALGARY, AB

Our CSC Youth stayed at Bridgeland Campus and helped many different organizations in Calgary ranging from Monday Night Evangelism, The Gideons, Bethany Care Centre, L'Arche, The Mustard Seed, The Drop-In Centre, Jesus Loves You Society, etc. This trip gave the youth a chance to see the needs in our city and hopefully draw their hearts back to serving with some of these organizations on a regular basis. We wanted them to see how easy it is to serve — simply show up on a Monday night and join MNE in sharing the love of Jesus. This trip also helped us build community amongst our youth group as well. It was an absolute blast!

FEEDBACK FROM STUDENTS

"I went on this trip because my family encouraged me, and I have no regrets. God impacted me and I feel my faith has become stronger because of the trip. God is telling me to go on next year's trip too. My faith can continue to expand and I can share God's word and love and mercy with others. I would like to try and bring more of my friends, and hopefully some strangers to Jesus." - Evan Weenink

"This was my first mission trip and through this experience, I learned to actively preach the Gospel and share my faith. I want to experience the working of God in my life as I witness how God works through us to spread truth. I was amazed by the ways we can reach out to others as I worked with various groups around Calgary. I could feel God working in me to give hope and share His love. God has reminded me that I need to pray for the healing of others. Since He is with me, I am free and should share His love with others. I would like to continue to serve in such min-

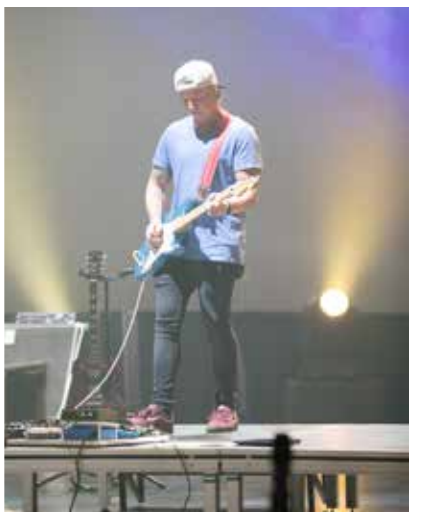
istries so I can pray for and share my faith with more people." - Daniel Park

"I was affected by the trip in many ways, but one of the main things God taught me is that all people are equal, as we are all His children. God showed me that when I reach out and talk to people, we are all very much alike. I was also impacted by a one-day fasting activity we did. I had never done anything like this before and it really made me realize how blessed I am to have food. Throughout the week, I found myself in many situations where I did not know what to say or how to act. I could feel God's presence in my words and actions. He made it easier to step out of my comfort zone. I want to make it a priority to read my Bible and devotions more often." - Emily Weinberger

FEEDBACK FROM ORGANIZATIONS

"We wanted to extend gratitude and many thanks to your Youth Ministry for coming out to volunteer with us. Both groups were so enthusiastic and willing to take on any task we asked of them, even if it was not the most appealing. It was a pleasure to have your youth and leaders volunteer with us. The work done truly helped us and made our end of summer clean up much easier." - Between Friends

"I can't express how fantastic it has been having the CSC volunteers in this week! They ask such great questions and it's amazing to see young people so engaged in helping the community! They've helped us out so much by covering all these routes from Calgary Meals on Wheels and our clients, Thank you! I hope they all enjoyed the experience and we would love to have your team back any time." - Meals on Wheels



N.O.W. (Night of Worship) in September featured Matt and Michael Schorr as hosts and included a testimony from Braeden Wolf; four baptisms (Dan Irving, Jayden Lui, Seanna Thornton, and Terri Adeleye); talented musicians to lead participants into engaging worship; a youth hangout space in the Galleria; and opportunities to connect in the Atrium before and after the service. Photos by Brian Harris



Danielle Zipprick. Photo from Danielle Zipprick

BY TESSA LITTLEJOHN,
Contributing Writer

Danielle was fortunate to grow up in a family with Jesus-loving parents as the second oldest of four girls.

"Both my dad and my mom make relationship with the Lord the highest priority," she says, "and so we spent much time together as a family reading through The Word, singing, and praying together throughout the years. The Lord blessed me with a family that was quite stable and well-structured, and I have never been in doubt that my family loves me and supports me."

Danielle accepted Jesus as her Lord and Saviour at a very young age. She explains, "When I was about three years old, my older sister, who was five, decided she wanted to ask Jesus into her heart. My parents hesitated because they weren't sure she fully understood the meaning and

commitment around giving her life to Jesus. They did walk through the process of becoming a Christian with her, though, explaining and praying with her, and she gave her life to the Lord. I remember my parents taking her into their room to talk to her about this. As I watched the door close behind them, I felt that I was missing something important.

"After my sister gave her life to the Lord, I think my childlike perception picked up on some shifts in her attitude and behaviour, and I began to desire a special relationship with Jesus too. One night, after I had been put to bed, I called out emphatically to my mom from my room. When she came to see what I needed, I insisted that I could not wait one more second to give my life to Jesus. She prayed with me, and my journey with Jesus at the centre started there."

Danielle has never looked back.

She lived in Calgary for the first ten years of life, then lived in Ontario for a few years, before moving to Pennsylvania for high school. Her immediate family is still living in Pennsylvania.

When she moved back to Calgary seven years ago to study nursing, she moved in with her grandparents, who were attending Central Campus. She tried it out and has been faithfully attending ever since.

God's work in Danielle is still on-going and He continues stretching her.

"Because my relationship with my earthly father is a good one," she says, "I didn't realize that I was failing to spend much time leaning into the person of Father God. Over the past three years or so, God has been getting my attention around that, and showing me the richness of His fatherly love and correction in my life. I am so thankful that God gives us more than we need even before we know to ask for it sometimes. He is so gracious."

Another way Danielle has really seen God working in her life is in the way He is weaving together her different passions to serve Him. One of those passions is for an end to the injustice of human trafficking.

As Danielle tells it, "My heart beats for awareness, education, and seeing freedom restored." She goes on

to explain, "At the age of fifteen, I first heard about the reality of human trafficking. My immediate response to this was horror and anger. Suddenly I found myself with a drive to fight for these men, women, and children who were being exploited around the world. For the next several years I struggled with feeling that I had all of the passion but none of the power to be actively involved in the fight against slavery. So I waited (impatiently, I must admit), I prayed for opportunities, and I learned everything I could about the issue."

Her patience has paid off, as she is now very involved in opportunities to make a difference.

"God is so sovereign," she says, "and He has been making wild connections within the different parts of my world. My biggest passion is for sexually exploited people, and I have helped to lead The Walk, a Calgary organization working with sexually exploited individuals in our city."

"Exploitation is a huge issue in Calgary, and it's such a privilege to be involved in making change around that. My work as a nurse in addictions and mental health is both incredible training for the work I have done with The Walk and an opportunity to educate my fellow medical colleagues regarding treating exploited clients with dignity and respect."

"I love to see how God opens doors and provides endless opportunity for conversations around the things that set my heart on fire. It is so exciting to watch how God weaves together the different aspects of my life, and how He draws out different pieces of my passion and my character as He moves me further into my calling. He is always working on so many things. It's so exciting to walk with Him."

When asked about the future, Danielle says, "Life with Christ has been and continues to be a royal adventure. The way He grows me and leads me along is incredible. His hand on my life has been evident throughout the years, and for that I am so thankful. I continue to learn about my identity in the Father, and love it when He provides deeper insight into the way He has made me."

"My hope for my own story, is to continue partnering with organizations to raise awareness and to see where God continues to lead me in being an active part of this fight to bring healing and wholeness to exploited persons around the world."



(Left) Danielle and her family: (L-R) Karen (Mom), Volker (Dad), Danielle, Anna, Elya, Bethany; (Right) Danielle on a winter's day with a photo supporting the December Project fundraising effort to end sexual exploitation. Photos from Danielle Zipprick

Geogy Joseph and Mini George

BY TESSA LITTLEJOHN,
Contributing Writer

Geogy Joseph is from India but was born in Kuwait, where Geogy and his three siblings grew up and went to school. After high school, Geogy went to India for his college education.

"Although we are from India," he says, "my parents went to Kuwait after their marriage to work there. Both my parents come from India's southernmost province of Kerala. My mother tongue is Malayalam. One surprising fact that many do not know is that, way back in AD 52, Jesus' disciple, the apostle Thomas, brought the gospel to Kerala and established a church there. Today that church has split into a number of denominations. The Mar Thoma Church is one of them.

"My parents were part of this church; and I was baptized, received communion and was married in the Mar Thoma church. So I grew up in a traditional Christian home, and went to church and Sunday School on most weekends. There I heard the gospel and learned all the Bible stories and knew all the correct theology in my head. But I did not have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ."

Like Geogy, Mini George's parents are from Kerala. Although Mini was born there, she was raised in New Delhi and Pune, close to Mumbai. "Having a good education was a value impressed upon me from childhood," Mini says, "so I was blessed to have the privilege to study medicine."

Mini says, "My older brother and I were raised by God fearing parents who brought us up in the traditions of the Mar Thoma Church. We were taught to read the Bible, and family prayer time was very important. Like Geogy, I grew up knowing Bible stories and learning about Jesus. I knew all the hymns and loved to sing worship songs in both English and Malayalam, my mother tongue. I prayed daily for safety, for good marks and other needs. In youth meetings there were guest speakers from a seminary who challenged us and said we can be Christians only if we were born again. They said we were all sinners and we needed personal salvation. I understood the theory, but really I did not feel that I was a sinner who needed the saving grace of Christ."

Geogy studied engineering in India. After university he went back and worked in Kuwait but then returned to India and worked for five years in Bombay (now known as Mumbai), where he met Mini. They were married in 1987.

"Immediately after our wedding," Geogy said, "my wife Mini fell sick, and in spite of the best medical care, her condition steadily worsened. When everything else failed, we were forced to turn to God for a divine intervention. For the first time, I began to pray and talk to God, not just with words but from the bottom of my heart. That illness enabled us both to start a personal relationship with Jesus. Till then we had known Him in our heads to be our God, but at that point Jesus became our personal Saviour."

As Mini explains, "It was during the time of being seriously ill, when I was feeling really helpless, that the Lord intervened. God spoke to me in several ways. He spoke through the Gospel shared in a letter by a faithful woman of God whom I have never met to this day, a friend of my parents. He spoke to me through a video message by an evangelist. And He spoke to me through a vision which



(L-R) Mini, Grace, Geogy, and Reah. Photo from The Joseph Family

brought in me a deep conviction of my sinfulness and my need for Jesus. This was a turning point in my life. I accepted the Lord Jesus as my personal Saviour."

Romans 8:28 says, "And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to His purpose." This was certainly true for Geogy and Mini. From that point on they began a spiritual journey as they began reading and studying the Word and engaging in worship from the heart.

In 1992 they migrated to Dubai, for jobs and worked there for 10 years. "Soon after we migrated to Dubai," Geogy says, "God in His mercy brought us to a small fellowship of like-minded believers, and there we deepened our walk with the Lord." During this time God blessed them with two daughters!

In 2002 they migrated to Canada. "We came to Calgary," Geogy explains, "because we had a bunch of cousins who were already here. Family is a big thing for us, and Calgary became our automatic choice to land when we came to Canada. By 2005 some of our extended family members had already started attending Centre Street Church. They invited us to church and very soon Centre Street became our primary church. We now consider Centre Street Church our home church."

Geogy and Mini go on to describe what God has done for them.

"Before we began our personal relationship with Christ, we lived for the 'good life.' We had good educations, good jobs, and enough income to have a comfortable lifestyle. We went through the motions of church and worship, but it was not 'in spirit and in truth.' We were completely self-sufficient and did not feel the need to have fellowship with God or to lean on Him for our day-to-day life.

"After we started our personal relationship with Christ, we have experienced the joy of true worship and the joy of being intimate with our Abba Father. We are now aware that this life is just a fleeting moment. We have an eter-

nity waiting for us that we need to be ready for. We are now sensitive to the things that break God's heart and are willing to step out of our comfort zones to be engaged in them."

Geogy and Mini are involved in a number of ministries. They are small group leaders, communion volunteers, and India Mission team members. They organize fundraising events and retreats such as Fusion 2016 and 2017. And they conduct worship services at a nursing home once a month.

"We have experienced God's amazing faithfulness. We are amazed daily at how God takes care of us and looks after our smallest need. As we have grown closer to Him, we are amazed at God's unconditional love for us, in spite of our failings and our lack of devotion. We know that His love will never let us down."

Mini says, "My desire and prayer is that the Lord will help me to walk in the power of the Holy Spirit daily, to pray for and serve those in my circle of influence."

From one side of the world to the other, God's love has not failed Geogy and Mini, and we can be confident it will not fail us either!

cscfamilylife

SEPTEMBER - DECEMBER 2019

Baptisms

*child **youth

Ling Zhou
Temi Adeleye**
Jayden Ke Lui
Dan Irving
Seanna Thornton
Linvie Apron-Barte

Bretta Morris*
Stuart Murray
Yeni Soberanis
Thaddeus Ma**
Aleah Jacobsen
Jordan Zader
Jesse Mendoza
Charlene Timbol
Maria Meier

Birth Announcements

NAME	DATE	PARENTS
Jana Eloise AuYeung	May 24, 2019	Jonathan & Louise AuYeung
Maverick Bennett Friesen	July 10, 2019	Shane and Christin Friesen
Sophie Hope Betts	August 7, 2019	Devon and Brenda Betts
Robyn Olivia Brooks	October 4, 2019	Ryan and Brittney Brooks
Liam Robert Zacharias	November 8, 2019	Justin and Melissa Zacharias

Dedications

September 22, 2019
Camilla Grace Gamez

September 29, 2019
Levi Howard Burgess
Joshua Reyn Doner
Noah Eli Dyck

Claire Louise Goosen
Taylor Marie Iversen
Bethany Hope Monson
Taya Brynn Munton
Eliza Kwafi Obeng
Lehna Meg-Daleyza Titanji

October 12, 2019
Isabelle Rose Gehrinf Ogston
Ava Serina Muller
Lily Rose Tam
Chloe Leah Tam
Dylan Jacob Yee

Zoey Daniela Rodriguez Salvatierra
Jeremy Daniel Rodriguez Salvatierra
Oghenefegor Patricia Onohwakpo

November 3, 2019
Beatrix Leigh Wilkins

November 17, 2019
Sophie Hope Betts

November 23, 2019
Bryce Daniel Wico
Jaxson Liam White
Darnedge Roseme
Henry Mark Horbay

Weddings

Robert Drutu & Rebecca Jacota	September 1, 2019
Brayden Chase & Justine Prankard	September 14, 2019
Kwasi Boakyee & Rissy Boukaka	September 29, 2019
Philip Waho & Kylie Mross	November 2, 2019
Nikolaos Vlismas & Laura Sadler	November 2, 2019
Conrad Darling & Ebony Bassingthwaighte	November 9, 2019
Isaiah Stonehouse & Mikayla Colyn	December 28, 2019

New Members

Neha Ashani
Eliman Camara
Blaise Cherif
Rose Kabole Mbaya Cherif
Patricia Garner
Joel Goosen
Colette Griffin
Steve Griffin
Paul Hartsook
Katya Hust
Trevor Hust
Kevin Johnas
Jordan Kent
Danielle Mann
Brent McCarthy
Christine Philip
Michael Pickles
Katalina Prado
Jorel Quemuel
Michelle Rygus
James Scott Jr.
Vitaliy Vanichkin
Irina Vanichkina
Nicholas Walt
Sandra Werle
Kabrie Wolf

In Remembrance

Chad Campbell	October 6, 2019
Jack Elliott	October 10, 2019
Kenneth Dyck	October 18, 2019
Elisabeth Shaer	October 25, 2019
David Gordon	October 25, 2019
Mark Dublado	October 31, 2019
Albert Braun	November 3, 2019
Melvin (Mel) Jassman	November 18, 2019
Jada Cossette	November 20, 2019
Randal (Randy) Burtis	December 17, 2019
Joy Asman	December 26, 2019





Encounter God's Presence Weekend

NOVEMBER 1-3, 2019

Encounter God's Presence Weekend is held three times per year for followers of Jesus to learn to Walk with God and experience a fresh and renewed sense of intimacy with Father, Jesus and Holy Spirit. They experience anointed worship and learn about spiritual warfare and the battle we all face. Participants experience the council of Holy Spirit and practice hearing God's Voice. Through the counsel of Holy Spirit, they identify and break free of bondage in their lives in the areas of occult influence, sexual impurity, negative attitudes and behaviours, unforgiveness and generational curses and sins. Throughout the entire weekend participants receive the deep restorative healing of Jesus as He heals wounds and pains in their life.

On Sunday participants encounter Jesus at the Cross to experience the magnitude of what Jesus did on our behalf. All weekend long participants share with like-minded companions and through it all receive encouragement and support from a team of trustworthy leaders and teachers.

Encounter God's Presence Weekend has now taken over 1128 people through the journey of healing and restoration that God has prepared in advance. At the Encounter God's Presence Weekend in November 2019 we had 38 participants attend and here is what participants testified about:

- EGPW has given me a fresh lens to view the world.
- I found Pastor Henry's paper on Holy Spirit enlightening. I was able to identify the cause of the hurt I was experiencing and able to forgive.

- This weekend has opened my eyes to the truth of who God is. He truly has a plan for me, He is listening & loves me deeply.
- I learned how to walk with God holding my head high, not afraid of the enemy's attacks. As long as I have Jesus with me, victory will always be on my side. Life has many hurts but God uses them to grow me. I am a warrior and will keep on remembering how to fight using Scripture and prayers.
- EGPW provided food for my soul and faith to digest and grow.
- Set free from bondage to fear, insecurity, tormenting thoughts by finding out I have Christ's authority to refute/renounce the enemy's lies.
- I am a new Christian, such great information and a great start
- I did experience a physical difference in my rapid heart rate during worship. I learned new ways to pray, especially in confession and repentance.
- God revealed to me unforgiveness and resentment and anger towards my parents from something in my childhood. I thank God for this revelation and thank Him for this weekend.
- EGPW helped me rid a lot of pain, sin, failure and unforgiveness. This program gave me so much freedom I feel lighter. For the first time I felt myself worship without fear. I was able to get a lot of hurts of the past dealt with; the things I wasn't aware of have opened my eyes to sin in my life.
- It has given me a new way of thinking and I have gained more knowledge on how to receive what Holy Spirit is telling me.

BAPTISM

testimonies CENTRAL CAMPUS

September 7-8, 2019



LING ZHOU After my marriage broke down, I was very lost. I spent a lot of time by myself and had a negative outlook on life. I started going to CSC, talking to people and praying, I realized that I was not alone. I could get through the darkest days with Jesus by my side. I now try to help as many people as I can throughout my day. My faith has brought me peace and I am excited to take the next step in my journey with the Lord. I have chosen to be baptized to restore my faith in God. I have needed God this past year and I have felt His presence. He has guided me and helped me. I love CSC and am deeply thankful to Pastor Barry for guiding me to trust God. I appreciate our Special Needs Ministry for helping me utilize my professional skills to help more vulnerable people. I really like Psalms 28:7, which empowers me to be a stronger, more positive person. I can do all things through Christ!

October 5-6, 2019



LINVIE APRON-BARTE I grew up holding so many grudges from people who hurt me. My mom abandoned us and my dad was murdered when I was a small child. My siblings and I were raised separately by our half brothers and sisters and experienced abuse, hardship and suffering. I never felt loved or accepted, and struggled with my identity. I had put myself in a prison of anger. At age 13, I held a knife on my wrist, and then heard a voice say, "Your life is not yours to take, but Mine." I knew it was God, let go of the knife and cried. My prayer was, "Lord please take me now to end my suffering. I do not understand the purpose of my life!" Last year was one of the hardest times of my life, as I struggled with depression. I listened to worship music to silence the lies of the enemy, so I could sleep. Eventually, I surrendered my situation to God. My small group encouraged me to attend Encounter God Weekend last November. It changed my life 180 degrees. I surrendered my grudges at the feet of Jesus. I am free and can start living in my new identity in Jesus. I am loved. I am wanted. I am a child of God. I want to be baptized as a public declaration and obedience for my love for Jesus Christ, to live according to His will and loving others. I was able to forgive the people that sinned against me because I understand now how God was able to forgive. My scars and sufferings were nothing compared to what He suffered to save me. He uses my brokenness for His glory.



BRETTA MORRIS I asked Jesus into my heart two years ago after hearing how much He loves me at Sunday School. I asked Him to come into my heart and forgive my sins and be my Lord and Saviour, my forever friend, my provider, my protector, my everything. I want to be baptized to show everyone that I love God with all of my heart and I will follow Him always. My favourite scripture verse is John 3:16, "For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him will not perish but have eternal life."

Photos by Colin Brown and Pam Hawkes



Jigs Gonzales (centre), his wife, Jovi (R), daughter Chami (L).

BY LORI KLAUS

Contributing Writer

Jigs Gonzales, the enthusiastic Pastor of Grade 5 and 6 Ministry at CSC, is living all-out for the Lord and embracing each day with God-given joy and purpose! It's a 180-degree turn from a past characterized by loss, anger and hopelessness. And Jigs owes it all to the transforming power of Christ!

BEFORE THERE WAS HOPE...

Growing up in Manila, Philippines, life was very difficult.

"Food, clothing and education were hard for my family to get," says Jigs. "There were times we would go to school hungry or go to sleep hungry. I remember growing up with just one pair of shoes. I would use plastic bags to cover my feet so they wouldn't get wet during the rainy seasons. I know that my parents were trying their best to provide for us, but it was never enough. Eventually these struggles made my parents fight a lot."

When Jigs' mother became seriously ill, his father tried to escape from the added burden through drinking.

"One night I saw Dad hit my mom. I wanted to help her, but I was too young and afraid of my dad. This made me hate my father and start rebelling. I started blaming him for everything. I started doing things that would make him mad. At the age of 12, I started drinking, smoking and doing drugs. My life was miserable, full of hatred and had no direction."

When Jigs was 17, he came home late one night to find his mother alone and suffering in her room. She confronted her son with something he didn't want to admit—her time was running out.

"As soon as I came in, she started a conversation that led me to promise to take care of my other siblings. I'm third to the eldest. I wasn't sure what was going on, but I committed and said yes. The following day, she passed away. That day, I died on the inside."

ENCOUNTERING JESUS

Growing up with a Catholic background, Jigs was familiar with who Jesus was, but he didn't know Him personally. In the dark days following his mom's death, he simply wanted to get as far away from home as he possibly could. Therefore, when he was awarded a scholarship, he jumped at the opportunity to attend university in another

The Power of Christ

city. Little did he know at the time, the trajectory of his entire life was about to change!

Jigs' cousin invited him to attend a leadership seminar for university students hosted by Campus Crusade for Christ.

"This guy on stage started talking about his life. It was as if he was sharing my own life story. I know now it was the Holy Spirit. All of a sudden, I just started crying. There were more than 2000 people there, but it was as if it was just me and the Lord. I went up to the front and received Christ into my life. I accepted the love and forgiveness He offered."

It was Jigs' first real encounter with the Lord and the beginning of a brand new life.

"When the Bible says you are a new creation in Christ, it is very true. God gave me the control and strength to walk away from my old way of life. My appetite for drinking, smoking and drugs went away overnight. I started to see hope and light in my lost and darkened life. I found meaning for all my doubts and questions. I became new! I started to dream of a better life. I started to aspire to become a better man!"

FORGIVENESS, THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE

"One night I read in my Bible, 'Honour your father and mother.' I wrestled with that passage because my dad was nowhere close to being an honourable man. I refused to respect and honour him."

After that, when Jigs would pray to "God, my Father," he felt as if he was offending the Lord in some way. He knew he wasn't heeding God's command to forgive his dad and show him honour. But how was he supposed to

move past all the hurt and pain? How could he honour someone whose character he couldn't respect? He didn't have the strength on his own, so Jigs started praying – and continued praying for an entire year.

Finally, he surrendered and received from God the courage and strength he needed. Jigs shed tears, asked for forgiveness and was forgiven. If that wasn't remarkable enough, his father accepted Christ eventually as well!

"Since then, my dad and I are friends. Because of that, I realized I can be obedient to God's Word. I have submitted my life fully to the gospel of Jesus. I am not perfect, but I can be obedient."

Today, each member of Jigs' family is a Christ-follower!

"It wasn't an easy journey, but victory is within reach all the time through the help of the Holy Spirit."

GOD'S CALL TO MINISTRY

After earning an accounting degree in the Philippines, Jigs moved to Dubai, where he met Jovi, his wife of 23 years. There his faith grew stronger and he began serving in a variety of ministries. Through a distance-study ministerial program, he gained credentials to become a Pastor at his local church – something he did while also working full-time as an accountant at an oil and gas company.

After immigrating to Canada in 2006, Jigs continued his career in accounting. When his contract position in that field ended, he interviewed for several positions which seemed right up his alley, but he wasn't the successful candidate. It was very upsetting and confusing.

But God had other plans for him! Jigs learned that God opens windows of opportunity where doors have shut. We might not understand everything that's happening



Jigs Gonzales with his wife, Jovi, their daughter Chami, and the family dog, Halli. Photos from the Gonzales Family

at the time, but in the end, all things weave together according to God's plan when our lives are surrendered to Him.

In the fall of 2017 Jigs was presented with the opportunity to coordinate Grade 5 and 6 Ministries at CSC. After much prayer, it became clear to Jigs that this was the very position God had in mind for him all along!

He's always had a heart for young people and yearns to be the kind of influence for them that he never had growing up. He believes it's critical for the church to reach Grade 5 and 6 students because it's a bridge from grade school to youth. Whether or not kids feel connected and accepted at this stage will greatly influence whether they continue in Youth Ministry.

"They need community before they enter junior high/high school," Jigs adds, "so we focus a lot on building relationships and making sure they feel loved and accepted—so they feel they belong and can talk about anything. Communication and connection are key."

When Jigs realized that THIS was his job – caring for young people and working alongside devoted Christ-followers each day – he says, "God was exploding in my heart!"

ALL IN THE FAMILY....

Jigs' wife Jovi and their sixteen-year-old daughter Chami join him regularly in ministering to the Grade 5/6 youth of our church. Jovi as a small group leader with the same heart for serving the Lord as her husband has. She's also been involved in a variety of ministries over the years.

"Being able to minister to different groups of people (couples, ladies, young adults and youth) and being part of church leadership (Prayer Ministry lead/ Worship team) – all these areas of ministry brought joy in such a way that life transformation unraveled right before my eyes! It was such a privilege and honour for me to be able to see lives changed and to be an encouragement to people. It was such a joy to see the power of God being unleashed, prayers being answered, and people clinging to their only hope in times of trial."

The Gonzales family's life verse is Joshua 24:15: "As for me and my household, we will serve the Lord!" It's a verse they try, with God's help, to embrace each day.

**"In my journey of faith I
continue to grow," says Jigs.
"I continue to desire to know
my God even more. I am
convinced that my existence is
fully to the call of Christianity,
however that may look."**

Transformed

BY HILARY J,
Contributing Writer

What, then, shall we say in response to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord. - Romans 8:31,35, 37-39

Meet Gianna, the eldest of five siblings, whom she dearly loves. She was raised in a Christian home and grew up going to Centre Street Church (CSC).

"This church is my home church and has always felt like an extension of my family. I've known many people here for most of my life, and I really enjoy being part of the staff team."

Gianna is the Children's Ministries Administrative Ministry Coordinator at CSC. When she's not busy with her day job, she enjoys being active outdoors—rock climbing, walking in Nose Hill Park or studying astronomy. She loves a good story—whether on Netflix, at the theatre, or in print—and she has read a couple thousand books to prove it. Today, the story we will share is hers, a personal account of a life that has been transformed by God's relentless love.

"I grew up knowing about Christ my whole life. My parents taught me to pray when I was very little. Night time prayer was a very important part of going to sleep each night. I made the decision to be a Christian when I was four, and through most of elementary I was strongly devoted to following everything I learned in Sunday School."

Though all these things laid a solid foundation in Gianna's life, she faced deep challenges in her early teen years.

"I suffered from some pretty bad depression and isolated myself when I was fourteen. I lost all my friends. I felt lost and very alone... with so many outside pressures telling me I had to meet certain expectations. I sometimes felt God had made a mistake in making me like I was. I was afraid of everything, but couldn't show it because I thought it would be letting people down. I was terrified of people."

Even in her isolation, God met her right where she was. "During Christmas break, I turned 15. My parents had a big party on [December] 31st and had a bunch of people over. I hated being around people, so I hid in my brother's room. All I could hear from the bedroom upstairs was everyone having fun, laughing and talking about the year ahead and all the things they would do. I wanted to be there, but I didn't know how. Yet I sensed God saying, 'You can!'"

Sick of trying to go it on her own—and failing—Gianna turned to God's Word. She opened up a Bible that had been sitting in a drawer, untouched for several months, and found a devotional that spoke about being broken. But that 'broken' did not have to be the end of the story. The scripture she read was Romans 12:2: "Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—His good, pleasing and perfect will."



Photo from Gianna Lucente

That very night, in her desperation and despair, Gianna surrendered her life to God. She was done doing it on her own and prayed, "Whatever you want, God, I will do." And she sensed God saying, "Okay, let's do it!"

With that, she went downstairs and joined the party. She started talking to others and began her journey to healing.

In her senior year, Gianna felt God tugging at her to go back to Youth group. A couple of friends had invited her, and, still afraid of being around people, she said no. She was especially afraid of Christians who "knew what they were doing" or perhaps hadn't been through some of the valleys that she had.

But the invitations and the nudgings continued. Youth group seemed to pop up in conversations. Finally, one of her friends invited her yet again. Though she had already said 'no', this time she sensed God saying, "Go!"

"I've always been very obedient," Gianna explains. But even for her, obedience was not easy. She remembers being on her bed that night, crying, before she headed to Youth.

"My parents said I didn't have to go, but I knew God had asked me to." And so, she did. And God proved Himself faithful.

"I remember very specifically going up to the door and all of my anxiety stayed outside. There were a couple of people I knew there, from school, and I met a whole bunch of others. When I came back the next week, a few people even remembered my name."

In this community of young believers, Gianna made friendships that carried her through future years. She tells how God provided exactly what she needed when she needed it. Not only has He healed her from the isolation and the fear of being around people, but He has made this one of Gianna's greatest joys. He has been faithful in leading her to where she is today—thriving in community, investing in the lives of children through her job in CSC Children's ministry, and enjoying relationships with her family and cherished friends.

"I have never regretted what God has called me to. Many times, it was the most terrifying thing looking ahead. But looking back, I wouldn't have chosen any other way. His way has always been the best way. It was terrifying to live with the sense of isolation and hopelessness that I had, and I'm grateful every day that God saved me from it. He's been an amazing provider, and I would not be where I am if He hadn't done this for me."

For you are a chosen people. You are royal priests, a holy nation, God's very own possession. As a result, you can show others the goodness of God, for He called you out of the darkness into His wonderful light. - 1 Peter 2:9 (NLT)



HERE'S WHAT THE YOUTH ARE SAYING ABOUT N.O.W.
 "So cool to see more and more faces in the Galleria Youth area, so many new ones!"

"It is so great to see the excitement in my teen boys to actually be at church."

"Young Adults are loving that they have a defined space!"

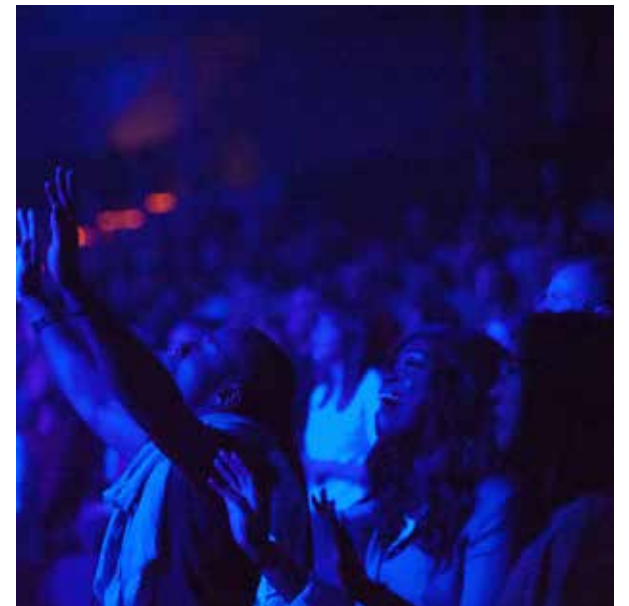
"The food was amazing! The chicken nuggets were my fav."

"Having a space just for us is the best! And there's food and snacks too!"

"This is awesome – and 9-square is epic!"

FROM A YOUTH MINISTRY LEADER

"One student I connected with was looking to plug in, they had explained they had been roaming different youth groups and had some rough experiences in the past. When they spoke with me at NOW, they said they would love to connect and asked right away what we did for community groups. They had so much fun with the game and got to know some other people that night. I am so blessed to work with this generation and am so excited to see what God will do!"



N.O.W. (Night of Worship) on October 6, 2019 was hosted by Matt and Michael Schorr. Guest speaker, Cody Matchett shared a great message and Damien Wolf shared his testimony. The worship was led by a talented group of musicians, and the youth hangout space (Galleria) was filled with lots of energy! The coffee served by 'Sought x Found' has been very much appreciated as well. Photos by Tara Whittaker

Hope and Joy in Christ

Maranatha

ADULTS 55+ MINISTRY

BY TESSA LITTLEJOHN,

Contributing Writer

Rod Martens was the child of a Mennonite father who broke tradition, attended Prairie Bible Institute and married an English lady. His father became a Pastor of an Evangelical Free church. The family of five was very poor. How poor were they? Rod says, "We were so poor that we depended on our own garden as a source of food. There was no running water, and no insulation in the walls. We used an out-house. Our weekly bath was melted snow and we all used the same water." Most of Rod's free time was spent playing sports. He loved hockey despite the fact that his "hockey" skates were "hand-me-downs" from an aunt - four sizes too large. He also played softball, football and basketball and in his school years would often go door-to-door to round up players. In fact, Rod played slo-pitch ball until retiring at age 72.

Rod's father was very authoritarian and did not 'spare the rod.' Rod claims, "I could not avoid my father's glare for misbehaviour as he preached." Rod felt that his father was very distant. The family moved several times from BC to SK and then to Lacombe, Alberta. As a preacher's kid Rod at times felt ostracized and even persecuted. "I had a tendency to be an attention-seeker and could be obnoxious at times."

Rod says, "I became a believer at age four and a half. As young as I was, I still recall how meaningful this confession and commitment was. I asked my mother to lead me to Christ and I remember my passion at the time, trying to tell friends and others about Him!" Rod was baptized at about thirteen years of age. He says, "I wish I could claim that I faithfully followed our Lord and Saviour throughout my days. Not so. In my teens and 20's I strayed and even rebelled against what I very well knew to be God's truth(s)."

"During this time I often lived a dual life - friends and relatives assumed that I had it all together. I recall giving my testimony in which I quoted Phil. 4:13. 'I can do all things through Christ who gives me strength', when this was simply not true in my life. I was leading a very selfish, hedonistic life. I even told my mother that I was questioning my values as a Christian. My parents were very saddened by what they witnessed in me. Thankfully, God got a hold of me."

In the early 1970s, a revival swept through much of Western Canada (Sutera Twins). At this time Rod recommitted his life and found his future wife, Sharon. Some good friends attempted to play a matchmaker role but Rod and Sharon hardly needed any help. Rod knew he had fallen in love at first sight. Rod went on to land a job teaching High School Social Studies in Calgary. Rod and Sharon went on to have two sons. Both sons and their families have gone on to serve and follow Jesus.

He says, "I wish I could say from that point on I lived a victorious life. I still struggled like the Apostle Paul's experience. (I continue to do what I do not want to do.) However, I can honestly say that I claim victory through Christ. Now I can quote Phil. 4:13 and really mean it! In my life I

see the fruit of the Spirit listed in Galatians, chapter 5. I am aware that I still need to be very vigilant to avoid the tug of the flesh and temporal things."

In 1987, Rod experienced a severe clinical depression and spent a few weeks in the Calgary General Hospital. He says that this was easily the greatest challenge that he had to face as an adult Christian. From Rod's research and experience, he identifies the following feelings associated with depression: despair/hopelessness/loneliness/dejection/worthlessness/helplessness/sadness/rejection/emotional pain/self-blame/introspection.

Rod identifies with some characteristics that King David experienced: "I am pining away with grief," "my days are filled with anguish," "I groan in despair." (Psalms 31, 38, 69, 73)

Rod says, "My experience with depression led me to ask this question: Do we, as believers, have any assurance from God that serves to support us, as we wrestle with this and other illnesses." The Lord responds big-time throughout The Psalms:

- "The Lord is my refuge, my high-tower, my fort, my rock, my armour, my shield, my rugged mountain and my wings."
- "He is also my glory, my hope, my comfort and my strength."
- "The Lord hears my cries."
- "The Lord's promises are true. He will never leave me or forsake me."

Rod points to very relevant scripture:

- 1 Corinthians 10:13, "...will not burden me with more than I can bear."
- "My grace is sufficient...just enough for what I need."
- Psalm 73:26, "my heart fails, my spirits droop, yet God remains." "He is the strength of my heart. He is mine forever."
- Psalm 22:24, "For He has not despised my cries of deep despair; He has not turned and walked away. When I have cried to Him, He heard and came."
- Psalm 22:26, "All who seek the Lord shall find Him. Their hearts will rejoice with everlasting joy."
- Romans 8:38, "Nothing can separate me from His love."

Rod has learned many things from mental illness such as:

- "There is still a stigma involved; it is still considered something to avoid, to abhor even though it is just part of our make-up, our very body and soul."
- "One out of five will experience deep depression and it is on-going for some."
- "Depression cannot be resolved by saying 'happiness is a choice'. You cannot just 'snap out of it'."
- "It does not reflect one's spiritual condition. Some wrongly believe that if everything is right between you and God, no known sin, you should experience no negative emotions or feelings. Conversely, if you experience depression and/or anxiety you must have unconfessed sin; you are not enjoying spiritual



Rod Martens, with his wife, Sharon. Photo by Colin Brown

victory; or, you are not exercising sufficient faith or trust in God. This just isn't so.

- Suicide rates are highest among teenagers and the elderly.
- Most common causes of depression are poor self-image or low esteem especially in early life, circumstantial (e.g. on-going pain) or chemical imbalances.
- Solutions: some combination of therapy (counseling) and medication, and of course, the intervention of God through prayer."

Something that I discovered is that the support of significant others, in particular one's spouse, is extremely critical. Especially since one may be unreasonably, and irrationally, downcast. The depressed person is in need of fortifying and building-up.

Rod's wife Sharon, was incredibly supportive during his darkest hours. She did everything in her power to encourage and comfort him. This experience was perhaps scarier for her than for Rod himself, since it marked the unknown and Sharon felt so helpless. This should constitute evidence for the importance of love and support for those going through any form of mental illness or depression.

Ever since experiencing that period of clinical depression, God has placed on Rod's heart the need and desire to come alongside people in hospitals and other institutions. People that are suffering physically, emotionally, mentally and spiritually; people that are hurting, lonely, or depressed. Rod says, "We are comforted by God so we, in turn, can comfort others. Since that time I have been involved in various visitation ministries. Currently I am helping co-ordinate the visitation of Maranatha Seniors. To God be the Glory!"

Rod and Sharon initially tried CSC in the hope of finding a more effective youth program for their two sons. Rod says, "We ended up getting totally hooked on Pastor Henry's sermons: so practical; so much meat! That was in 1988 and we continue to be blessed to this very day. I have encountered a much closer walk with the Lord under the preaching and teaching of the Pastoral staff. I believe that I have grown in obedience and have developed a stronger faith and trust in my Lord and Saviour. As well, serving in various capacities at CSC has served to ground me in my Christian walk as I attempt to become a more fully devoted follower of Jesus."

More and more God has given Rod a burden for those around him that so desperately need the Jesus he knows and loves. Their eternal destiny is weighing on him. As Rod says, "Unless they turn their lives around, they will be subject to a Christ-less eternity." He longs for others to find the hope and joy that he has in Christ.

Caleb and Kitty and the Coffeeshop Mission

BY LAURIE GRIFFIN,
Contributing Writer

Caleb tossed and turned in bed. Distraught, he thought about all the events that led to now. He had brought his family all the way out to Hawaii so he could pursue his coffee Q grader (quality evaluation) license. "How did I fail the cupping exam?" he wondered as he tossed and turned.

Only a couple weeks earlier, Caleb was confident he had the taste and the skill to roast the world's finest specialty coffee. He and his wife Kitty's dream of opening a coffee shop was about to become a reality, and that coffee Q grader license would have been the *crème de la crème* of his accomplishments.

PERCOLATING PRIDE

A self-professed coffee snob at the time, Caleb pursued his education in roasting and tasting coffee while working a part-time job at Canada Post. He originally had a career as a social worker and was laid off when oil and gas sponsorship declined, decreasing funding at the non-

The price of the machine ultimately became a barrier to Caleb's basement roasting fantasy as legal requirements meant he would have to vent the roaster up through two stories. The renovation job came with a price tag too rich (\$100K!) to justify the limited operation of which it would be capable.

"God always shut the door when the timing wasn't right," noted Kitty. And, boy, was the timing not right! Not only did God have some refining work to do in their lives, but by 2016, Kitty also succumbed to the plight of the economic downturn, being laid off from her downtown oil and gas job. She was one month pregnant. Good thing they weren't paying off a \$100K debt!

One day, Caleb missed an important assignment call that would have guaranteed him the same route for the next six months. The loss of stability during such a critical time in the life of the family was the last straw. Caleb began to wonder if the timing was right to start pursuing what he loved for so long but always lacked motivation and drive to do. Meanwhile Kitty wasn't thrilled about the idea of going back to a career she didn't enjoy. "I wanted to do something I loved and felt God gave me the gifts to do and now we had the distractions of comfort and sta-

could take the weeklong exam and get his prestigious grader license.

HUMBLE BEANS

And now, a few days into the exam, Caleb lay awake, distressed and distraught. There was no way he could get his license now, no matter how well he did for the remaining exams. He had failed the cupping test and the triangulation tests, which were the ones he was most confident in. He could not taste which cups were spiked with the defect – be it over-fermented or burnt beans, or any other way coffee could go wrong. His Q grader title was not to be.

Caleb pulled out his notebook and started to pray. He began to write out his feelings. "You were doing this for yourself all along," he sensed God saying to him. "You were trying to prove something to the world. You know that's not what you should be living for. That's why I let this exam crush you."

"Now when I look back, I know that I needed to be humbled," said Caleb. Not only that, but God's insight brought a sense of relief to Caleb's journey. "It helped to know what went wrong, why I failed this part of the test,



profit he served.

He began to have his eye on a large commercial roaster machine from the San Franciscan Roaster Company. The red machine was designed to reveal his skill to the world as it was manually operated and the quality of coffee it produced depended entirely on the roaster's fine sense of smell and skill.

"At first I thought I could install it in my basement," said Caleb, who had been attending CSC with his wife since 2012. Recently they had been impacted by Pastor Henry's teaching that Christ followers should be devoted to God in whatever their passion is.

In Caleb's case, it was clearly coffee.

Caleb fantasized that he would roast the world's best coffee and take orders from home, playing video games in between orders. In retrospect, Caleb recognizes pride and laziness were the barriers to his devotion to God and passing the cupping exam. "I wanted to be the best and show people what I knew about roasting coffee. God knew that was my flaw."

bility taken away from us," said Kittie. They both started to seriously consider whether they might open their own coffee shop and even started hunting for space that might be available for lease.

After a lot of searching and some false leads, they discovered a space for lease on Centre Street and 8th Avenue. But even after putting in every penny they owned, they only had half the start-up capital. Thanks to family support and loans, they secured the space in May 2018. "We spent those months trying to get ready as much as we could," recalled Caleb. Part of "getting ready" in Caleb's mind was becoming a licensed coffee Q grader. It was pride that put this action on the family's to-do list...becoming a licensed coffee Q grader is not a requirement to run a coffee shop. "It is a very prestigious title because it's not easy to pass the 21 sensory tests," explained Caleb. "The pass rate is only 30 per cent and I was confident I would be part of that 30 per cent."

So off they went with their family to Hawaii so Caleb

and also how I should be living from now on... not for myself."

For the rest of the week, Caleb passed with flying colours. "God gave me my senses back and I was able to finally perform," he said. "But I wasn't proud at all. I knew that there was a deeper purpose to this experience." Ultimately Caleb would get his Q grader license in a future test that his instructor offered a few weeks later, free of charge. "Even though God needed to break him down, He always has His way to rebuild," reflected Kitty.

They both sensed that God wanted them to keep pursuing coffee. "But not to glorify the self," Kitty added. "I had to find a deeper mission in coffee," said Caleb. What the mission opportunities were, they didn't yet know. But the coffee business had to somehow be a part of God's plan.

TRAINING GROUNDS

The hard work was only beginning. They aptly named their shop, Sought and Found, and renovations began

with great expense. "We were prepared to lose everything," recalled Kitty. During this time, they also found themselves pressing deeper into God's will for them. Despite all obstacles they continued to press forward.

A week before opening, the couple found themselves shorthanded. Kitty had never been trained as a barista. Out of nowhere a stranger from Korea walked into the shop looking for a job. Caleb did some cupping with the stranger and discovered he was a great taster. He wasn't asking for much, so they hired him full time. At that point they couldn't even afford to feed their own family, but their new employee helped Kitty get trained up to serve coffee. After three months the man announced he was going back to Korea.

"He was provided by God at the exact time we needed him," reflected Caleb. "We couldn't have afforded to keep him longer than those three months."

Kitty describes the desperation they felt when they depleted all their savings in February 2019 after clearing several large bills. God stepped in again and again. "Out of nowhere the Starbucks across the street suddenly closed down and there was this sudden burst of business that came in," described Caleb. That provision allowed them to pay bills in March and April, bringing a sense of stability to the business. "If it wasn't for God, we would have lost everything. God is refining us here. This is our training ground



and, each day, He is providing just enough while smoothing out our flaws."

"We felt like the Israelites relying on manna from heaven," added Kitty. "Every day we had just enough to cover rent, our staff, the pastries, the milk, the coffee beans, and childcare for our daughter Cadence."

For Kitty and Caleb, the expenses are higher than most coffee shops. That's because, throughout their journey, God was revealing a deeper mission behind the beans, and ways He would provide.

COFFEE WITH A MISSION

It all started when Kitty and Caleb were approached by a staff member from Wycliffe, the Bible translation organization. This individual would meet with potential donors and share coffee from the countries needing translation work. "The coffee was a way to talk about the country, share stories about the farmers and solicit interest in supporting Bible translation work," explained Caleb. "We realized coffee

was so much more than just good taste. It is connected to a lot of people and stories. We started thinking, maybe God wants us to use our expertise in coffee to serve Him."

One reality they discovered was that many coffee producing countries had missionaries who were always looking for ways to connect with the locals. Sometimes those missionaries would help farmers market their coffee, even building facilities to help process it. "We realized we could partner with them and be a good testimony for Jesus," said Kitty.

Kitty and Caleb offered to use their own network of importers to help Wycliffe source coffee from certain countries that needed attention. They would then roast the beans for Wycliffe's fundraising and awareness raising efforts.

God also opened their eyes to the unethical trading practices that exploit small coffee growers. "The market price for coffee is largely well below the cost of production and largely driven by politics and demand from consuming countries," explained Caleb. "Even the Fair-trade minimum price is often not enough. Cheap coffee isn't actually cheap. Someone has to pay the price."

Being a Christian company, Sought and Found took on the mission to bring awareness to the realities of the coffee trade. "Every purchase we make has to be ethical," said Caleb. "We have to know where our coffee is coming



from, how it's traded and how the farmers are treated."

Kitty and Caleb then raise awareness and share the stories of their suppliers on their social media pages. Customers will often ask them why their coffee costs so much more, which opens the door to deeper conversations.

"I don't usually work well with people who are different than me," noted Caleb. "But God is constantly using our business to connect with new people and embrace people with different mindsets. We are called to reach out to different people – that way we can minister to them. He is calling us to treat our staff well and to minister to them, potential partners, suppliers and customers who come in."

Kitty and Caleb will often open their doors for different uses – community events, art shows, coffee events and small church-related gatherings. "When people come, we hope they feel our relationship is beyond a transaction and that's how the doors open for us to talk about our faith," said Kitty. They relate their different ways of doing coffee as being a metaphor for Christians living in this

world. "We are different. We hold our beliefs and principles for a reason, and some people may see it as a deviance."

Caleb sums up the world of specialty coffee as being similar to coming to know Truth. "Because once you know it, there is no coming back and you just want to tell more people about it," he says. He notes that just as convenience and marketing will prevent people from acknowledging the dark truth behind the coffee trade, so too is the world kept away from God's Truth by popular culture or comfort. "We see ourselves as advocates for Jesus and justice, for a different lifestyle and a different coffee."



(Left to Right) From roasting and brewing to pouring and garnishing, Caleb and Kitty ensure every cup is perfection for their customers at 'Sought x Found'. (Top) A look inside the coffee shop. (Bottom) Caleb and Kitty are passing on the passion for coffee to their daughter, Cadence. Photos from The Leung Family, Doug Cooke, and the soughtxfound.coffee website.



In September, we hosted the "Walking Together" workshop at our West Campus. This was a Mother/Daughter conference centred on healing and restoration. Over 60 women came to experience this day together. It was a wonderful time of teaching from Healing Hearts Ministry, worship, meaningful conversation and prayer. It was exciting to see the age-spread in the mothers and daughters who came to connect and invest deeply in their relationship



Mothers and daughters enjoyed a day together to share, learn and grow in their relationship with each other.
Photos by Pam Hawkes





FEEDBACK FROM THE WALKING TOGETHER WORKSHOP

"After attending the Healing Hearts conference, I left with a more at peace heart. My mother and I had some great conversation and learned how each other thinks about certain situations. As well, it was a great experience to be in a room filled with other mothers and daughters who needed a little guidance on how to maintain a godly relationship with one another, including better communication and forgiveness. Personally I loved being in a room with other girls around my age, who are daughters of mothers who want to grow alongside them. Overall it was a great experience."

"Taking my daughter to this conference gave us an opportunity to spend time together and learn some communication skills, which has encouraged our walk with the Lord and one another. The sharing time between the moms in a separate room from the daughters provided a safe time to share and feel supported by other mothers. It was also a fun time to share with my daughter getting our picture together and having lunch. I'm glad we had a chance to take time out together. I feel more equipped with the teaching to understand how to communicate and work on our relationship."

"My daughters and I really enjoyed the Mother-Daughter retreat in September. The food was amazing and we were treated like royalty. It was nice to take time out of our busy lives to focus on our relationships and how we could improve things. We recognized that none of us is perfect, and we shouldn't expect each other to be perfect either. As a mother, I was reminded that I need to show more patience and grace toward my daughters. I think it was time well spent!"

"Well, I was surprised! I thought that I had talked my daughter and granddaughter into going to the Mother-Daughter Workshop to improve their communication and give each of them a clearer understanding of some of the things that might be unnoticed in their lives. To my delight though God had intended something better!

As I participated in the breakout sessions, I heard and saw the hardships and fears that moms were under in their mother-daughter relationships. Through the questions asked and then shared in the group, I saw eyes and minds and hearts awakening to the devastation that fears unspoken and unexamined has wrecked in relationships. I saw and felt an infinity with other moms who wanted better relationships but were stuck on patterns of pride-entitlement - unbelief crumble, break apart under Christ's faithful watch. I was convicted to work on my own relationship with my grown daughter."

"It was amazing. The image I take with me is that we—moms and daughters—need to be honest and open as we travel together the same road and same destination in view as Jesus-followers. A striking take-away was teaching on peace-making. It is a tool I had never seen before and has me reflecting on my own behaviour in a new and God-honouring way. So glad I went—will encourage many to go another time."



SOME FEEDBACK FROM N.O.W.

"The set and lighting was amazing!"

"Powerful prayer time during 'Praise Your Name' – a woman came forward who had been scared to come for prayer previously, and confessed struggles and worry about moving forward. Leaders were able to pray over her."

N.O.W. in November celebrated Thaddeus Ma's baptism; a testimony by Braden Kehler, Guest speaker, Christopher Yuan; powerful music and passionate prayer. Photos by Tara Whittaker, Baptism Photo by the Youth Ministry Team

Special Needs Ministry Winter Camp

BY ROXANNE FERNER, Contributing Writer

MARCH 19-21, 2019



Our Winter Adventure Camp at William Watson Lodge in Kananaskis, was wonderful. The purpose of this camp was to facilitate a time to enjoy fellowship, winter activities, and worship. Thirteen participants and nine volunteers attended this year.

The theme was "Creation Calls," based on Romans 1:20. "For since the creation of the world, God's invisible qualities—His eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that people are without excuse." We saw abundant evidence of God's power in the beautiful creation around us.

We went tubing, strapped on some ice cleats and went hiking. We experienced the peace and serenity of nature as we walked through God's incredible creation. The blue skies, sparkling snow and majestic mountains were indescribably beautiful!

Indoors we made bird feeders and coasters with Bible verses on them. Some girls had a spa day in their cabin and decorated journals to record favourite Bible verses.

We had morning and evening devotionals, gathered together to worship and shared about "God sightings," things we saw, felt or heard that made us feel God's presence there.

There were other people at the lodge who, though not part of our gathering, told us how much they enjoyed listening to our worship and singing time.

In such a beautiful setting, it was easy to worship God. People with special needs worship with their whole bodies and hearts, and while it may not be harmonious, it is always a joyful noise to our God. It is a beautiful sight to see.

What a wonderful time of community, fellowship, learning, growth, worship and joy.



Lots of winter camp activities and fun.
Photos by the Special Needs Ministry Team

Special Needs Ministry Summer Camp

AUGUST 24-27, 2019

BY ROXANNE FERNER, Contributing Writer



At the first annual Family Summer Camp at Camp Rehoboth in Lacombe, Alberta families joined together to enjoy fellowship, hiking, worship, games, and experience community and God's love.

The theme of the camp was "Life is Wild. God is good. All the Time!" We explored topics like when life changes, is scary, sad, and unfair. We followed the story of the Israelites from slavery in Egypt, the plagues, crossing the Red Sea, wandering in the wilderness, and finally entering the Promised Land, through worship, drama, video and interactive object lessons.

Morning began with enthusiastic worship. Afternoons were filled with hiking, beach time, games, crafts, and water balloon fights! Evenings consisted of campfires, more worship, sharing our "God Sightings," and s'mores!

Pastor Corinne and Sandra led devotions and a time of sharing for parents, where they could share struggles, build community and pray for each other.

God answered our prayers and provided for us throughout the weekend. He helped us all to learn more about His goodness, and His character.



Chapel, worship, crafts, games, and more.

Photos by Special Needs Ministry Team

"As a parent of a child with special needs, I enjoyed facilitating a group and spending time connecting with other parents. It was wonderful to get to know one another more deeply and develop some lasting connections." (parent)

"My prayer for many years was that God would enlarge our circle of support and just four days at camp went beyond. This time together was the first time I have felt comfortable in sharing some of our struggles, concerns and angst for the future. God's got this, I know. But there is comfort in knowing others are on this journey too. It was such a release for me emotionally, to know how much others care and understand." (parent)

"One of the most powerful moments for parents occurred when we did an activity using Bible verses. I had prayed the evening before for God to reveal special verses to me. I wrote the verses on cue cards and prayed over them, that they would be delivered to whomever God felt needed to hear that particular message. The next day, I mixed the cards up and each person chose a card with a verse on it. Many had tears in their eyes as they read, as they felt that God had indeed spoken to them personally and profoundly through His Word." (staff)



BAPTISM

AUGUST 18, 2019

testimonies

RIVER BAPTISMS - CENTRAL CAMPUS

ZACHARIAH BARNA

My mother read Bible stories, prayed with me and brought me to church every Sunday and I accepted Jesus into my heart when I was seven. I can say now that my relationship with God has grown exponentially through different challenging events in my life, such as moving and dealing with my parent's divorce. No matter the circumstances, God has always been right beside me through the lowest parts as well as the highest parts of my life. A verse that has come to me and has been predominant in my life would be Joshua 1:9, "Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go." This verse helped me to never be discouraged, as God will be with me wherever I might be.

SAFIYA THORKELSON

I have heard about Jesus since I was little and a few years ago I asked Him into my life. He has helped me through my tough times by giving me peace and hope. In Psalm 62:1-2 it says, "I am at rest in God alone; my salvation comes from Him. He alone is my rock and my salvation, my stronghold. I will never be shaken." I like going to CSC because the leaders are kind and helpful. When I was in grade school, Pastor Randy taught us to do our devotions. Now in Grade 5&6 ministries Pastor Jigs challenges us to love and serve God faithfully. Last year, I took a trip to Germany with my mom and sister. We visited the cathedral in Cologne. Inside it was dark and dull, but as soon as I came out, I felt God was telling me to get baptized. I am obeying God because He is the king of Kings and the Lord of Lords. My favourite verse in Scripture is, "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path." Psalm 119:105

GRACE MUTUA

I was raised in a Christian household, but for me that meant not really owning my faith, as I was just following my parents. After a while I realized that being a Christian was not about just following all the rules but having a relationship with God. Once I knew this, I was at a spiritual high. Life got in the way and I drifted. I was aware that I was drifting, but did nothing about it. I started attending

youth and reconnected with God. Getting baptized is a step to say that I am ready to lean on Him in the hard times.

CALEB MUTUA

Ever since I have known Christ, my life has been changed in many ways. When I am in need of His comfort, He gives me His unfailing love. Over the years, the Lord and I have developed a profound relationship with each other. I have grown spiritually and mentally with Him. Children's Ministries, Grade 5&6 Ministries, and Youth Ministries are all examples of what I have been involved in at CSC. All of these have grown and developed me in preparation for this day and that is why I want to get baptized.

ANDREA REBALBOS

I have been a Christian my whole life and was raised in a Christian home. I started my relationship with Jesus when I was 6 and that was when I had my first vision of angels singing in heaven. Then, two or three years later I had another vision of two soldiers fighting. Then a man came up and split them apart. I have had more visions after these, but this time they were different. I would have one and then the next day it would actually happen. This is my testimony. I cannot wait to learn more about Him.

MARK REBALBOS

I grew up in the Philippines in a devoted Catholic family, so I knew Jesus but did not really understand that we could have a relationship with Him. Five years ago, my wife was battling with her own faith and that was when I realized that we can talk with Him and that He can guide us on our everyday life. Growing up in the Philippines, we have this saying, "Bad weeds never die." I thought if I am a little good and a little bad I would not die young and still go to Heaven. Now I see that I cannot be lukewarm. Through my relationship with Christ, I would like to be obedient to His Word and be baptized.

JANE KIARIE

I grew up going to Catholic school and surrounded by Christian family and friends. My parents took us to church, read the Bible, sang worship songs and had occasional family devotion times. I volunteered

in church, but it always felt routine and like I was not making a difference. When we began attending CSC, I got involved in different ministries and connected with so many wonderful people. I feel that I am part of a community. Going to NOW services, volunteering in Children's Ministries, Guest Services and being part of youth has opened my eyes, and set me on a path to take control of my faith. At age fifteen, I committed my life to Christ. I have confessed that Jesus Christ is my Lord and Saviour and asked for forgiveness of my sins. Baptism was the next step.

SARAH KIARIE

I came to know Jesus through my mom. I accepted Jesus into my heart when I was 7 years old. I have been helped through my faith journey by the Grade 5&6 ministries. A verse that speaks to me is 2 Corinthians 5:17, which says, "Therefore when anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation, the old has passed away, behold the new has come." I would like to get baptized because getting baptized is obeying what Jesus says. I want to be a part of God's family.

BEATRICE KIARIE

I came to know Jesus and accept Him into my heart when I was 7 years old, through my mom. The Grade 5&6 ministries has helped me grow in my faith and learn more about God. The verse that has helped me through my life is "Be still and know that I am God, I will be exalted among the nations. I will be exalted among the earth" (Psalm 46:10). I would like to get baptized because I want to show the world that I love Jesus. Jesus says we should get baptized, so it is a way to show my obedience to Him.

ANNA COUILLARD

Before becoming a Christian I lived a very self-centred, anxious life. I did not know how to love or live truly. In the summer before grade 10, my heart was open to God as I started going to youth group and I gave my life to Christ during grade 10. I am saved! I am continuing to learn more about the life and love of my Saviour. I want to be baptized because God wants me to get baptized and I want to learn more about the life God wants for me, starting now.



Photos by Louis Fong and Mary Ann Salazar

HALEY COUILLARD

I was born into a Christian home and came to know God through Church and my parents. Even though I have been a Christian, I viewed the world differently before I committed my life to God. I didn't appreciate life and viewed the world as dark and unfixable. I recently started thinking about my faith and how, if I really wanted to follow God, I would have to give my life to Him, so I committed my life to Him a month ago after many years. Ever since, I have viewed the world and the people in it as beautiful. I want to be baptized because I want to show my commitment to God and how I am willing to follow Him no matter what.

JULIA ARMSTRONG

My Grandmother brought Jesus into my family, and my mom took me to church as a child. After my parent's divorce I did not think much about God. I have always struggled with depression and anxiety, which intensified after the passing of both my parents. I still did not know what to think about God, but I was starting to think more about the purpose of life. It took the death of my twin sister to see the truth about life, people and myself. There is a defined right and wrong. Sin and strongholds are real and have far reaching consequences. A Saviour is needed to show us what righteousness is and offer us forgiveness so that we learn how to forgive each other. Now that I believe and have experienced the Holy Spirit working in me, I need to be baptized as an act of obedience to God and to do what is good.

FIONA NG

I attended Christian school, but left Christianity after I finished school. By a very weird incident in 2008, I got the chance to go into Centre Street Church. I felt that CSC was home right away. My faith grew stronger each year. When I looked back, I have always been closely looked after and blessed by God all the time. Each year, each month God had been sending out messages to be baptized through the church and other occasions. But I did nothing. This year, I felt the urge inside me to get baptized. God has been waiting for me for so long with His love and blessing. I felt I have to humble myself in front of God and be baptized. That is my first baby step to surrender myself to God. I am repenting of my sins and I want to be a follower of Jesus Christ from now on. I want to be more like Him and a better person and a better Christian.

MICHAEL MARCELO

I am originally from the Philippines, but came to Canada as a foreign worker in 2017. Since I was a kid, I believed that there is a God, but did not fully understand Him. I grew up with exposure

to three different religions, as my father is Catholic, my mother is Church of God and my uncle and auntie are Christians. Sometimes we went to their house for Bible study. I loved watching "Super Book" as a kid. I did not know much about the Bible, but watching this series taught me the Bible stories, and that there really is a God who made everything in the universe. On December 24, 2017, I was invited to CSC, and wanted to attend more services. I have always felt very excited each weekend to go to CSC. I never felt this in my life before. I feel so blessed that He showed me the way to surrender everything to Him, to take Him as my Saviour and allow Him to take charge of my life. Every time that I watched the videos in the service and saw people get baptized, I promised myself that one day I would too. Today is the day! I have accepted the Jesus as my Lord and Saviour and am entrusting everything to Him, declaring myself to be His follower for the rest of my life.

RACHEL SANTOS

I was born and raised in a Catholic family in the Philippines and built my happy family back home. I have three kids but wondered how to raise them with a good future. My ex-husband had no job, so I decided to come to Canada to help my uncle. In 2009, I started to work here, which was hard because my kids were so young. It has been difficult getting my permanent residence here, but I keep hoping. In 2017, my kids chose to go back to my ex-husband. It was so difficult for me, I felt like dying. I lost my job and one day I was talking to my uncle and he said, "Come to the Lord and ask forgiveness for your sin." I made the decision to do that. Every night, I keep praying to God to please heal my burden and even my kids. One day I went to church and I heard the song "Cornerstone." I felt great relief and my tears are flowing. That was the time I told God, "I give myself to You."

GARNETT BAILEY

Fifteen years ago, I was living in Jamaica and was at my parent's house picking up my children. My mother had a serious conversation with me, in which she said, "You have a wife, children, house, job, and car, but you do not have Jesus." I stumbled to respond and failed to understand what she meant. I brushed it aside and ended the conversation in light of my long journey home with the children. I have never forgotten what she said to me that day. Today it is my testimony in Matthew 6:33. "But seek first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." Today I choose Jesus. I thank my mom and dad for training up the child in the way he should go.

JETHRO ORIBELLO

I grew up in a Christian family and attended church every Sunday, but was only there physically, not spiritually. I have always known

who Jesus is and what He did on the cross for me. This year, everything changed. I met someone who was attending this church and helped me change my life by walking the path toward Jesus. I realized my mistakes over the years and even though I know it was wrong, I still kept doing it. Jesus came to my life and saved me from the darkness and emptiness that was inside me. Now I have decided to follow Jesus. I want to obey His command by getting baptized. I commit my life to serving and obeying Jesus Christ. My favourite verse is Psalm 23:3, "He restores my soul. He leads me in paths of righteousness for His name's sake."

ELLIE JANG

I have known about Jesus for a while, but I did not try to know Him or follow His word. I have not been brave enough to get baptized and I thought it would be ok without baptism as long as I believed in Him. At the same time, I could not answer confidently that I was truly a child of God when people would ask me about my religion. One weekend, Pastor Kent said, "Genuine love requires action." It moved my weak mind. I decided to get baptized and live as a true child of God.

JOSEPHINE NG

I first came to know Jesus through a childhood friend. I want to be baptized today because Jesus has shown me His presence during these last few years of hardship and trauma. I am alive and resilient through Jesus Christ my Lord and Saviour. My favourite Scripture and one that resonates with me always is, "Be still and know that I am God. I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth." Psalm 46:10. To me, the baptism means devoting myself entirely to Jesus and always putting Him first. I am forgiven and through Him I can learn to forgive others and myself. Being baptized affirms my dedication to following His Word and knowing that I am always loved. Put God first and everything else falls into place.

TREVOR CHAN

I have always believed in a higher being. Growing up in a Buddhist family, I knew Buddhism did not have the answers to my purpose in life. As I continued searching in my youth, I came up empty. Fifteen years ago, I met friends who loved God and served others unselfishly. I did not know it then, but God had started pursuing me. Prior to accepting Jesus as my personal Saviour, I believed that I had to earn my way to Heaven. Through prayer, reading the Bible, serving, I now believe I am a beloved child of God. He saved me from countless near-death situations, placed godly people in my life and gave me a new purpose. Since accepting Christ, I know God is in control and I can live for Him.

Photos by Louis Fong and Mary Ann Salazar



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LOGAN GABEL

I believe that God first entered my life while I attended church as a kid with my nana and going to youth with my cousins. I have always believed, but never took steps toward a better understanding of God, the Bible and faith. God planted a Christian girl with great faith and a passion for Christ into my life. We started going to church and that is where I met my CSC family. This church has made a big impact on my life. The people, pastors, and ministries have raised my spirit and thirst for Christ. Before Christ I was lost, broken and confused with little hope and no purpose. He is helping me give up my pride and eliminate my sinful ways. God has filled me with hope and gifted me with a vision that He has been a Father in the ways He's working in my life. He is by my side, watching over me with His love and grace. He has given my life purpose and is shaping me into the Christian man I was born to be.

SHAMMAH GASANGWA

I was born into a Christian family, but did not experience God until I started going to a Christian summer camp and attended CSC Sunday morning services regularly. I would love to get baptized because I want to be born again, giving my life to God and getting into a closer relationship with Him. CSC pastors and everyone at Camp Chamisall helped and impacted my life when they shared the Word of God. Also, they helped me to understand and get closer to God. The Scripture verse that is very meaningful to me is in Mark 1:8. "I baptize in water, but He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

DANIEL PARK

I was born into a Christian family and my faith grew as I learned about Jesus through my family and understood His presence in my life. There were times where I had struggled with anxieties and fear. I have found peace, freedom and hope in Jesus. I feel that the presence of my mother and father were vital, as they constantly reminded me about my life and identity in Jesus. They introduced me to the truth through their teachings. I want to be baptized and let people know that it is the certification of my new life in Him. One meaningful Scripture that I am reminded of is Galatians 2:20, because it reminds me that I am a new person in Jesus. It reads, "I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God who loved me and gave Himself for me."

DANIEL CHEN

I first felt Jesus in my life during weekly Bible lessons in the BSF children's group studies in Grade 1. Through my children's group leaders, I learned and felt a growing relationship with my Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. I want to be baptized because I want to make a public declaration that I belong to Jesus. I have been homeschooled for the last four years, living under the protection of my family and friends in Christ. I have read the Bible and I believe that Jesus died for me. I feel God's love with me in every circumstance and I understand God's expectation of me as a growing man. I will be attending a public high school next year, I know that I will be facing many new challenges and difficulties. Through my baptism, I will have the Holy Spirit to be my guide. This is my declaration that I live for Jesus. Satan and sin have no power over me.

CALEB CHEN

I was born into a Christian family, taking everything for granted. I did not think much of family fellowship and church. My spiritual journey began when I started attending the BSF in Grade 1. Before then, I did not think much about God. I loved Him and He loved me. At Bible study, I learned that God was more than that. I was fascinated by the stories of faith and courage. Last year, we studied 1st and 2nd Samuel. I was captivated by how David always trusted God, no matter the circumstances, and that God always provided. David was "a man after God's own heart" and I want to be like him. From today on, I live for Jesus and accept Him into my life.

RACHEL DE GROOT

I have grown up in a Christian home and my parents have taught me about God all my life. I have gone to Sunday school and youth and have always had a strong connection with God. I feel God is calling me to be baptized today so I can take the next step in my faith journey and share my faith with others. Psalm 23:6 says, "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever." This verse gives me a promise that God will never leave me and that if I trust Him, He will bless me and give me eternal life.

VAL HEEREMA

I am very happy to have this opportunity to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ and declare my love and devotion to Him publicly. I was first baptized 30 years ago but was never given an understanding of the meaning of baptism, as I was not raised in a Christian home. I faced multiple emotional and painful challenges, in which Satan preyed upon my vulnerability and wanted me to believe the lies that I was not loved or worthy and that God had abandoned me. Yet the child within me had known and experienced God's love and care at various times in my life. Through connections with several Christian individuals, I fought back to overcome the darkness. Now I recommit and dedicate my life anew to the glory of God in faith, trust and love through and in our Lord Jesus Christ. Thank you to CSC, Pastors Henry, Kent, Ashwin, Cam and Becky for guiding me along this journey back. I am thankful for the incredible love and support of my husband Hank, our children, Caralynne and Mark, and grandchildren whom I think of and pray for every day.

ABIGAIL GRISDALE

I was born into a Christian family and attended a Christian church. So, I knew and heard about Jesus all of my life. When I was 7 years old my mom and my brother were talking about baptism and I told them I wanted to get baptized. My mom explained that before getting baptized I needed to ask Jesus to be my Lord and my Saviour, repent from my sins and believe that Jesus is the Son of God. So, I told my mom and my brother to help me pray that evening. Now I am 10 years old and still want to get baptized to let everyone know that I am a follower of Jesus.

Photos by Louis Fong and Mary Ann Salazar

