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Angela Chen | RPG

Jenny Li Joy Mao | 2024

**Jake** 

Joseph Jan	
Mandy Lu	
Joy Mao	
	Fenny Chen
Andy Lin	Karen Chen
My Story with Brea	d of Life Church in Atlanta

Joseph Mao Johnson He Joshua Li **Melody Kong** Daniel Li Stephanie Cao Jonathan Jan Gracia Wei Joshua Mao Robert Liu Ian Hinson

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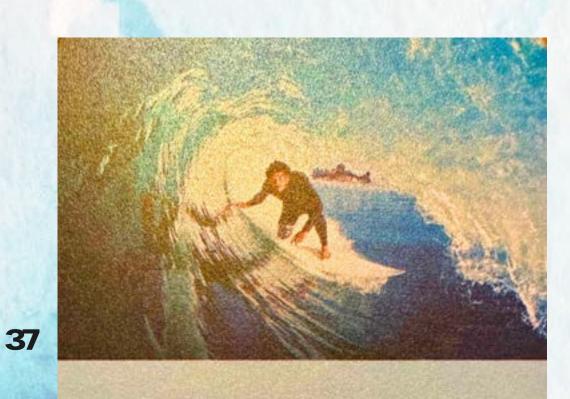
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My shield is God Most High, who saves the upright in heart.

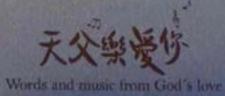


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惟有聽從我的,必安然居住, 得享安靜,不怕災禍。

箴言 1:33



掃描我 聽音樂

曲目 Track\*安靜

歌曲出處 Source\* 約書亞樂團



### 我親愛的孩子:

最近生活讓你感到迷惘害怕了,是嗎? 很多事情都超出你的掌控,一種深深的 無力感揪著你的心。孩子,不要怕,我 是你的上帝,也是你天上的父親,我知 道你內裡的一切。讓心安靜下來,你會 聽見我正對著你的心說話。來信靠我, 我會帶領你穿越一切的風浪。

樂愛你的天父





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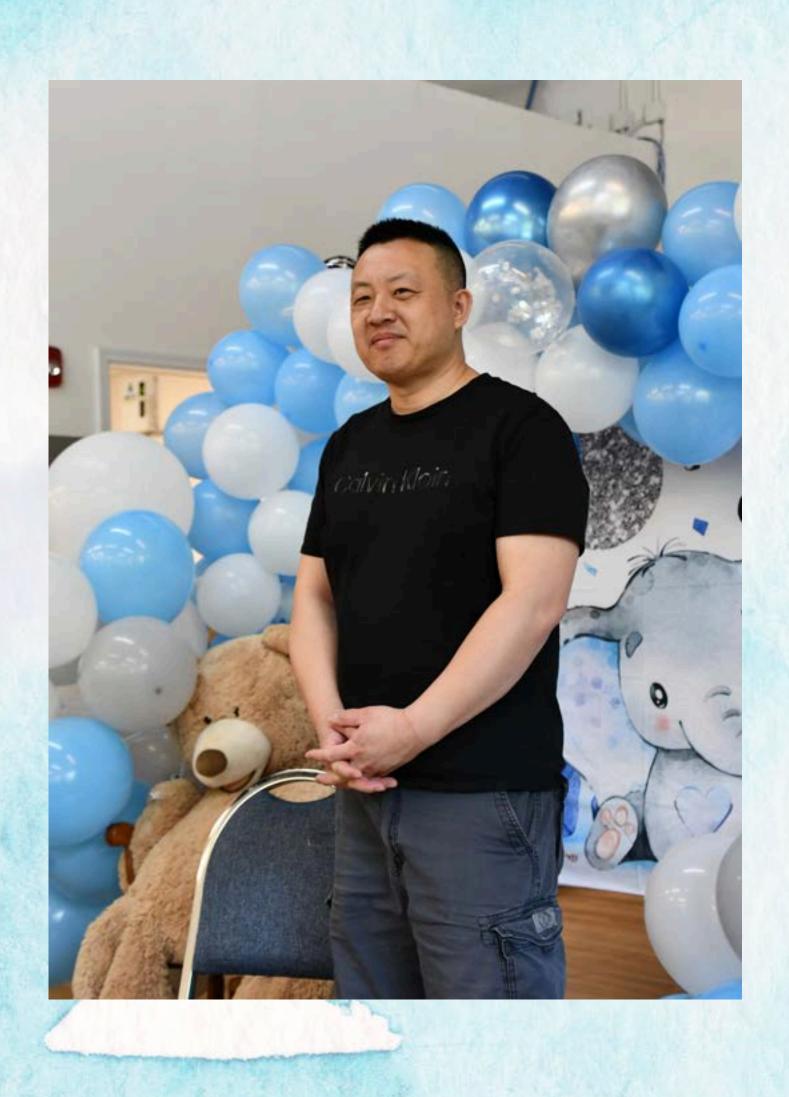
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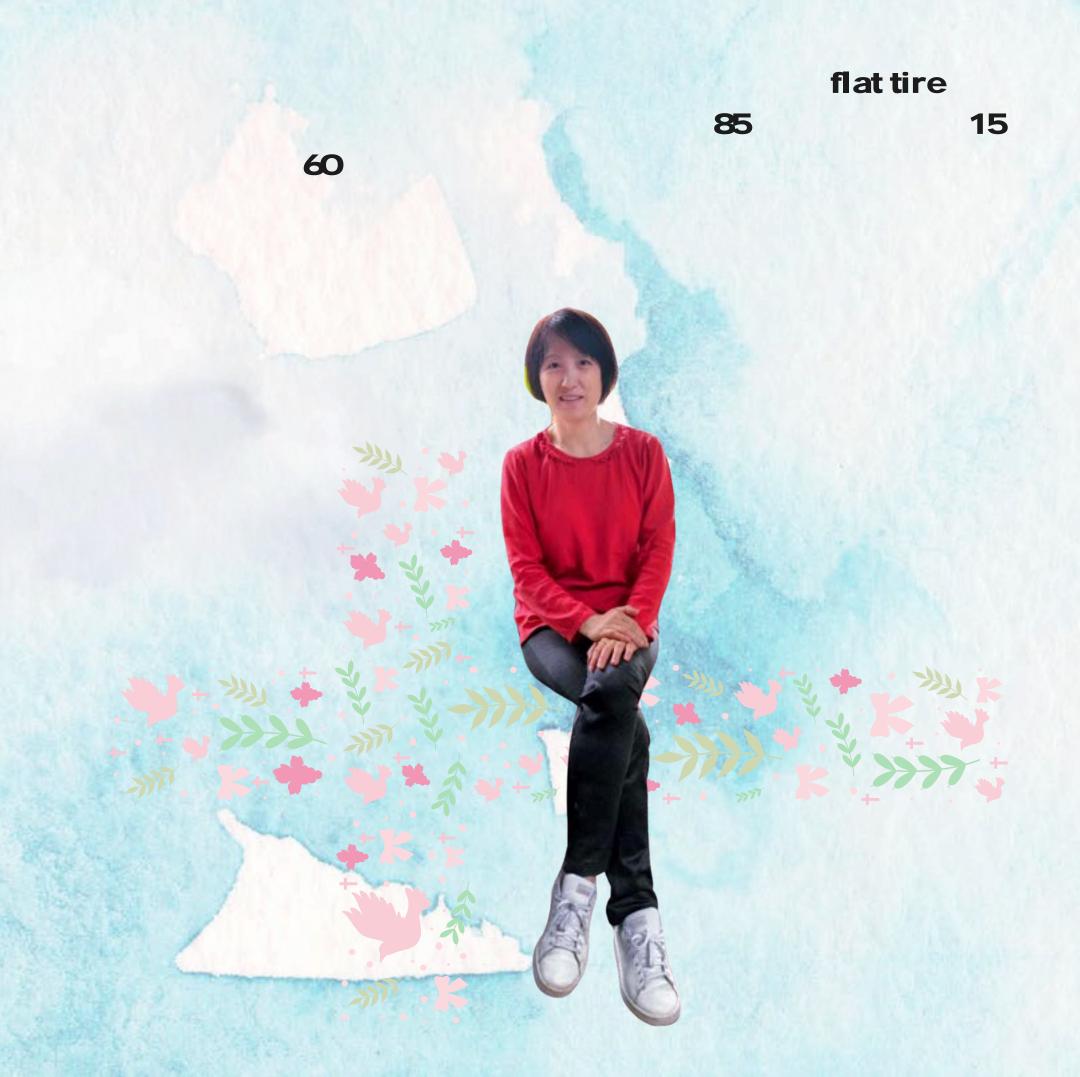




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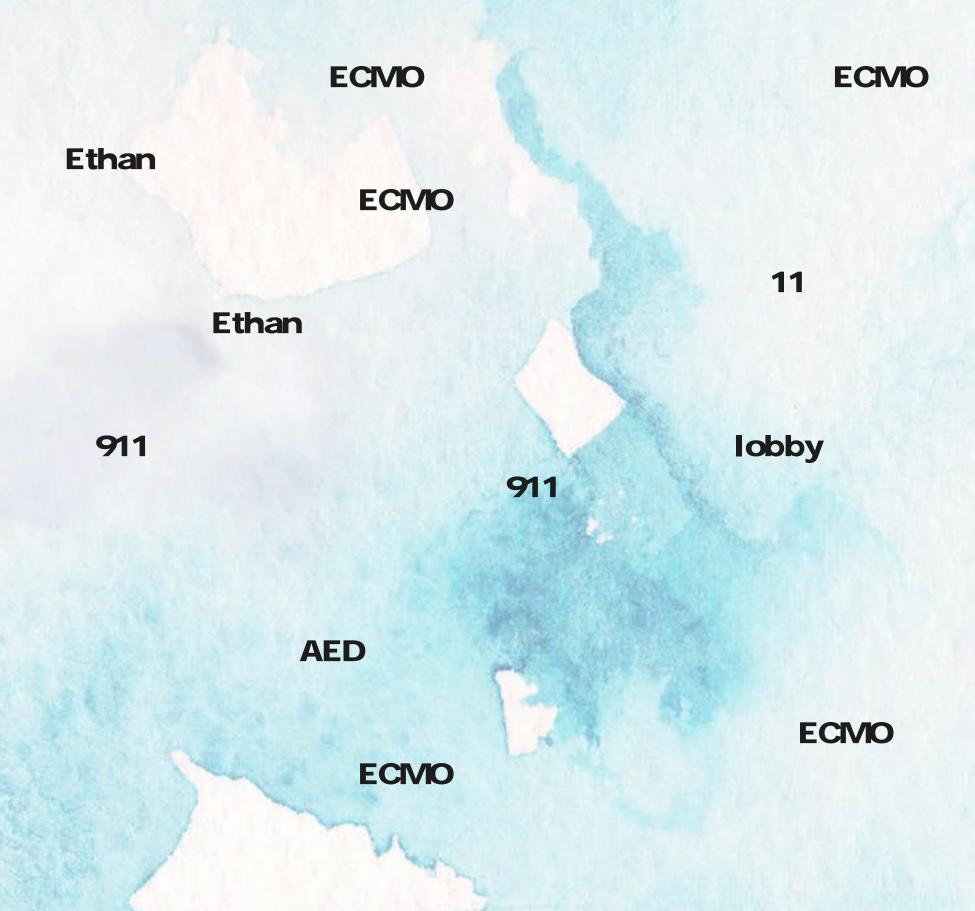
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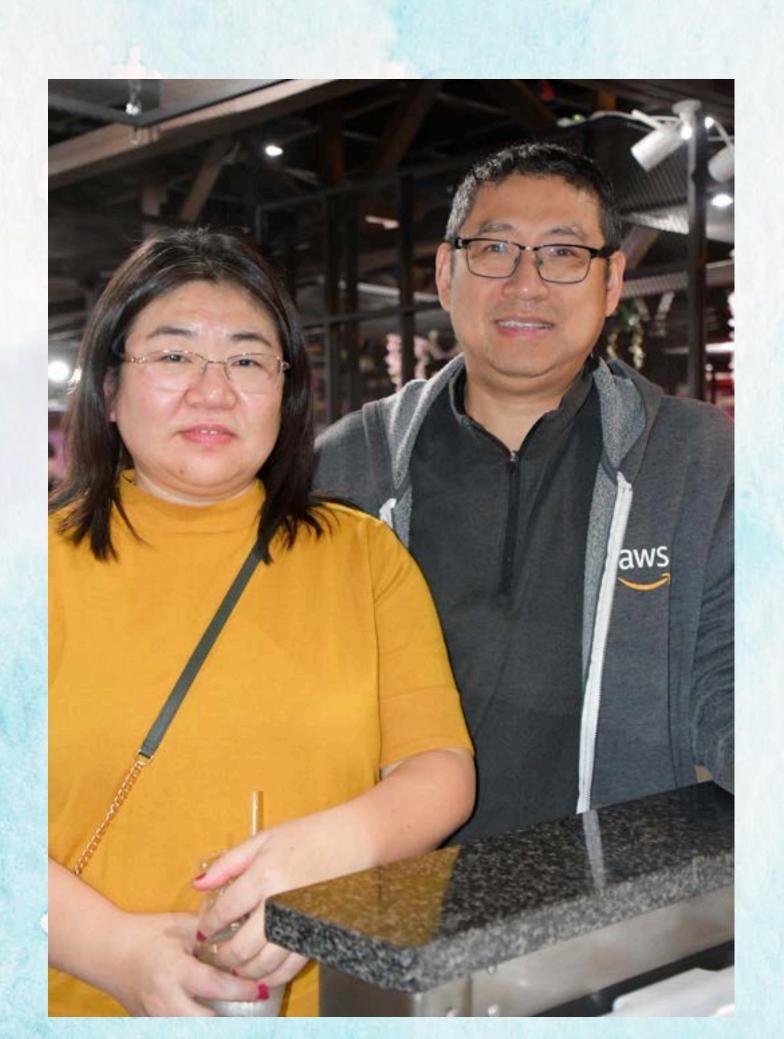
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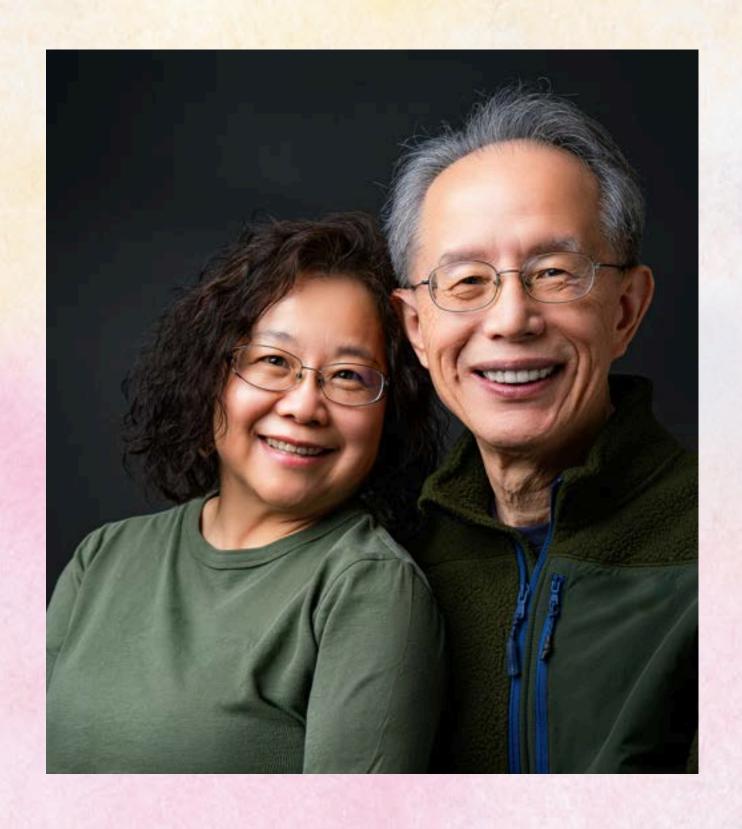
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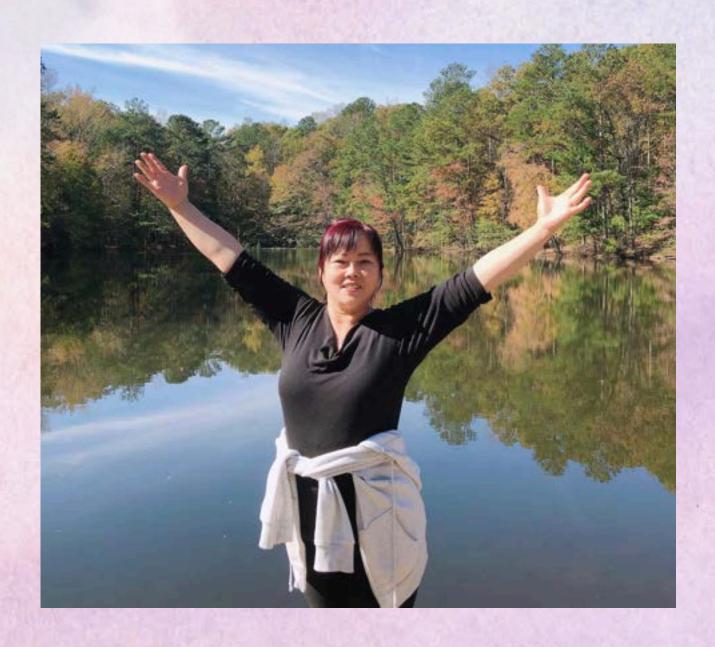


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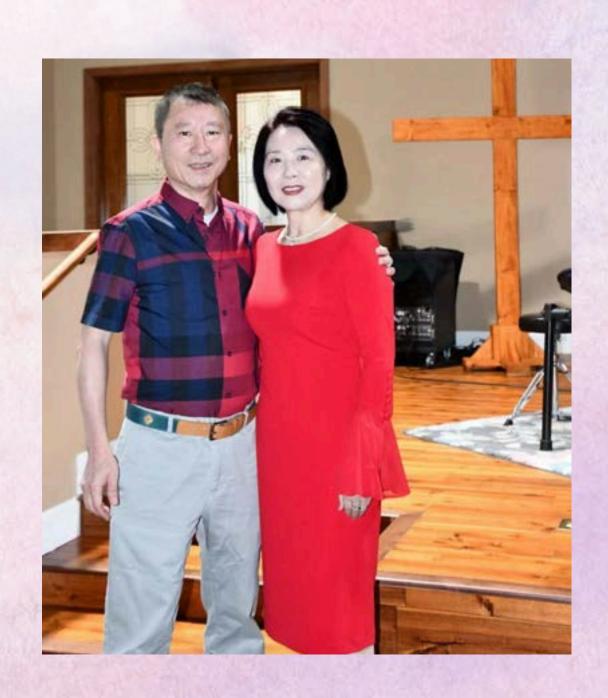
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# My Story with Bread of Life Church in Atlanta

## Joseph Mao

I was fortunate to experience God as a small child. I tasted God' s goodness, and leaving God was never an option because I knew He was real. I knew He was good. And I knew I wanted to know Him more than anything else in life. However, though I was enthusiastic, my faith was young and immature. BOLCC Atlanta was the environment the Lord used to grow me from anxious immaturity into a secure relationship with Him.

In the early years of my faith, I associated God's Presence with full services or special conferences. Even as an elementary school student, I preferred going to the "grown-up" services. I knew the kids program would be fun, but I didn't want fun. I wanted real. I jumped at every opportunity I could to go to conferences—when my family went to Orlando, I enjoyed the conference we went to more than Disney or Sea World.

But this faith was insecure. Because I had experienced so much of God, my relationship with Him was based on what I felt, so when I experienced less of Him, I doubted His love for me. I spent many of my middle and high school years trying to "earn" God' sintimacy through my good weeks.

Now, looking back, I see that my real spiritual development came from my consistent involvement in BOLCC. As I cleaned the bathrooms and volunteered in Penguin class, I learned to serve. When Sunday School rewarded spiritual habits with prizes, I learned the importance of spiritual consistency. Though the teaching, I learned to submit to authority and that my attitude would determine my altitude.

Ultimately, as I got to know God in the context of healthy community, I learned that God's Presence had less to do with the setting and the size of the service and everything to do with the posture of my heart. Yes, the conferences often did make a real difference in my life, but it was the mundane, everyday involvement at BOLCC that supported my spiritual growth and taught me to live out what I'd learned. The older I get, the more thankful I am that the Lord saw fit to place me at BOLCC Atlanta.

### Johnson He

Before I came to BOLCC church, I wasn' t Christian. I didn' t believe in God and I never particularly felt comfortable around religion. There' s many cases of Christians causing a lot of pain and suffering to spread their faith. The religious wars in the name of Jesus caused many deaths; the Spaniards spread an immense amount of diseases while conquering the Americas and forced the natives to accept their religion. Even today, there are Christians who don' t embody Jesus' sideas and attack others for not being Christian or for being "sinners" when they themselves are also sinners.

Despite this, I still became a Christian. The Bread of Life Christian Church showed me that not all Christians are unempathetic, cruel, or hypocritical. BOLCC showed me that people who are fully intent in following God are immensely wonderful people. They' re people who I could talk to about my interests, complain about the woes of schoolwork, or just crack jokes with one another. The church was fully willing to shower me with kindness. I' ve made many friends in this Church, even though in the beginning, I wasn' t particularly comfortable with Christianity. The kindness that BOLCC was able to show was what made me comfortable with Christians, and by proxy, I became more comfortable with the concept of Christianity.

God has also moved BOLCC to discuss things that I myself was questioning before I met God. While I don't particularly remember what was mentioned each Sunday, I distinctly remember the feeling of awe where I would have something I wanted answered, and the Sunday sermon would answer that question as quickly as I said it. That was what gave me the confidence that God was possibly real, rather than imaginary. ADVENT was also massive towards my spiritual journey, and BOLCC was how I was exposed to it. I still had doubts about who God was when I signed up for ADVENT, but I was willing to go since I had friends along the way who were able to come with me. The trip quickly showed me God's power, and how lacking we were as ADVENT teachers without God. It wasn't uncommon for us to start feuding with one another at the start, but God was with us. God was with me when I was feeling mentally unwell.

#### Johnson He

God was with me when I started beefing with my other teammates. God was with me when I felt disgusted and uncomfortable. Even then, I was able to overcome my mental health issues, my arguments with team members, or my discomfort with the bathroom floor rust.

Without BOLCC, I would be without God. Through this church' swillingness to be kind, I was able to destroy my previously constructed biases surrounding religion and become Christian myself. I don't regret being Christian, and I don't regret being a part of BOLCC.

#### Joshua Li

When I was younger, around the age of or, I used to fight with my brother all the time. Everyday, I would fight with him, arguing constantly, and throwing punches at each other, especially while we were in the car. Our parents always told us to stop fighting, but we only stopped fighting for a short time before fighting again. When I went to church and prayed to God, I always prayed that I would stop fighting with him. Slowly, God changed how I thought about things and helped me to stop fighting with my brother. God has helped me to be more calm and hold back my anger.

# **Welody Kong**

Dear BOLCC,

Wow. years? You' ve made it so far. I remember my first time at the church on the st floor that we shared with the Chinese school, crying in Sunday school, not wanting to leave my parents. I remember crushing my finger in the door hinge, running around barefoot in the church, and moving to the nd floor. I remember our Family Fun Nights, the Easter egg hunts, Simpsonwood retreats, and getting baptized for the first time. I thank you for giving me such a vibrant and colorful childhood.



I also have you to thank for making me who I am today, especially in my faith, through continuous discipleship, prayer, fellowship, and relationships. Although I took these experiences for granted when I was younger, I started to realize how blessed I was to have a community I could call family. Slowly, you began to be more than just a building to me, but the people that made it. It wasn' t until that I truly started to understand your value- a community to help build me up and somewhere to meet God. I started showing up not for friendship, but for a chance to encounter Him. My relationship with God started picking up super fast and my life started changing quickly as a result. Soon, my life outside of church also started to reflect Jesus. My past introverted self changed to become more extroverted and outgoing, desiring to show others what it means to love like Jesus. Now, I' m excited to see how you will impact so many others and change their lives.

Here's to another years of fellowship, growth, and BOLCC Atlanta.

Much love,

Melody

#### **Daniel Li**

" . million excess deaths associated with the COVIDpandemic in and "

began with a whirlwind of uncertainties empty streets, masked faces, and fear for our loved ones. With school moved online, my days blurred together boredom creeping in as I finished assignments quickly (we don't talk about my grades that year). But what weighed on me most was the unexpected reality of being home / . As much as I loved my family, the constant togetherness felt overwhelming.

One day, pastor Joy texted my mom asking whether I could join ADVENT that year, despite my young age at the time. I entered training with a cloud of uncertainty over my head, unsure of what I believed. But during one prayer meeting, something changed. As I poured out my struggles and confessed my distant relationship with God, I felt a peace I hadn't known before. It was at that moment that I realized that God had been waiting for me all along. God used that camp to draw me closer to Him. I ended that summer with not just the memories made, but with a heart that would never be the same again.

Looking back, I see God's hand in every step; He used pastor Joy, ADVENT, and that summer to reshape my heart. What started as an activity just to fill up my summer schedule became the turning point of my faith journey. to most people was a year of despair and loneliness, but to me, is the year that changed my life marking the start of my life with God.

## Stephanie Cao

My God has brought me out of the valleys. He has led me to the still waters and the wilderness.

I grew up as a Christian. My idea of a good Christian was one who read the bible, prayed, and went to church. I now know that there is so much deeper. It is one who knows God and who desires for Him to be Lord over all areas of their life. That loving God and loving others is the foundation of their life.

Back then, I went to church but during the week I never read my bible. I prayed sometimes but only for the things I wanted. I cursed. I was quick to get angry. I watched things I shouldn' t have. I wasted my time on games and social media. I never talked to God unless I had needed something. I lied. I didn' t obey my parents. The result of this was a life full of depression, anxiety, and self-hatred. I didn' t understand why God made my life so hard. I complained to Him. I was angry at Him. "Why was my life so hard?" I would wonder to myself.

I understand now that it wasn' t God who did that but this is what life is like apart from God. When we turn from Him and do the things we desire. These are the fruits of our own ways. I am not saying that with God our life will be easier. But, struggling with God is very different than without God. When we struggle with God there is hope that this is a process. Hope that this is necessary. Hope that in the proper time it will pass. There is peace that God is in control. God can use all things for His good. There is no loneliness because He is so close to us. He is bearing our burdens for us but His burden is easy and light on us.



## Stephanie Cao

In my depression, in my anxiety, and in my self-hatred God brought me out. He will do this. He encouraged me with the prayers of other people. He led me to His word and the truth in it. Back then, I rarely read my bible. The bible is how God speaks to us and how He leads us throughout the day. He taught me things I didn't know. He gave me clarity on the questions and doubts I had. I learned the importance of reading the Bible everyday. The importance of being with Him all throughout the day. The importance of loving others and loving God. The importance of the words I say. The words I tell myself. The words that are deceitful and lying. My mother told me, "Even a small sin is still sin."

He started to be in all the big and small parts of my life. I understood that when I acted in the ways of God, I felt peace inside. I felt joy that pushed away my anxiety. I felt love for others even more. These are the fruits of the Spirit.

God used the body of Christ to speak to me the most. People and friends of God prayed for me and encouraged me. I was very independent at a young age. I wanted to solve my own problems. When God began to do all these wonderful things in my life, there was pride and arrogance in me. I believed I could do it on my own. I believed I could do it in my own abilities. I distanced myself from the body of Christ. I didn't realize back then the importance of community, of growing together, and being with one another. I didn't understand the value of the body of Christ. I didn't understand the importance of serving others in the Church, of honoring authority, and being faithful to the people who helped me to grow. I needed to serve the Church to the best of my abilities. I needed to honor it, think highly of it, and speak kindly about it.

The body of Christ is something I am learning to cherish more. All the people that make up the body represent a part of God. I can learn from everyone. I am thankful for our church, for our pastors, and for those who have faithfully served the Church.

## Stephanie Cao

God never stops working on our lives. I am always learning and God is always molding me. I am learning to honor those around me. Honoring teachers by not cheating. Honoring parents by obeying and loving them. Honoring people by loving and being truthful. This is honoring God's people inside and outside of the Church.

The difference between Stephanie back then and Stephanie now is that she knows God should be in all the aspects of her life. I used to think this was controlling. This is not control. This is His love. He is like a parent who wants to be a part of their children' slife. A parent who gently guides their children in the way that they should go. A parent who knows what is good for them and what is not. It is our choice to trust Him and be obedient to Him. And when we are, there is peace, there is joy, and there is hope.

Thank You God for all the things you have done in my life. I complain a lot. I disobey a lot but thank you because you never give up on me. Thank You Father.

"Therefore, as God' s chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity." - Colossians

#### Jonathan Jan

Bread of Life has changed my spiritual life through connecting me a lot closer to God over these past years. Before I started going to this church, I would always feel empty and dead inside. I had no spiritual life whatsoever, and there was no connection with God. I only went to church because of my parents, and I thought that I had to go because I was born Christian. I had no motivation to go and no passion or desire for Jesus.

I originally thought BOLCC would be another simple and boring Sunday with a speaker and tons of praying. It was when I walked in and felt the heartwarming invites that I decided to give myself to Jesus. Everyone was so welcoming and nice, encouraging me to be the same. I also felt a lot more connected to the people here.

Eventually, I decided to go to Friday night fellowship. This was also a big stepping stone in my relationship with God. It encouraged me to chase my relationship with Jesus, resulting in me getting baptized in September of . Everytime I went to fellowship meetings, I would always enjoy worship a lot; connecting with Jesus always felt like a recharge for me.

BOLCC changed my life from no Jesus to reading the Bible and praying everyday. This helped me feel so much more connected and alive with a purpose in life.



#### Gracia Wei

BOLCC has helped me walk faster with Jesus by giving me goals to accomplish. This takes away my excuses to hold off talking to God. Now I have a habit of talking to God before I sleep, which has in turn given me peace to help me fall asleep. Before BOLCC helped me with this, I tossed and turned in my bed, getting tangled in my covers, sometimes for over an hour and a half. Consequently, I would get very little sleep during the night, go to school and get bad grades, and get screamed at by my mom. My life felt like a downward spiral. I sometimes would just break down in school, first on the bus, then in the gym.

I don't do that anymore. Now I get over six hours of sleep (yay!) and get great grades, and it takes me only around minutes to fall asleep. I' II be talking to God aloud and drop out in the middle of a sentence. There are no more midnight raids to the pantry for snacks, but I would gladly trade a few snacks for peace during my sleep.

BOLCC has helped me in my walk with Jesus. I have a lot of peace. Jesus has been permanently woven into my life. I am very grateful to BOLCC for helping me.



#### Joshua Mao





Bread of Life is strongly rooted in prayer. Since childhood, going with my parents to the Wednesday night prayer meeting was always an interesting experience. I would sing some of the songs, and then sit and watch as the other adults poured their hearts out in prayer. Going year after year, it got pretty boring. It was a dull part of my elementary school life, and there were much more exciting things to do. As I sat in those prayer meetings, I would daydream about playing outside, playing computer games, or being the strongest person in the room.

I definitely wasn't very close to God. This showed in many of my relationships as well. Wany of my playtimes with my siblings would end in conflict because I would outburst in anger. I had trouble communicating with teachers because I took their kindness for granted. Wy helpless and rule-breaking addiction to games severely strained my relationship with my parents. In fact, I also put a lot of my identity in being the tough kid who had nails to protect himself. I hurt a lot of people.

By the end of elementary school, the weight of my actions weighed heavily upon me. I hated the person I had been. I hated the person I was. No matter how hard I tried to forget the past and my previous actions, they would always return and condemn me all the same. How could my family possibly see me with eyes of love? How could God love someone who didn't even love his family? I did not know God well.

#### Joshua Mao

One night, it was again time to go to the weekly prayer meeting. As always, I was reluctant to go because it would be another boring meeting to talk to a God I thought would judge me. However, my parents coerced me to go, and I went. At first—dead silence. My heart was cold. Then, after some encouragement, I told God a little bit of what I was feeling. As I tried to get closer to Him and talk with Him, the memories of my previous sins and unjust actions came back stronger and stronger. As they played in my mind in K HD, I cringed back in my chair.

"Why, Lord?" I asked. "Why do You want me to remember these things?" Then came His reply: "Because I have forgiven you of every one of them. "Suddenly, it was like a great burden had come off of me. I didn't have to face the weight and punishment of my sins because of Christ and His mercy. I was forgiven—I could accept love from others and learn how to love them because Christ loved me and forgave me first.

The steadfast and consistent prayer of Bread of Life Church helped me, as a young boy, come to understand the gospel. It wasn' t just for all mankind in general—it was for me personally and for the sins I had committed against other people. Through prayer, God revealed Himself to me. Through prayer, I know we will see the great works and faithfulness of the Lord.

#### Robert Liu

Bread of Life Church has affected my relationship with Jesus by drawing me closer to the Holy Spirit. Before I joined this church, I was a careless kid, and I would spend hours on games and social media without being conscious of how this would greatly affect me in the future. I always felt like my life wasn' t real and I barely got out or hung with my friends.

I am still suffering from mental issues that cause me to feel angry easily and sometimes I take it out on my family or household objects. After I came to BOLCC, the program and prayer helped me become closer to God and it somewhat helped me to overcome my anger issues and focus on what is important, like completing a task or helping my family. I didn't like churches at all and I hadn't gone to one since I was eight because I had bad experiences at all of the ones I went to. I hadn't gotten to know God like I do now. I feel like I can love God now and do better things for myself.

P.S. I' m not good at a lot of sports, but God has helped me practice and get more fit and healthy, which makes me happier and my life better.



### Ian Hinson

My stomach hurt, and there was nothing I could do about it. Honestly, I really could do nothing about it—the pain, the aches, and the other problems. The church and prayer really helped me.

It started in the middle of sophomore year. I was working hard on my assignments, and there was only one thing that could make me focused and attentive: coffee. I couldn't work without it, but I didn't know that it was the problem. My average day went something like this. I would wake up and immediately chug a cup of coffee next to my bedstead. This would make me wake up and I would feel good, but when I got to school I was throwing up and I was not feeling too well. I was so blind to it—most likely because I wasn' t praying that much—but one thing stuck out. I remembered the verse that If you knock on the door it will be given to you. So I started praying for my stomach to be healed. At first I lost interest because it didn't seem to get better. I remember going every Friday night to Bible study, where everyone told me to never stop praying and to never lose hope.

At the time I did not know that the cause of all of my problems was my caffeine addiction. But when I went to Taiwan, I got sick and didn't drink coffee for four days. This made me realize that coffee was the root of my problems, but though I gave it up, the pain didn't go away.

This put me in a valley in terms of my faith. I didn' t really have faith in God or believe in the power of prayer, but many people at BOLCC helped to pray for me. Then, a miracle happened! I woke up one morning and there were no more problems. I was jumping in joy about all of what God did for me. It made me realize that when God doesn't respond immediately, it' s for a purpose—so I would have faith in Him.

















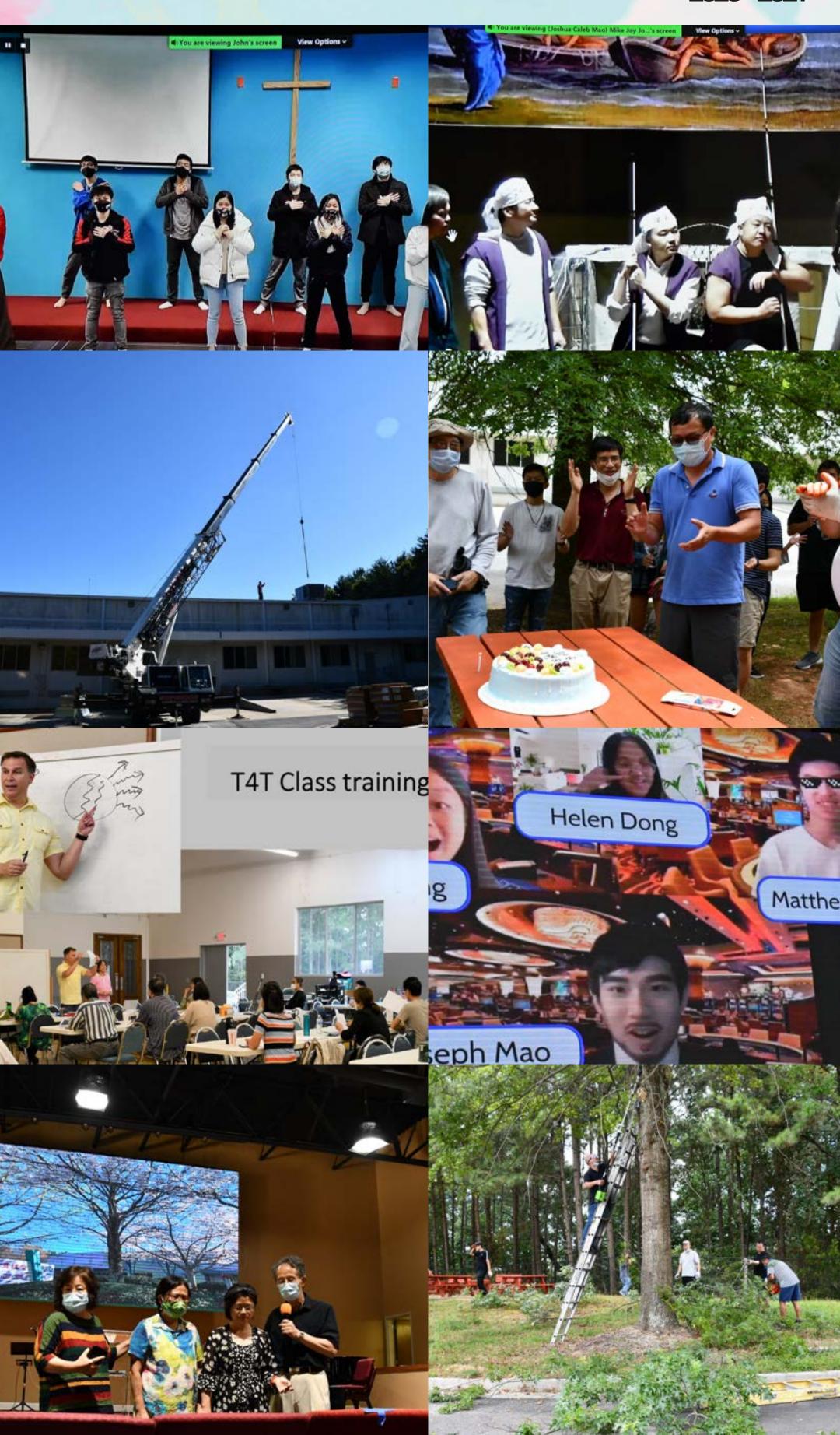
























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470-636-7344

: 770-652-3662

404-543-2176

404-543-2003

Holy fire 678-654-0501

404-536-7272

404-680-5974

TOG Joseph Mao - -

678-979-8143

706-908-5585

aren Chen 678-533-8708

404-290-6625

:

408-931-2688

678-777-2508

: 10.00am

10.00am

10.00am

: **7:30pm** 



#### Bread of Life Christian Church in Atlanta

4995 Avalon Ridge Parkway Peachtree Corners, GA

(678) 979-8143

www.atlanatbolcc.org

bolcc.atl@gmail.com