

January 2008

North York (Chinese) Baptist Church



Volume 16, Number 1

ENCOUNTERS

Newsletter of the NYCBC English-Speaking Congregation

“NYCBC – TOWARDS 2014” VISION

By God’s grace, over the next 10 years, NYCBC



“NYCBC-Towards 2014”, A 10-Year Plan for North York (Chinese) Baptist Church

a) will build a Godly, loving, welcoming, nurturing and growing community of Christ-like disciples relating with one another as families and friends.

b) will be a community of multiple cultural groups called and sent by God to serve

the people of our time in ways that are relevant to our neighbourhood, GTA, and the world.

c) will use 675 and 685 Sheppard Ave. East as the outreach- ing base for more than 2, 000 adults and their families engaging in worship and service.

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- *Anonymous*
- *Richard Choy*
- *Nelson Lau*
- *NYCBC*
- *M. & S. Border*

Giving Thanks by *Anonymous*

Some churches have a tradition of prayer meeting and countdown on New Year’s Eve. It may be appropriate to remember God’s goodness to me and the

church. Spiritually, I am grateful for God and His pardoning love. There is growth; although it is small and yet I have more

understanding of the hope that Christ has given us. Speaking of growth and hope, allow me to use point form to give thanks.

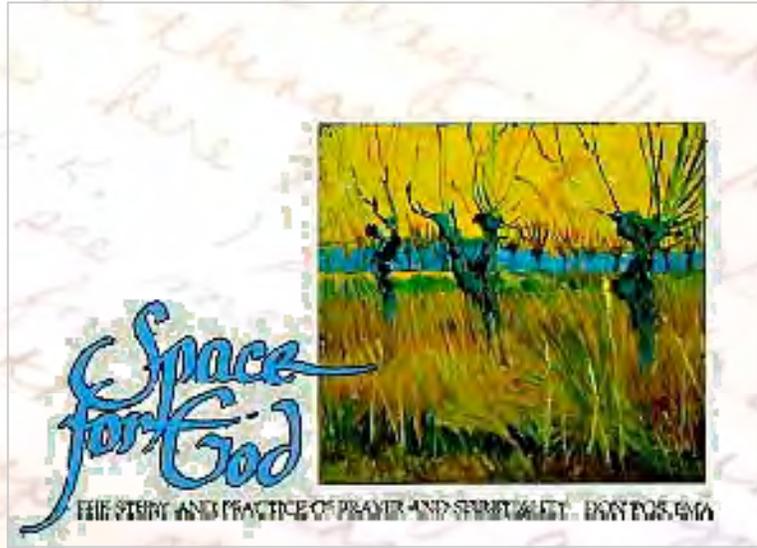
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Giving Thanks (continued from Page 1)

Journal

Learned to keep a journal and write down prayers.

I started to practice this discipline through the fellowship group sessions on "Space for God."



Identity

Learned more about my identity in Christ through a Sunday sermon, and how to live to bring heaven to earth.



Thanks for our pastors and their faithfulness in God.

Here I need to express my thanksgiving for Pastor Richard; I learn to respect him more and more.

"Here I need to express my thanksgiving for Pastor Richard"

Heart

We had a big storm a couple of weeks ago. When I came to church that Sunday, there were three trucks one behind another

plowing the snow and blocked all entrances on Sheppard Avenue. It warmed my heart when I saw so many people plowing and making ways for the cars to go into the

parking lots. Despite coldness and the blowing snow, they helped us walk safely to the church. I noticed that even young people like Timon or Joshua had helped.

Gratitude

There are lists of people to acknowledge.

Thanks for Robert and Maria who kept the prayer meetings going in 2007.

God has also provided us with His people to make our church live and work towards the purposes that God has set for us.

Thanks for Edward and Grace, and Alex serves in the deacon's role in 2008.

Grace and Kay are so instrumental to help our worship time.

The dedication of Walter and Betsy cannot be ignored.

Hope

God has given us much hope.



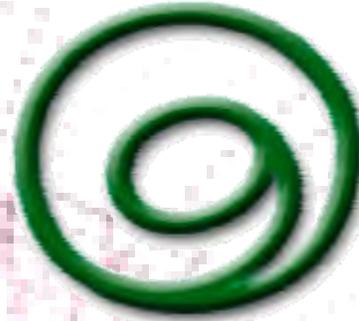
I appreciate Tom who puts his faith into practice; once he has found the truth, he keeps the truth.

Speaking of community life, we cannot survive without Irene; thanks for her friend Charmaine too.

There are endless people serving us; included are Joyce, Jeremy and Joyce, Clarence and Anna, Belinda and Clive, Ken Carey and Ken Cheng.

I feel that I am not expressing my gratitude adequately

May we be determined to be His disciples, commit ourselves to God and the big family that He has given us.



Gratitude symbol

for all His saints around us in the church.

I love to go to church, to worship God with you. It

really makes a difference to worship God corporately.

I love to see the mothers attending the services and Sunday School faithfully even when they have their newborn.

"Thanks for Edward and Grace, and Alex serves in the deacon's role in 2008"



FEBCC National Convention

November 5 – 8, 2007

by Richard Choy



I was sent by NYCBC as a delegate to the Fellowship of Evangelical Baptist Churches in Canada's (FEBCC) National Convention on November 5 to 8, 2007 held in Hamilton, Ontario.

Our church is a member of the Fellowship. We are identified with the Toronto Association, within the region called FEBCentral (Ontario).

This is likely the 7th or 8th Fellowship Convention I've been to in the past 20 years. But this one was different.



A national movement that convenes only once a year usually finds itself endlessly receiving reports and voting on housekeeping business.

I thought I was going to doze



through more of the same this year. Instead I found myself caught up in times of heartfelt worship, stirring messages from God's word, entertaining reports, and exciting business sessions that were not trivial or boring, but actually inspired hope!

CHANGE

10 years ago, the Fellowship membership plateaued at 500 churches from across Canada. There have been no net losses or gains for a decade. 70% of these churches are themselves plateaued or in decline. Last year, the Fellowship appointed a new President brought in with the express purpose of turning the Fellowship around. This year's convention is the beginning of changes designed to turn things around. The convention business that brings hope in the face of current statistics was the overwhelming endorsement of sweeping changes to the administration of the Fellowship. Boards of each of the ministry agencies of the Fellowship have been eliminated. There are now directors of these ministries with each one directly accountable to the Fellowship president, who in turn is accountable to national council, which is accountable to the convention. Ministry can happen now much more quickly with the streamlined bureaucracy. Although ministry fruit depends upon the Holy Spirit, the new structure reflects the new heartbeat of the Fellowship. We want to see change. We want renewal. We want to see churches encouraged and resourced to grow. We are hoping and praying that in 10 years, the Fellowship will see 70% of its churches healthy and growing with new believers. This year's national convention was a first step of faith in that direction.

A further very exciting development: As a Fellowship, it was felt that ministry must be a priority even during a national convention. So this year, one day was dedicated to blessing the convention host city. On Wednesday, all delegates had the opportunity to participate in an afternoon of apartment painting, garbage collection, winter coat give-away, hot chocolate give-away, or prayer in one of two high-risk neighbourhoods of the city. That evening was an open worship service at the downtown convention centre dedicated to blessing the city. National Convention will never be the same as the Fellowship commits itself to doing ministry alongside conducting business each year. In 2008, the Fellowship Convention date has actually been moved forward to August 4 to 6 in order to coincide with the 400th anniversary of the founding of the city of Quebec. Delegates will attend convention and get involved in a massive outreach to Quebec City and the surrounding area.



The grace of God must be at work if a conservative, old institution like the FEBCC can embrace this kind of change.

I am glad I had the opportunity to attend the convention this year.

Thank you for sending me.

I look forward to what God will do next year.



Pastor Richard Choy

The following is a summary of the major piece of business at Convention 2007:

“Changes to the Bylaws

UNIFIED STRUCTURE FOR MISSION AGENCIES

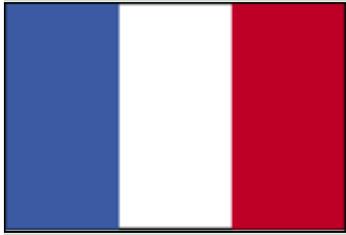
Explanation:

The most significant bylaw change being recommended by the National Council to the Convention delegates this year is a temporary amendment replacing Section 5 that will make the directors of agencies accountable to the President instead of to separate governing boards. The amendment will allow up to six years for the Council to demonstrate the effectiveness of this unified structure and will require a subsequent vote by Convention to make the change permanent.

Recommendations:

This structural change is recommended unanimously by the National Council to Convention. The President considers this structural change critical to a revitalization of the Fellowship. The National Council and each of the three agency boards have voted unanimously to endorse it: National Council, FEBInternational Board, Chaplaincy Board, French Mission Board.”

This change was motioned and carried by the Convention. Although delegates to the Convention recognize that any real change or revival in the Fellowship must be brought by the Holy Spirit, this move reflects a desire to see the Holy Spirit work by implementing increased leader accountability and diminished bureaucracy.



**Due to sensitivity issue, names and places have been altered.*

A summer on the road...again

During our short Home Assignment this past summer, the Lord reminded us that we are well cared for in his covenant of love. We are thankful for the many individuals who were the instruments of God's care. We rejoice also for the opportunity to introduce Annie, one of our church leaders, to some of our supporting churches and to life à la Canadienne!

Travelling with our two older teenage daughters this past summer also reminded us of the significant changes that our family is presently going through. A. has completed high school and is looking into the next step in life—starting with a one year training programme in Floral Art in Paris. With G. in high school for two more years, we are realizing that our children are entering those adult years very quickly. Please pray for us as a family as we grow through these life changes by God's enabling grace. It's just as challenging for parents, as for children.

A summer of miracles

After a difficult year of grieving over the death of her partner, S.'s niece, Marie-Eve, went down a very dark path into drugs and the occult, which led her, incredibly, to rediscover the depth of God's love and care for her. At the end of June, just before our arrival in Canada, God led Marie-Eve to find freedom in Christ from dark spiritual forces at work in her life and started her on the road to recovery from drugs. In looking back, we now see how God had orchestrated our visit with her in mid-July, and assigned us a specific role in her spiritual journey. We had the privilege and joy of helping her take the next steps of doing more "house cleaning" through prayer ministry, leading her to get rid of occult objects and connecting her with a local church. To give only the "PowerPoint version" of this wonder-full story, Marie-Eve took the initiative to get baptised the following week and has sought to get her life harmonized with the Gospel. What is more, the man with whom she was living miraculously turned to Christ, after trying to take his life twice, and after having witnessed the power of God to bring about real changes in Marie-Eve's life. He also was baptised. They also decided to get married quickly. All of this is like a dream. Please continue to pray with us for this "recomposed family," as they seek to build a new life together on the foundation of Christ and his word, and to integrate into a local church.

Coming back to NLG

The return trip to the church plant in NLG confirmed suspicions about Satan's work in seeking to oppose the church from moving ahead. Please continue to pray that God would show himself strong in the face of spiritual opposition so that a solid church would be established in NLG. Pray especially that one couple would wake up to God's call to save their marriage by getting the right counselling. On another note, we are very thankful for the arrival of our colleagues, Pierre and Jeanine B., with their children. We have been witnesses of God's goodness in the face of many obstacles. Today, for example, Pierre came out of a French administrative office with a residency card that normally takes years to get. We see this as a sign of God's stamp of approval and cannot help but thinking that there is fruitful ministry ahead. We are all looking forward to a good year of spreading the flame of the Gospel together in NLG, through many means!

Finances

Support needs: **\$350/m**

Rental facility project:

The NLG church plant urgently needs to get out of the Hotel in order to move ahead. We are seeking to raise \$5000 over the next year. Please consider giving a one time gift to help the church plant grow.



On mission with God
Serving with
FEBInternational



Christmas 2007

Borderpape

In our last edition of the Borderpaper, we talked about how God had been mightily at work in Marie-Eve, S.'s niece. It's incredible to hear about God's ongoing work of putting order and peace back into Marie-Eve's life, after over thirty years of significant suffering. We rejoice in our great God!

We also talked about Satan's work in seeking to hinder the advance of God's work in NLG. The fall has been quite challenging, as we have had to face up to a significant change of mood in our small assembly—with tensions over charismatic issues. The presence of the Bolducs, our new colleagues with FEBInternational, has served to bring encouragement in facing up to these divisive issues. Please continue to pray for wisdom as we seek to keep the church focused on the essentials of the faith, as well as growing into deeper spiritual unity through the process. One of our difficulties has been the fact that the "ring leader" in the charismatic issues is a very influential person in the church. Please be in prayer also for one couple in particular who has been very faithful up until this fall, but is presently showing signs of "withdrawal" and refuse to talk openly about what happened. In times like these, we are learning to trust God in deeper ways, and to recognize that HE'S in control...and that is a totally reassuring thought that empowers us in our security!

But the fall has not only been one of spiritual warfare. It has also been a time for serving Christ and his kingdom purposes. We have had the joy of sharing the Good News in several ways. At thanksgiving, we put on a special artistic evening in conjunction with a sister church plant. We invited a professional theatre group to present the Gospel in creative ways to our friends, while we enjoyed a traditional thanksgiving meal. Over 50% of the people present were unbelievers, many of whom had heard the Gospel for the first time!

Support needs

*We praise God for his faithfulness in 2007 and your partnership in providing for our needs. **We continue to look to him in faith for \$300 per month that we lack.***

*We have placed a challenge before our little church to move into a rental facility in the coming year. **We are looking to raise \$5000 in 2008 to encourage this step of faith.***

More prayer needs

- *We are still struggling to get a Market ministry set up. The city rejected the church request to hold a book table in the local Market. But, we have not thrown in the towel. God has given us other ideas of how to get to the Market. Please prayer for an open door.*
- *Pray that the church would grow in unity.*
- *We praise God for the good team spirit between us and the B. Pray that their ministry would continue to develop and bear fruit.*
- *Pray for the renewal of our strength and vision to face the new challenges in 2008.*

thanksgiving and men's evening out, we are planning to have a majority of unbelievers with us to meditate on Jesus' birth. Again, as we enjoy doing in France, our Christmas programme will include a meal, and followed by a creative presentation of the meaning of Christmas. We need your prayers for a special work of God's Spirit in the heart of each one. May God visit us in a unique way!

Finally, in the midst of a fairly laborious fall in ministry, God has intervened in the life of a young woman that we have known for over fifteen years. We will talk more about this in the coming editions of the Borderpaper. But for now, we simply want to share our joy with you about a special work of God's grace breaking through strongholds, which has led our friend to submit to the lordship of Christ. S. and Jeanine were God's special instruments in helping this spiritually needy person turn to Christ. Please prayer with us for spiritual growth and for how God will use this woman to be an instrument of his glory in the time ahead.

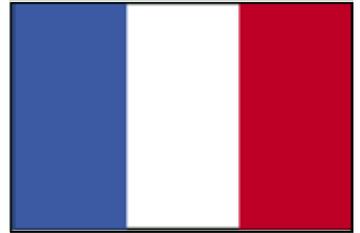
We give thanks to the Lord for the wonder of sharing together in his great work of announcing glad news of his incarnation and total commitment to his creation. May his glory shine upon you during this Christmas season!

A month later, in November, we continued our outreach efforts through a men's evening out, around a meal and an interactive discussion on communication between men and women. Again, several of the men who came out were unbelievers, who took to heart that Christians are committed to building strong families and becoming better communicators.

We have also distributed 5000 offers for a free calendar with a daily bible verse. This served to mobilise the church to get out into the city's neighbourhoods, as well as a significant prayer effort. We have had over ten responses so far and are praying for at least ten more.

Our last significant outreach event for this year is happening this coming Sunday. We have annual "Fête de Noël," an event that seeks to share the message of Christmas with our neighbours. This year, building on our

On mission with God
Serving with
FEBInternational



M. & S. Border

Christmas 2007



BLOOPERS

CHURCH

- The Fasting & Prayer Conference includes meals.
- The sermon this morning: 'Jesus Walks on the Water.' The sermon tonight: 'Searching for Jesus.'
- Ladies, don't forget the rummage sale. It's a chance to get rid of those things not worth keeping around the house. Bring your husbands.
- Remember in prayer the many who are sick of our community. Smile at someone who is hard to love. Say 'Hell' to someone who doesn't care much about you.
- Don't let worry kill you off - let the Church help.
- Miss Charlene Mason sang 'I will not pass this way again,' giving obvious pleasure to the congregation.
- For those of you who have children and don't know it, we have a nursery downstairs.
- Next Thursday there will be tryouts for the choir. They need all the help they can get.
- Irving Benson and Jessie Carter were married on October 24 in the church. So ends a friendship that began in their school days.
- A bean supper will be held on Tuesday evening in the church hall. Music will follow.
- At the evening service tonight, the sermon topic will be 'What Is Hell?' Come early and listen to our choir practice.
- Eight new choir robes are currently needed due to the addition of several new members and to the deterioration of some older ones.

submitted

BY

BLOOPERS



NELSON LAU

- Scouts are saving aluminum cans, bottles and other items to be recycled. Proceeds will be used to cripple children.
- Please place your donation in the envelope along with the deceased person you want remembered.
- The church will host an evening of fine dining, super entertainment and gracious hostility.
- Potluck supper Sunday at 5:00 PM - prayer and medication to follow.
- The ladies of the Church have cast off clothing of every kind. They may be seen in the basement on Friday afternoon.
- This evening at 7 PM there will be a hymn singing in the park across from the Church. Bring a blanket and come prepared to sin.
- Ladies Bible Study will be held Thursday morning at 10 AM. All ladies are invited to lunch in the Fellowship Hall after the B.S. is done.
- The pastor would appreciate it if the ladies of the Congregation would lend him their electric girdles for the pancake breakfast next Sunday.
- Low Self Esteem Support Group will meet Thursday at 7 PM. Please use the back door.
- The eighth-graders will be presenting Shakespeare's Hamlet in the Church basement Friday at 7 PM. The congregation is invited to attend this tragedy.
- Weight Watchers will meet at 7 PM at the First Presbyterian Church. Please use large double door at the side entrance.
- The Associate Minister unveiled the church's new campaign slogan last Sunday: 'I Upped My Pledge - Up Yours.'

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We're on the Web!

www.nycbc.on.ca



Our Mission

Empowering God's People,
Blessing our World

Our Vision

We are to glorify God as disciples of Christ who reflect His image and serve him.

We shall engage in God-centred worship, Bible-based teaching, body life relationships, servanthood ministry, community service, lifestyle evangelism, strategic church planting, and global missions.

Through the power of the Holy Spirit, we seek to obey the Greatest Commandment and fulfill the Great Commission of Christ so as to bless our kinsmen and all peoples in our neighbourhood, greater Toronto, and the world.

About *Encounters*

Encounters is the newsletter of the English-Speaking Congregation (ESC) at North York (Chinese) Baptist Church (NYCBC), here in Toronto, Ontario, Canada. It is published twice a year, and is meant to serve as an *inclusive* medium through which all members of the ESC can share their thoughts about the different ways in which they encounter God in their lives.

For publication in the **Summer/August issue**, please send your submissions via e-mail to Giselle Chin at jiminycricket18@gmail.com.

For publication in the **Winter/January issue**, please send your submissions via e-mail to Charmaine Ing at charmaineing@rogers.com.

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