

ETC Monthly

Berkeley Chinese Community Church

卜技利中華基督教會

Nov. 8, 2009

From the Desk of Dr. Karl Fung

Dear Members and Friends,

On Nov 8 we begin our Stewardship Campaign and we will conclude and celebrate our commitment on Dec 13. We will focus on learning and reflecting on the biblical mandate of stewardship during our services.

Stewardship means managing all our resources from God for His glory and the betterment of His creation. Stewardship begins and ends with the understanding that God has the ownership of all:

- *"I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End." (Revelation 22:13)*
- *"The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it." (Psalm 24:1)*
- *"To the Lord your God belong the heavens, even the highest heavens, the earth and everything in it." (Deuteronomy 10:14)*
- *"The land must not be sold permanently, because the land is mine and you are but aliens and my tenants." (Leviticus 25:23)*
- *"Who has a claim against me that I must pay? Everything under heaven belongs to me." (Job 41:11)*

Stewardship is the responsibility we have in using wisely the gifts that God has bestowed on us. An example of stewardship is in Genesis 2:15. "And the LORD God took the man, and put him into the Garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it."

A broader concept of stewardship is illustrated in Jesus' parable of the "talents", which refer to an amount of amount of money but by implication and by common use of the word in English as "abilities." Frequent references to the "tithe" or giving of a "tenth" are found throughout the Bible. The tithe represents the returning to God a significant, specific, and intentional portion of material gain. However, giving is not limited to the tithe or a specific amount, illustrated by Jesus' comment that a woman who gave a very small amount had given more than those had given large amounts because "while they gave out of their abundance, she gave all she had to live on." (Mark 12.41-44; Luke 21.1-4)

I invite you to grow with us during this Stewardship Campaign period. God has blessed us so richly this year. What can we do to be faithful stewards on what God had entrusted on us?

A pledge form will be sent to you latter to enable you to make a commitment to God through our church. Meanwhile, thank God every day and pray for the ministries of our church.

In His love, Karl

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Waterproofing

--Derrick Wu, Moderator

It fell overnight and lasted for only a little while into the morning, not exactly a cause for celebration. Nonetheless it came at a time when the earth around us definitely needed the relief. The sweet smell of rain woke me but its magical pitter-patter on my roof kept me in bed. Lying there I congratulated myself for putting off washing my car the other day. Procrastination worked out. I always have a certain fondness for rain and rainy days. The tropical downpours of Thailand, the morning mists in Scotland, the twilight showers of Hawaii, and the no-end-in-sight precipitation of Oregon...love them all. Having lived in Eugene for 4 years I still try hard to stick to that unwritten Oregonian rule: umbrellas are for wimps. I'd rather risk pneumonia than be caught with an umbrella. Rain refreshes. Rain cleanses. Rain replenishes. No rain, no rainbow. The lines of Paul Simon's *Kathy's Song* occurred to me, "*As I watch the drops of rain, weave their weary path and die; I know that I am like the rain, there but for the grace of you go I.*" I could have easily slept in, stayed in and gotten all romantic about this first rain of the season... but no, not this day.

This first rain was also the first test for one of my projects that has been under construction. The contractor has just finished installing 890 windows as well as 50,000 square feet of roofing. I was anxious to find out how they all fared after the rain. You see, water leakage in a building is every builder and architect's nightmare. Rain creeps. Rain seeps. Rain finds the smallest cracks and holes and does its damage. No rain, no litigations.

The most notable teaching in the Bible that makes reference to construction is Matthews 7:24-27 - whoever hears Jesus' words and put them into practice is like the wise builder who builds his house on the rock that withstands the heaviest of storms. While a strong foundation

on solid ground is essential, let me tell you that when rain comes down, your house better be watertight also. Water infiltration damages building materials and furnishings, and can become significant sources of microbiological contamination in building environment leading to potential health problems for its occupants. To expand on Jesus' parable, I'd say that putting his word into practice is also like a wise builder who waterproofs his house to prevent any damages that rainstorms can do.

When Paul tried to steady the Ephesian church for the tough years ahead and encourage the church to carry on with their spiritual battle, he used the analogy of the armor of God - the belt, the breastplate, the sandals, the shield, the helmet, the sword. These are the outfits with which we can equip ourselves for the battle we will face in our Christian lives. Switching from the offensive to the defensive, how then do we Christians safeguard ourselves from the onslaught of external forces that sometimes beat down on us like rainstorms and penetrate like water? Perhaps we can draw our own analogy from these waterproofing measures - building paper, vapor barriers, bituminous coating, flashing, counter-flashings, sealant, caulking, roof pitch, gutter, downspout, splash blocks, drain tiles, sump pumps...where have you gone Mr. Bob Villa? From roofs to walls to foundation, we dare not leave a single corner unprotected. And so in the same manner we should look at defending our Christian lives and our church against the penetration and damage of sin, sickness and sorrow by waterproofing them to a tee through putting Jesus' words into practice, and through prayer and supplication recognizing our need for his help.

The first rain has come and gone. Weather forecast now warns of overnight gusty wind up to 45 mph. Did I hear you ask how a wise builder braces his house against strong winds?

路得記讀後感 黃陳淑惠

今年婦女團契以聖經“路得記”為我們一起研讀的一卷書。我很喜歡此卷書，因為書中的人物都很善良可愛，全書雖僅有四章，但它卻能完整地記敘一段生動感人的故事：話說在士師時代，猶大伯利恆有一個人叫以利米勒因躲避饑荒，帶著妻子拿俄米及兩個兒子移居摩押地，後來以利米勒死了，剩下拿俄米和兩個兒子。這兩個兒子各娶了摩押女子為妻。十年後兩個兒子也死了，當時拿俄米聽說耶和華眷顧猶大地，不再有饑荒，於是決定回猶大地。臨行，拿俄米囑兩個兒媳各自回娘家並盼望他們能找到新夫家，唯路得捨不得婆婆，堅決與婆婆同返猶大地。上帝祝福這個愛心的媳婦，使她在猶大地遇見一位敬畏上帝的富人波阿斯，最後嫁給了波阿斯。拿俄米也得到路得之子奉養其老。路得成為大衛王之曾祖母。

路得記讓我看見溫情和親情-拿俄米與路得之間婆媳情；路得與波阿斯之間的男女情；而在人間情意的背後，有一份更高的更深的情，那就是神自己的愛與引導。反覆思想書中三位主角之言行，感受良多，願與弟兄姊妹分享之：

• 慈愛的婆婆-拿俄米：

移居外邦幾十年，喪夫又喪子，當她年老想落葉歸根時，她首先考慮的是媳婦的前途，於是她囑咐兩個兒媳各自回娘家並祝福他們說“願耶和華恩待你們——使你們各在新夫家得平安”（得一：8-9）。好一個既有愛心又開明的婆婆啊！從此句話中可見拿俄米雖移居外邦幾十年，她的信仰生活仍堅持不變-以耶和華為她的神。相信她的信仰必也實踐在她的生活中，因此路得被她的慈愛吸引，跟隨她並歸向她所敬拜的神。拿俄米回猶大地後仍是處處為媳婦著想，將媳婦視

如己出，以“女兒”相稱（得三：1）。從拿俄米身上我們可學到“婆媳相處之道”。

• 賢德的女子-路得：

丈夫去世後他不離不棄，堅持隨婆婆返猶大地，一句“你的國就是我的國，你的神就是我的神，除非死能使你我相離——”令人動容。她既孝且順（得三：5）；她殷勤工作，奉養婆婆（得二 7，23）。猶大地的婦女們對拿俄米說“有此兒婦比七個兒子還好”（得四：15），這正如廣東俗語說“好仔不如好新抱”；路得是蒙大恩的女子-由於她的敬神愛人，上帝帶領顧恤她，使她“恰巧地”到波阿斯的禾場拾穗（得二：14）。最後她與波阿斯結婚，不但尋得好歸宿，還成為大衛王的曾祖母。

• “財”德兼備-波阿斯：

他是個大財主（得二：1）；他是個好主人，他到禾場見到收割的工人第一句話是“願耶和華與你們同在”（得二：4）他的信仰流露在他的生活中；他有憐憫心腸，他顧恤貧苦的拾穗者（得二：15-16）；他是正人君子，坐懷不亂（得三：7-14），這對富人而言尤為難得；他是一位願意對家族成員承擔責任的人。他不以自己的財勢，而是依猶太人之法，在眾長老面前為路得取得合法妻子的名份。

路得記以喜劇圓滿落幕。路得嫁給波阿斯後家室興旺，見證了上帝對敬愛他的人的祝福及揀選，路得以一個寂寂無名的摩押女子，成為神救贖計劃中重要的角色，名列在基督的家譜中，何等榮耀！



Reflections on the Story of Ruth

-- Joy Wong

Beginning in the month of October, the Women's Guild chose to study the book of Ruth in the Old Testament. This is one of my favorite books in the Bible because the main characters there are all kind and nice people. Although the book has only four chapters, it tells a captivating and heart-warming story.

"In the days when the judges ruled, there was a famine in the land, and a man from Bethlehem in Judah, together with his wife and two sons, went to live for a while in the country of Moab. The man's name was Elimelech, his wife's name Naomi..." (1:1-2). Elimelech died, leaving Naomi with two sons who each took a Moabite woman as wife. Ten years later, both sons also died and Naomi was without either husband or sons. As news reached Naomi that the Lord has come to the aid of Judah that the famine was over, she decided to go back to the land of Judah. Upon her departure from Moab, Naomi told her daughters-in-law, *"Go back, each of you, to your mother's home...May the Lord grant that each of you will find rest in the home of another husband"* (1:8-9). Ruth, one of the daughters-in-law, did not want to leave Ruth and accompanied her to the land of Judah. The story continues as the Lord blessed the faithful Ruth and arranged for her to meet a rich and righteous relative of Elimelech, Boaz. Boaz took Ruth as wife and they had a son who eventually became the great grandfather of David, king of Israel.

From the book of Ruth, I have learned about love between mother and daughter-in-law, love between man and woman, and behind both the love of God that nurtures and guides. These loves are expressed through the three main characters in the story which I want to share:

- Naomi as a loving mother-in-law

After decades of living in a foreign land, having lost husband and sons, she was without support of family and friends. Yet she bid the

daughters-in-law to go home and start their new families. We can see that Naomi has the faith in God and lived it out in her life. It was her love that bound the two women together. No wonder Ruth was moved to say, *"Where you go I will go... your people will be my people and your God my God."* (1:16) And Naomi call Ruth, *"My daughter"*. The relationship between the two women is a model for us all.

- Ruth the virtuous woman

After her husband died, Ruth the Moabite woman insisted on following Naomi to the land of Judah. Her reason: *"Where you die I will die, and there I will be buried. May the Lord deal with me, be it ever so severely, if anything but death separates you and me"* (1:17). Her subservience to Naomi exceeds those in the traditional Chinese virtues. Thus, *"I will do whatever you say,"* (3:5) and *"For your daughter-in-law, who loves you and who is better to you than seven sons, has given him birth."* (4:15) Her good deed was rewarded by God, leading her to work in the field of Boaz the rich relative, who married her and together became the great grand parents of King David.

- The rich and righteous Boaz

Although being a *"man of standing"*, Boaz was also a benevolent master. When he greeted his workers in the field, he would say, *"The Lord be with you!"* (2:4) He was not only charitable to those who were poor and unemployed, he was also upright with his principles, not taking advantage of others when tempted (3:7-14). Boaz did not abuse his power and position, as he followed all the Jewish laws and traditions to acquire Ruth as his legal wife. It is rare for a powerful figure like Boaz to be humble and kind.

The marriage of Ruth to Boaz was blessed by *"the elders and all the people"* (4:11-12) which was both a happy ending to the romance and an auspicious beginning for the House of David. God has used such good people in His plan of salvation as they became the great grand parents of David the king of Israel.

Special People in My Spiritual Journey

-- Mabel Low

(On Laity Sunday, July 26, Mabel gave a testimony at the morning worship service. The theme of her presentation is the people having the greatest influence on her spiritual life. The following is an excerpt from her talk.)

In 1934, after my family moved to Denver, Colorado, this lovely little spinster lady, named Mary Van Deren, who had been a missionary in China, somehow heard that a new Chinese family with lots of kids had just arrived in town. She convinced my parents that we should start going to her church. The church was quite a distance from our house so to be sure that we would be able to get there, she came to our house every Saturday, on the streetcar, to bring car fare for all of us kids to go to Sunday School the next day. Rain, snow, sleet or hail, she never missed a day. After awhile, we did not have to rely on her for car fare, but we continued to attend that church until we moved to California in 1947. We will always remember Mary Van Deren for the care and compassion that she showed the Chinn family by planting the seeds and for nurturing and encouraging us.

My father passed away in 1944 and my brother, Joe was working in San Francisco so the family decided to relocate to the Bay Area in 1947. Joe bought a house in Berkeley on Delaware Street, about 5 blocks from here. Our next door neighbor's mother, Mrs. L. K. Wong attended church at BCCC when it was located on Addison Street. Through Mrs. Wong, I met Lily and Rose who invited me to come to church and it is because of them that BCCC has been an important part of my life. Mrs. Wong even convinced my mom to come to church and one of the proudest days of her life is when she was baptized and accepted the Lord as her savior. I have been at this church since 1948, except for the five years after I was married when we lived in Tucson, Arizona.

Sunny and I were married in 1955 and we lived in Tucson for the first five years. Sunny was not then a church-goer but we did attend a church near the campus. As a child, and because he lived in the barrio among Mexicans, he went to the Catholic church. As he grew older, he stopped attending church and it wasn't until we moved back to the Bay Area that he began to attend church regularly. He immediately got involved with many aspects of the church. Even though we had no young children at the time, Sunny became involved with the Boy Scouts for many years as the Scoutmaster. At the same time, he served on many boards, including the church treasurer. He was also on several national UCC boards, traveling to meetings all over the United States. It was because of his love for God and this church that he devoted so much time and energy to it. Sunny was well liked because he was always very honest and people knew exactly how he felt. I admire him for his humble demeanor and for the way he lived his life, especially after he was diagnosed with multiple myeloma. He accepted what life had in store for him and accepted what he knew was the inevitable. He did not pity himself but lived life to the fullest. He possessed most if not all of the fruits of the spirit that I mentioned.

My brother Joe and my sister Dorothy didn't start attending BCCC until much later than I, but once they got involved, they devoted much more time and energy into the church than I have. Because of their involvement in serving humankind, both Dorothy and Joe were very inspirational and I do admire the many things they did and they were especially good role models for me. Joe was very quiet. A man of few words but when he spoke, he made a lot of sense. He too was on many of the church boards and he served as the Moderator during a very trying time in our church. Joe also served the community in many ways; for many years he was a tutor at one of the local schools.

(continued in next page)

(Special People; continued from page 5)

He also served on the Human Rights Commission of El Cerrito. My sister Dorothy was tireless in the work that she did for the church, on national boards of UCC as well as community organizations in the Bay Area. But her greatest accomplishment (other than her daughter Adrienne) was to establish a senior center, now known as the Dorothy Wong Senior Center, at our church. The Center is now 22 years old and is thriving, and it fills a void in the lives of many seniors, thanks to the dedicated volunteers who share and carry on Dorothy's vision. Joe and Dorothy were both inspirations to me.

Bessie Poy and Ellen Fong were two ladies who showed me what it was to work for the church. Mrs. Poy, who was Rusty Huie's grandmother and helped to raise him, was a remarkable woman. She was a great cook.... always in the kitchen but don't ever expect to get a recipe from her. Whenever anyone would ask, she would always say "just a little of this and a little of that". When we used to have congregational meetings each month, Mrs. Poy would make two huge pots of jook all by herself to feed all members who attended the meetings. She could also stretch a pan of Jello farther than anyone I know. When we had Easter or Thanksgiving dinners, one of her favorite salads to serve was a canned peach on a bed of lettuce. Right in the middle of the peach where the seed was removed would be two perfectly cut little squares of Jello which made the salad look more appetizing. I learned a lot from Bessie Poy and was inspired by her dedication and hard work.

Ellen Fong was unbelievable... she could do almost anything around the church. When she was superintendent of Sunday School, she decided that we needed some cabinets, so she made some... all by herself and if you go check out the Sunday school rooms, you will find that we still use those cabinets in spite of the fact

that they are probably over 50 years old. In the 70's, when there were Vietnamese refugees arriving in our area, Ellen saw a need and did something about it. She put out a call for donation of clothes and household goods and once a month held a giveaway for all who needed it. Single handedly, although sometimes she had a little help, she hauled out the goods from storage and set up tables for people to see what we were giving away. During the holidays, she organized a food donation which members helped to distribute. She did this for many years in spite of the fact that she had a pacemaker in her heart. The spirit of these ladies lives on at BCCC and I am grateful that I was able to learn from such unselfish and caring ladies.

I admire and respect Sharon MacArthur for the path that she has chosen to follow. For a person to start all over after working for many years in a different occupation, it would be very scary to me. But after years of serving at BCCC, something was beginning to "gnaw" at Sharon and she began to seek answers. One year, Sharon, Rose, and I were attending a conference at Asilomar, when out of the blue, she asked us how you knew if you were "called". I told her that I did not know but she should seek out someone in the ministry who might be able to answer her. Well... she did just that and somehow found the answer. She immediately made plans to quit her job and began the process of entering the seminary and the rest is history. It could not have been easy for Sharon to be a student again. She was recovering from breast cancer surgery and treatment, and she had to worry about how to balance her responsibilities to her family as well as focus on her studies, all this without a steady paycheck. But, her strong faith provided her with the courage to "answer His call" and after years of diligence and hard work, and I'm sure some "blood, sweat and tears", she is now a highly successful and compassionate pastor. Another Special Person to me!

Annual Church Membership Meeting

The annual November meeting of the church membership will be held on Sunday, Nov. 8, immediately after the 11:00 am worship service. The purpose is to elect officers for Year 2010. A financial report will be heard as well as other business that requires action. All BCCC members are urged to attend.

Cantare Children Pride and Joy Concert

The Cantare Children's Choir will be the guests of BCCC at a music and fun fest on Nov. 8, 1:00 pm after the annual membership meeting. This event has been a recent tradition of our church for outreach to young people of diverse background, and enjoyed by all ages.

Thanksgiving Luncheon at Church

A luncheon of roast turkey with all the trimmings is sponsored by the Board of Congregational Life to celebrate our national day of Thanksgiving on Sunday, Nov. 22, after a joint morning worship service at 11:00 am. Ticket sales and donations are received to benefit the needy while the congregation gathers for fellowship.

Alameda County Food Bank

Throughout the month of November, the Board of Mission will place bins in the church to receive donation of non-perishable food and other grocery items.

"Hanging of the Greens"

The Saturday after Thanksgiving, Nov. 28, is the day to decorate the church with Christmas tree and ornaments for the Advent Season. Everyone is invited to give a hand for the festive event with a potluck dinner and carol singing.

Praises and Prayers --Mabel Low

As we prepare to celebrate Thanksgiving, let us give praises for our countless blessings. For all things, big or small, let us be eternally grateful.

Praises that **Lindsay Huie** has passed the California Veterinarian Boards and she can now practice as a veterinarian in California. Our congratulations to Dr. Huie!!

Praises that **Rusty Huie**, who suffered a fall on his bicycle several months ago, has now been cleared to return to work. He is still going through some physical therapy daily but is doing much better. Now he can get back to work remodeling Lindsay's condo.

Praises that **Pastor Karl** and **Eugenia Fung** have purchased a home in El Cerrito that has exactly what they were looking for-- a spectacular view of the greater San Francisco Bay Area. They will be moving in soon and are anxious to get "settled in". It should be a wonderful holiday season for them in their new home this year.


Praises that **Mary New** is now feeling better and has returned to worshipping with her BCCC brothers and sisters.

Prayers for **Jerry Lee** as he recovers from knee surgery. He is presently at a rehabilitation facility and doing very well. We hope that his rehabilitation is swift and allows him to return to his home and resume his normal activities very soon.

Wedding Bells



The wedding of Helen Liem (center) in Hong Kong on Sept. 12 was attended by BCCC friends (from left) Godfrey, brother Jacky, Joyce, Vivian, Wesley, and Roy.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 Lunch fellowship	2	3 Senior Center	4	5	6	7
8 Joint worship; Annual member -ship meeting; Cantare Children's concert	9 El Cerrito area group meeting	10 Senior Center	11	12	13	14 Women's Guild meeting
15 Lunch fellowship	16 Cantonese prayer meeting	17 Senior Center	18	19 Walnut Creek/ Concord area group meeting	20	21
22 All-Church Thanksgiving Luncheon	23	24 Senior Center	25	26 Thanksgiving Day observed	27	28 "Hanging of the Greens" dinner and Advent decoration
29 Laity Sunday; Church Council meeting	30					

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