



**Graceland**  
CBCSD Newsletter #36  
April 16, 2023

*"But the land you are crossing the Jordan to take possession of ... is a land of the Lord your God cares for; the eyes of the Lord your God are continually on it... (Deuteronomy 11:11-12)"*

**Words from the Editor:**

Dear Family,

"My Church. My Home." How much do you know about this big family of CBCSD? The theme of this issue is "Happy Family." In addition to the group photos of each campus or congregation, there are also several brothers and sisters from each campus or congregation sharing their feelings about returning to the church's in-person worship and gatherings, or the reasons why they like to return to this spiritual home. I hope everyone will be encouraged and inspired. Everyone loves to "come home" to worship and serve God together and love each other!

**Main - Mandarin**

*Happy Family*



**Spring Fellowship, Celebrating Chinese New Year at Home:** Brothers and sisters from my fellowship signed up to perform two programs at CBCSD's churchwide dinner party for Chinese New Year. We had so much fun during rehearsals. On the day of the event, we watched the performances together in the audience just like a family would during New Year's Eve. As we were waiting to get on stage, we prayed for and encouraged each other. Praise the Lord! Our performances were well executed. We not only had a great time together, but also really enjoyed the love of our church family. – **Wei Ye**



**Grace Fellowship, Celebrating Chinese New Year at Home:** After three long years, the Grace Fellowship finally held its first in-person meeting since the pandemic lockdown. We gathered with overjoyed hearts and feasted on delicious food and brotherly love for each other. This experience gave me enough courage and reassurance to return to Sunday worship in person, as nothing can compare to worshipping God in His own house. In keeping with the new year's theme of "Love our church and love our home," I pray that God would bless us with new talents, new wisdom, new power, and new passion to serve each other and to serve Him. – **Becky Tsai**



**Spring Fellowship:** Our fellowship has been meeting in person for almost a year now. One thing we enjoy doing is fellowshiping over dinner every week. We easily and comfortably share what's going on in our lives so that we know how to care and pray

for each other, just as we do in our own families. When we were invited to participate in the New Year celebration, we decided to sing and dance to the song "Live Out Love." We had a lot of fun getting together to learn the song and the dance moves during rehearsals. In the end, it gave me a lot of joy to see everyone in the audience on their feet, singing and dancing together, in encouragement of one another. That's something you can only experience in person. – **Edcon Chang**



## Main - Fengyan



Returning to fellowship meetings in church again is like being cured of homesickness! I have not missed even a single meeting ever since in-person meetings resumed. I look forward to every meeting and thoroughly enjoy the love, support, and companionship from fellow brothers and sisters. I am so blessed to have them in my life. Praise the Lord! – **Jiang He**

Some people claim that believing in God is itself enough and that you don't necessarily have to go to church. I think that individuals are limited in their own strength, and one would be better off going to church to have face to face interactions with fellow Christians and to better worship God. If you are lacking, you can get help from others, and when you have excess, you can also help those who are in need. The weekly gathering at Fengyan Congregation is the only thing that can relieve me of the stress and fatigue from my weeklong toil and replace it with peace that only God can provide. I feel right at home where the calming presence of my loving brothers and sisters is. – **Yuping Guo**

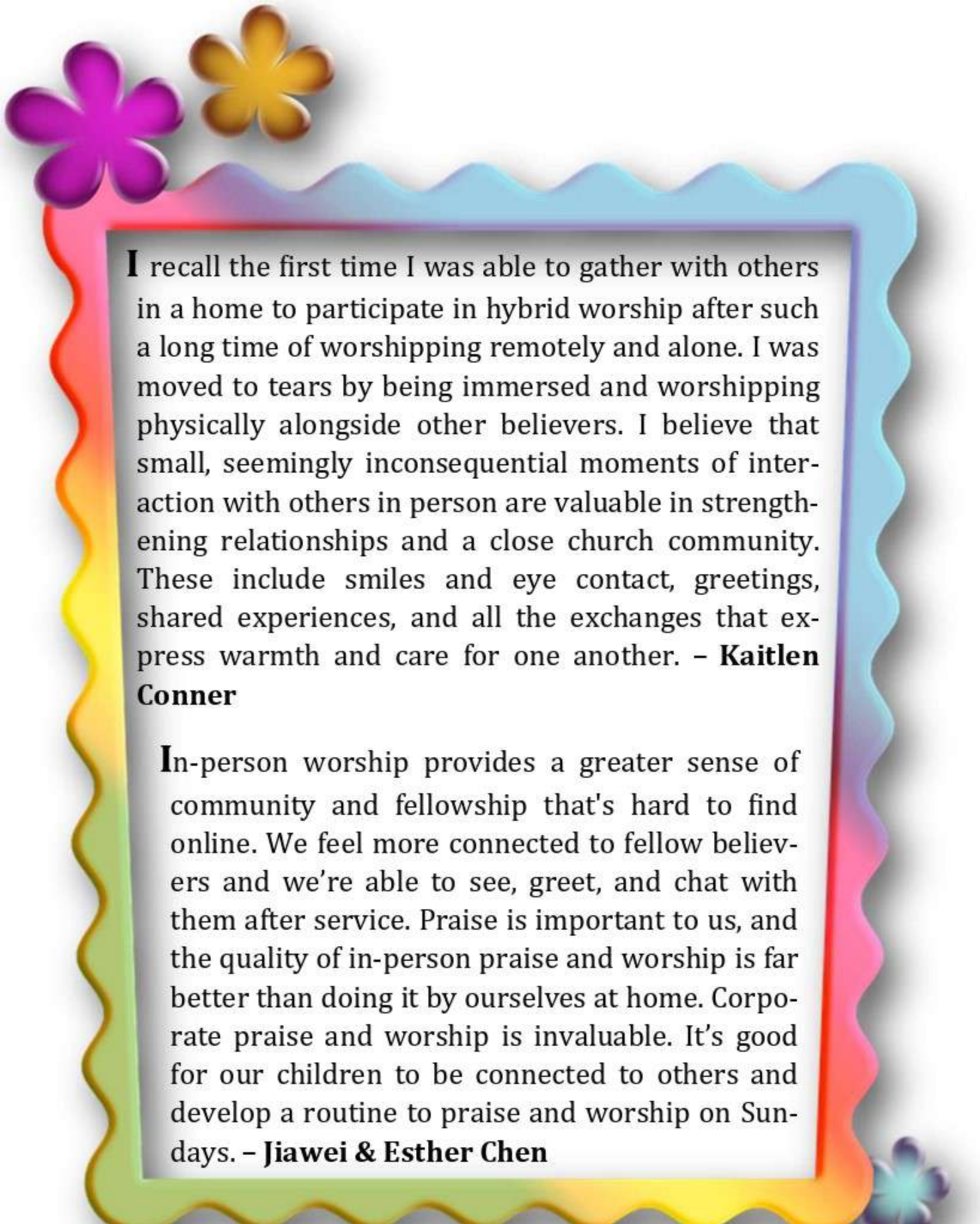
I love going to Fengyan Congregation as it is like a big family overflowing with love. It warms my heart to see fellow brothers and sisters there, praying for and supporting each other. I really enjoy playing games with everyone and learning God's words together! – **Yonghui Ye**

## Main – Lord's Grace




I watched on Zoom for a few Sundays when the church was holding services online. As someone who did not attend this church previously, I felt like I was watching the service from a distance. Since we did not know anyone, I did not feel like I was attending a church service. The singing was monotonous coming out from my iPad speakers and I had no understanding of some of the announcements. The message was interesting, but I was distracted by my surroundings and my iPad (losing audio and notifications). It has been a world of difference since we started worshipping at the church. I am meeting with many in the congregation. I know their names, their profiles, what their families are like, how their week is, and what vacations they are planning. I also share jokes with them and ask them for advice on household tasks that I am working on. Listening to the sermons in-person is more engaging and interesting. I can talk with the pastor after the sermons. Also, the music is lively, beautiful, and melodious. I feel a sense of belonging and I am growing spiritually. – **Kwee Sun**

Despite being able to sit in pajamas on my own couch and log in just with click of the remote, coming to church has a much stronger impact than the online worship. The Bible says it is good for brothers and sisters to be together: "How good and pleasant it is when God's people live together in unity! It is like precious oil poured on the head, running down on the beard, running down on Aaron's beard, down on the collar of his robe. It is as if the dew of Hermon were falling on Mount Zion. For there the Lord bestows his blessing, even life forevermore." (Psalm 133:1-3) There are more blessings and life in meeting together. – **John Mokili**

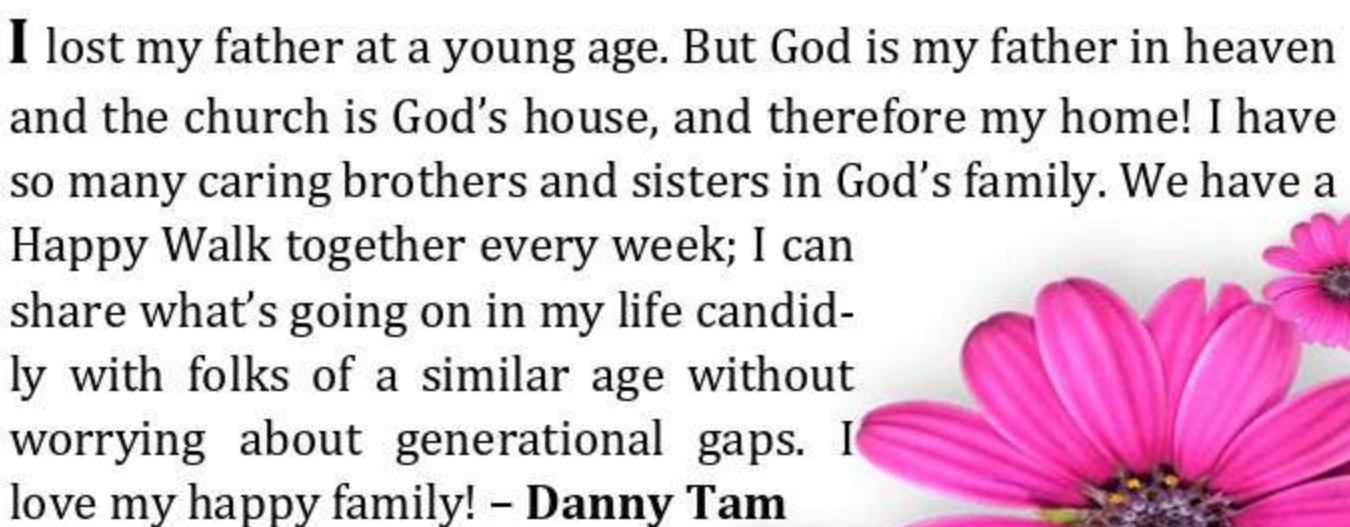


**I** recall the first time I was able to gather with others in a home to participate in hybrid worship after such a long time of worshipping remotely and alone. I was moved to tears by being immersed and worshipping physically alongside other believers. I believe that small, seemingly inconsequential moments of interaction with others in person are valuable in strengthening relationships and a close church community. These include smiles and eye contact, greetings, shared experiences, and all the exchanges that express warmth and care for one another. – **Kaitlen Conner**

**I**n-person worship provides a greater sense of community and fellowship that's hard to find online. We feel more connected to fellow believers and we're able to see, greet, and chat with them after service. Praise is important to us, and the quality of in-person praise and worship is far better than doing it by ourselves at home. Corporate praise and worship is invaluable. It's good for our children to be connected to others and develop a routine to praise and worship on Sundays. – **Jiawei & Esther Chen**



## **Main – Cantonese**



**I** lost my father at a young age. But God is my father in heaven and the church is God's house, and therefore my home! I have so many caring brothers and sisters in God's family. We have a Happy Walk together every week; I can share what's going on in my life candidly with folks of a similar age without worrying about generational gaps. I love my happy family! – **Danny Tam**



I am very grateful for having this spiritual home. The sharing of brothers and sisters helped me greatly in my spiritual growth. Their acts of love have done even more wonders! One time when I was sick, a sister came to visit me, and several brothers and sisters also showed concern and sent their greetings. I felt so loved by this family. – **Jenny Tam**

## Main - Youth



The church feels like home to me because the people feel like family. Without the people, which in my case refer to the youth, the church would feel empty and incomplete. At the end of the day, the people make the church and they are the reason why the church feels like home. – **Jonathan Tai (12th Grade)**

Being together with everyone in my youth group to worship God makes going to church for Sunday Worship and Friday fellowship feel like going home. When I get to church on Fridays or Sundays, I feel welcomed by everyone around me. Being on the youth praise team also helps because it allows me to get closer to God and be with my friends to praise God together. Fellowship definitely plays a big part in why I feel like the church is my home. – **Samantha Yang (8th Grade)**



## Main – NextGen



**N**extGen and Hearth Fellowship are communities made by people in different stages of life-- some in college, others working; some Christian, others non-Christian. No matter the person, NextGen and Hearth create a community genuinely seeking to know more of God and to glorify Him. Looking over the past couple of years, we can really see how much the group has grown, in numbers and maturity, and it is clear that God is really moving this fellowship. Furthermore, being part of a small group and serving on ministry teams has given me a sense of belonging and God-given purpose. – **Michelle Hwa (Ella)**

**I** enjoy coming to Hearth Fellowship because the people here really feel like my family. There's so many memories with Hearth that I will cherish forever, especially going out for lunch after Sunday service every week. Hearth feels like home because of all the love between everybody. I genuinely feel a sense of belonging and community here. – **Jasmine Jin**

**I** believe that there is an importance of ownership, an importance of identity. While so many other churches around here perhaps might be known for their worship, their speakers, or their community, Hearth has strongly emphasized the core value of giving everyone an opportunity to serve, which has truly strengthened my identity with the ministry, as the chance to serve whether be teaching, shepherding, or leadership really forces you to take ownership of your faith and fellowship. Therefore, Hearth has really become a home for me, a place that I along with those I serve with built together. – **Nick Dai**



I like to go to Church because it's fun to see my friends and enjoy time with them. I also like going to Church because I get to learn about God and the Bible. - Zachary Lim (6th Grade)

why I like going to church  
I get to be part of the worship team,  
Play with friends and  
learn more about God!  
Joanna Kwan Age 10

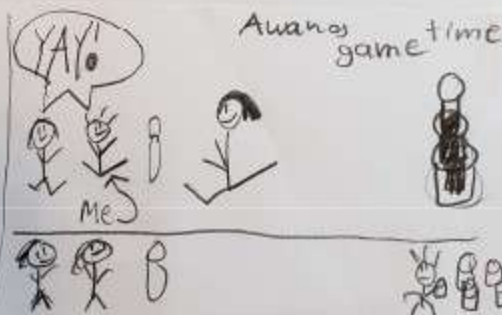


I like to go to church because I can learn God's words to grow closer to God. I also enjoy being with my friends, especially my friends in my worship team, who I practice worship songs with every Sunday. - Jacob Zhu (Age 10)

Name: Joshua Kwan Age: 7 years old  
Why I like going to church.  
**Question**

I like going to church because I like eating snacks, and reading Bible stories

I like going to church like going to Awana earning shares and playing the games and Movies.





## Gathering in the Lord's Love

Central Campus, Lan Tang

January 15th was the first Love Small Gathering in 2023 for Central Campus. The PFC small group carefully prepared snacks and teas. In the meantime, Brother Jun Cui took the first photo of the church after three years.

When three sisters from PFC were asked about their feelings coming to the Love Small Gathering, they responded this way. Salina said, "At in-person gatherings, I have a strong feeling that everyone is helping to support this family in their own little way, so at the same time everyone receives the benefits." Xiying smiled and said, "It felt so good to see all the brothers and sisters that we haven't met for so long." Kathy said, "I really like communion at in-person gatherings because we can see brothers and sisters in all these different groups. Everyone is like family."

Songbo from the Keep Watch small group also added that "It's so good that we can come back to church again. Listening to the computer screen at home is clear and smooth, but I always left with a feeling that I wasn't in it. I would also drag myself in late and I couldn't focus from the beginning to the end. Returning to in-person gatherings means that I won't be late or leave early. We can all sing worship songs together and encourage one another, and really feel that the church is a big family. We are all from different parts of the church body and we shouldn't be separated."

聖地牙哥中區主恩堂  
2023年1月15日



## North Campus



In-person gatherings have a more reverent and vigilant atmosphere where we can receive God's words and praise God together with brothers and sisters, as well as express our mutual love and care for each other. Online gatherings, on the other hand, tend to be more casual, and cannot replicate the warm, homey atmosphere of being in a physical church. I prefer in-person gatherings because I can more strongly feel the presence of God's love, the love of my brothers and sisters, the love of the church, and the love of the pastors for their flock (through prayer and care).

- **Annie Lin**

Seeing long-lost brothers and sisters again feels like returning to a warm home after being away for an extended trip. Online meetings are more prone to distractions, and one may also attempt to do other things simultaneously. In contrast, it's much easier to stay focused during in-person meetings and to have a more dynamic experience simply by being present. Interactions with pastors and fellow brothers and sisters become easier, too. For me, the difference between online and in-person meetings are like watching a concert DVD versus attending the concert in person. - **Christopher Liao**

I was so happy to see fellow brothers and sisters face to face again! It felt like a reunion with long lost family members! In person meetings give me more realistic experiences and make it easier to stay focused, as there are no distractions like those often found during virtual meetings at home. I like worshiping God in unity with fellow brothers and sisters, as well as the opportunity to catch up with one another after worship. - **Helene Chen**

## Temecula Valley Campus



**In-person worship follows the Lord's teaching. People can help, pray for, and encourage one another on the road to heaven. We must prepare our hearts when worshiping and singing praises. After worship in-person, we can also get involved by sharing with brothers and sisters and we become one another's encouragement. However, virtual worship is more casual. There is no interaction with others, and it's very easy to be distracted. - Joyce Lin**

**I love in-person worship because I can see brothers and sisters come together happily to worship and be with God, spending great time together. Praise the Lord Jesus. - Mama Rong**

**In-person worship enables everyone to see brothers and sisters worship and serve together, and we can greet everyone in person, which encourages more communication among us. Virtual worship seems surreal. - Lily Song**

**During in-person worship, we can hear every word of greeting from brothers and sisters; we can feel all handshakes and hugs. This is a form of encouragement and support. Especially for newly reborn Gospel babies, in-person makes it easier to communicate, draw closer to God, and improve their relationship. - Fang Ye**

**In-person worship is the norm for church gatherings, and also the most natural way. When the Bible teaches us to "not cease gathering," it meant this type of gathering. The New Testament also depicts the way the disciples gathered: to preach, pray, break bread, and share. This intimate sharing in the name of the Lord is something that online worship can't reach. - Shula Achord**

## Downtown Worship Center



## West Campus

There is a Chinese saying that goes like this: "To be separated for a single day feels like being separated for three years." This is exactly how we missed our brothers and sisters



from our church family over COVID lockdown. Our hearts were full of longing for the in-person Bible studies and prayer meetings that happened pre-lockdown. "How good and pleasant it is when brothers live together in unity." (Psalm 133:1) The church is our spiritual home on Earth and our brothers and sisters are our closest family members. We are truly so blessed to have such a home and, even more so, to be able to finally return home! - **Ban Li and Ruowei Jiang**

When I returned to in-person Sunday Service, from the moment I entered church premises I was immediately struck by the warmth and excitement radiating from the faces I met. My heart melted from long-overdue hugs and greetings from brothers and sisters. It made a world of difference to be able to sing and worship our God in unison in the church sanctuary; to enter fellowship gatherings and share our thoughts and concerns for each other, face to face; and to help further each other's understanding of God's words and inspire each other in Bible studies. It was such a welcome change from virtual attendance, especially because I found myself getting more and more easily distracted over time - or even slacking off - during those online sessions. - **Xiuying Han**

### Editorial Group Members:

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