

Looking Back, Looking Ahead

Volume 5

Encouraging True Stories from 2019-20

What Have I Witnessed of Jesus?

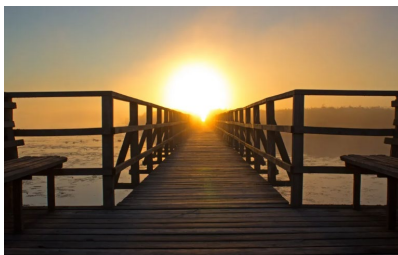
About Revive

Revive Presbyterian Church is all about new life in Christ for the nations of Silicon Valley.



Any opinions and thoughts contained in these testimonies do not necessarily reflect the stated opinions of Revive Presbyterian Church as an organization.

Letter from the Editor



2020...Each summer, high school graduates all around the nation think up clever catchphrases to celebrate their year of graduation. For the graduates of 2020, a popular theme was some variation of “2020, perfect vision for a bright future”.

Well, unfortunately, 2020 hasn’t been so bright. Frankly it’s been kind of dark and full of crises. And this has led people to ask many important questions, including big questions about life and our world.

The first disciples of Jesus had the following conversation which started with such a question:

“3 Tell us, when will these things be, and what will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age?” 4 And Jesus answered them, “See that no one leads you astray. 5 For many will come in my name, saying, ‘I am the Christ,’ and they will lead many astray. 6 And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not alarmed, for this must take place, but the end is not yet. 7 For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and there will be famines and earthquakes in various places. 8 All these are but the beginning of the birth pains.

Matthew 24:3-8

Having seen our fair share of pains, crises, and conflicts in 2020, these have prompted people from all around the world, who despite coming from different nations, speaking different languages, are asking the same

questions. The underlying question is “Is there some hope?”. The good news is that there’s an ultimate answer for these important questions, and the answer does not lie in a policy or an idea or a philosophy. Those are too flat and mono-dimensional to sufficiently answer our complex and existential needs.

Rather, the answer is something as complex and tangible as we would expect a sufficient answer to be: A real person. A real person is what will provide the necessary wisdom, holiness, and leadership that the nations need to permanently light up the darkness around us, and that person is Jesus Christ, the Son and Lamb of God.

23 And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and its lamp is the Lamb. 24 By its light will the nations walk, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it, 25 and its gates will never be shut by day—and there will be no night there. 26 They will bring into it the glory and the honor of the nations. 27 But nothing unclean will ever enter it, nor anyone who does what is detestable or false, but only those who are written in the Lamb's book of life.

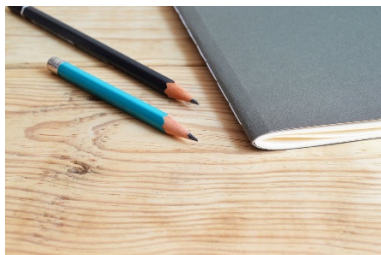
Revelation 21:23-27

The dark things we’ve seen this year remind us of the darkness which has plagued us throughout human history. Which is why the Lamb of God, Jesus Christ, laid down His life to wash away our sin and darkness and to give “the nations...and the kings of the earth” His light by which we are all invited to walk together with resurrected glory and honor with our Father. All we need to do is trust Him. The true stories that you’re about to encounter in this booklet are a testimony of that living Light, Jesus Christ. I and all those who testified here hope and pray that each person who reads these true stories will be blessed with a redeemed “20/20” vision to see Christ, the answer and the bright future that humanity has been searching for all along.



Peace to you,
Pastor Yung Kim

Christopher Har



I heard about a school. I really wanted to go there. It was my dream to go to the school. My family and I tried to get in and I did my part. The school emailed us when my test would be and until that time, I did math and worked. After, I felt like I wasn't ready. I always thought, "Can I do this and get in or fail and not get in?"

One day, they told us that the date of the test would change. So they told us the date. I knew that God gave me more time. So, I went to a room where no one was inside. I prayed and thanked God for giving me another chance to do more work. My parents told me that they don't want someone that knows every answer but someone that they can teach.

5 days in a row before the test, I had dreams about failing the test. On the day of the test, I felt so happy that I did the test. But I was still worried about getting in or not. They told us that they would group up and pray on a specific day and see if God lets me go or not. They said they would tell us and they did.

I was out practicing basketball on my basketball hoop, and my mom opened the door standing in the doorway. She said, "Come, I want to tell you good news. The school told us that they accepted you! Are you excited?" I was jumping up and down. I was overjoyed. After I heard that I got in, I kept saying, "I'm going to go to the school, I'm going to go to the school." I was excited to go because it was the first place I wanted to go to. I thank God for answering my prayer about going to school.

Grace Park



When I received Confirmation in high school, I thought I understood the message of the Cross: that I was saved by grace, not by anything I did, but by what Jesus did for me. Of course, I did understand on a certain level, but it took me 2-3 years into college before it made any dent in the way I believed/felt/lived. I lived most of my life up to that point thinking that I needed to perform, and perform well, in order to be loved or valued. I had to try my best with God. God had to be pretty repetitive with me, saying the same thing again and again. God gave me His grace, and I did not have to earn His love. In fact, He loved me even when I was a sinner. 2 Corinthians 12:9 says, “My grace is sufficient for you, my power is made perfect in weakness.” The hardest part for me was weakness. I really wanted God to change me and remove weakness from me. But this was not His promise. He does not say anything about changing or removing weakness. Instead His answer was that His grace was sufficient, and His power was what was important, not mine. I realize I wanted weakness done away with because then I can just depend on myself, my strength, and be secure. But with God’s answer I had to trust Him and I was not sure if He would come through for me. It required my faith in His promises.

The story that I want to share is pretty simple. As you may know, we as a church, were given a great opportunity to participate in a special project called the Kingdom Blessing. The Kingdom Blessing was a financial gift that our church received to be used to bless others. The few guidelines were that the money was to be given away, we must not just give money but

be personally involved, and the gift must be given in the name of Jesus. It was a wonderful chance to bless someone deeply on many levels. My discipleship group was asked to come up with a plan to bless someone. It is something that's exciting to be a part of, but it also produced a lot of anxiety in me. I am not a visionary or a great out-of-box thinker. How was I supposed to find this person/person(s) to bless? I started to pray. It was not some great eloquent prayer but my usual: "God, I'm worried. Please, help me. You know my weak points-- this is something that I'm not strong in, so You are going to have to help me. What am I supposed to do?" This was my way to have faith in God in my weakness. God answered through a series of ordinary events. At a time when I didn't even know about the Kingdom Blessing, I made a phone call to gather some information regarding another matter. However, back then I did not receive any response. Months later, as I was praying regarding the Kingdom Blessing, I finally received a call back, and with perfect timing, we were connected with a woman with an adopted daughter dealing with the recent death of her husband. In my heart this was huge, because when we came upon this connection, I knew that even though I didn't know what to do, God had made a way.

Recently I was reading 2 Corinthians 12:9 again. The rest of verse 9 goes like this: "Therefore, I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me. For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong." I am not sure if content with weakness is what I feel, but I am worrying less about weakness and more willing to step out in faith and experience the power of Christ at work. Because of my weakness I am certain that it was nothing of my wisdom, idea, or plan, but God's doing. I hope that the people who receive the funds from the Kingdom Blessing will indeed be blessed and that God would be glorified in it.

Nancy Kim



Resting Grace: Peace that surpasses all understanding

“And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.” Philippians 4:7

The first time I thought about peace of God was in my early 20s in college. I often ask, what does it mean to have peace like that? I was also a worrywart and would ask God to give me the peace that surpassed all understanding all the time. Hoping God would send down a lightning bolt and give me this superpower. I thought nothing would affect me then. I would be calm and collected all the time. But God has slowly been teaching me that this peace comes through going through hard times with the Lord. The last time I wrote a testimony was in 2016, I shared the blessing God bestowed on me through Franklin, my husband.

In my twenties, I struggled with my value and yearning to be married. That decade of singleness, I felt abandoned and distrustful of God’s plan for me. Like a mother disciplining her child and making him/her wait to eat dinner and not eat snacks because it will spoil their appetite, God was disciplining me to wait for my Michelin star dinner before I snacked on Lay’s chips. And boy was the wait worth it, that season I learned waiting on the Lord is best as His plans are way better than mine. Fast forward to the present, my heart yearned for more. I wanted children of my own. This deep sense of yearning has been met with a lot of heartache. Frank and I have been trying to have children for over two and a half years now. We

prayed to God to bless us; we ask many in our church family to pray for us. But I get a monthly reminder that it is not happening. My heart would hurt and be saddened. The first year was hard, but I still had hope in God's perfect time because God had been so good to me the last time I waited.

About 1.5 years in, as my faith was wavering, I found out I was pregnant. I was so excited; I told my parents and Frank's parents. They were all so excited with us! I even captured my mom crying on video when she found out. I began to dream of life with a baby and life as a mom. In less than a week of this joyful news, I had the worst cramps in my life and severe bleeding. My baby, who was the size of a blueberry at the time, was gone. Just like that, I had a miscarriage. I never knew my heart could hurt so much. I cried like I never cried before. Sobbed from the deepest part of me. I felt like God was playing a cruel joke on me with this baby that I had been wanting for so long. Why did He just give it to me and take it away? Having tasted the hope of a child and having it taken away, was so much worse. Why did He make it harder?

The Sunday after I found out about the miscarriage, I told God my father, "I don't know why you let this happen to me. You say you work all this for my goodness and your timing is perfect. I don't see it Lord, but I really need you to show me you love me right now. Please show me, because I need to know you love me and see me." I forgot what song was playing, but when I was listening to the lyrics, I felt the warmth of God wash over me and He said, "I see you Nancy and I love you. I am with you always." I have never felt this comfort and closeness with God before. I sobbed in the lap of my Father freely. Telling him my sorrow, my confusion, my hopelessness. I felt Him holding me in His arm. I felt loved and at peace. I was shocked, because this reaction was foreign. I questioned God throughout my 20s, but walking through my 20s with Him, He must have taught me perseverance along the way for this time of suffering. Pastor SooSang always says you will suffer in life; it is a matter of when and how. In this suffering, I was surprised by this unwavering knowledge that God loves me so much and His timing is perfect. Tim Keller said once in a sermon, "the peace that surpasses understanding doesn't take away earthly

suffering.” I think He showed me a little that day of what this peace looks like. God my Father has been teaching me a lot about what kind of dad He is. He doesn’t hide suffering from me, but He walks with me through it. This year Frank and I have gone to the fertility specialist and continue to “wait on the Lord.”

Each month hoping this will be it. My waiting has been imperfect and filled with ups and down still. Getting my periods is still hard. I will randomly see babies on my Instagram and a pang of hurt hits me. I will randomly cry uncontrollably. I would envy my friends who seem to pop babies out like nothing. Yet He is quick to remind me He is there. So, this peace doesn’t mean there is no sadness or emotions involved, but there is resting grace God gives in the face of trial. In Lamentations 3:25 says, “The Lord is good to those who wait for him, to the soul who seeks him.” God wants to have this deep relationship with us. He wants to shower us with His love. He wants to enter into those hurts and pains with us. He wants to wrestle with those questions with us. Slowly I’m learning this truth and I can hope in him because he promises, “Those who sow in tears will reap with shouts of joy!” (Psalm 126: 5)

Christy Kim



Leonard Ravenhill was a Christian preacher who described the difficulty of praying, but also the reward: "The church has many organizers but few agonizers. Many who pay, but few who pray. Many resters, but few wrestlers. Many who are enterprising, but few who are interceding. People who are not praying are playing. The worldly Christian will stop praying and a praying Christian will stop worldliness. Tithes may build the church, but tears will give it life. When we have paid, the place is taken. When they had prayed, the place was shaken."

Every week in our Intercessory Prayer Team, we gather an hour before service, and we get the privilege of praying for the church and our church family. There are many, many miraculous answers God that has given us as a privilege to witness and be a part of.

In the beginning of 2019, as Revive was getting ready to launch we were desperately looking for a building, a facility to worship. Our team had been praying every week, but one Sunday we received an email from the pastors urgently asking us to pray for a building. At that point they were expressing a certain desperation in the building search.

So that Sunday, our team looked at each other and said, "Maybe our prayers were too small. Maybe we need to pray bigger and ask bolder! So that week we prayed like this.

“Lord we are asking you to send us a building, a great building that will make it a wonderful transition for the next generation. A facility that has rooms for all the young children, a room for the youth, a playground even, a gym would be great too. We are going to pray boldly Lord and ask for all these things.”

Sunny, who is a part of the Intercessory Prayer Team, was at that prayer meeting. Sunny was also part of the Building Search Committee, and he knew that even though we were praying like this, we had no prospects like this that fit our bold new prayer. But he didn't have the heart to tell us because we were praying so earnestly.

That Sunday also happened to be the day for my rotation for the Congregational Prayer during Sunday service, and I remember praying the same prayer with a bold faith in our Father in front of our church. Maybe we even have it on recording somewhere.

Literally, that same week, Pastor Yung came home and said to me, “You are not going to believe what just happened this week!”

That following week was when our conversation about facility rental with Trinity Church began.

And look at what God did! Look at this beautiful building! It literally has everything we earnestly asked God for and we were able to move into this beautiful place before Easter 2019.

There are so many other beautiful, crazy true stories from the prayers that our Intercessory Prayer Team have had the privilege to lift up to the Lord, and every week, we get a preview of what God has in store for REVIVE, and it is something our team hopes and prays more people may enjoy.

Amy Hernandez



2019 was a hard year, so hard it broke me. Sometimes it felt hopeless, but God was in control. I found God as I had never found Him before. I knew He was a Wonderful Counselor, but I found Him as MY Wonderful Counselor, giving more wisdom and hope than any human counselor. I knew He was the Prince of Peace, but I found Him as MY Prince of Peace, bringing greater peace than any worldly distractions. I knew Him as the Everlasting Father, but I found Him as MY Everlasting Father, loving me more than I could ever imagine. I had heard He restores us, and not just to the way things were, but in the way He desires. To experience that firsthand brought me to a point of humility and courage that I had never known before. What I'd rather forget about 2019 will now always point to remembrance, the remembrance of God's goodness and faithful and knowing Him in a way I never had before. Praise God.

Damon Moon



Today, I had a really tough day at work. As we are going through a major reorg, several colleagues, mostly Christians, were let go. As I was waiting in line for my late lunch in the cafeteria by myself, I bumped into Jack (name has been changed to protect real identity).

I know Jack from the company's internal innovation program I created. He was very enthusiastic about an idea that he had in mind. He even created videos about the idea weeks before the deadline. Although his idea wasn't selected as one of the finalists, I supported his idea and helped him think through and revise the idea for the next several months.

When I ran into him today, I wanted to share what was going on in my heart, after a rough morning.

Jack is an engineer from India. I immediately assumed he was Hindu. When he saw me eating sushi, he asked me whether I was Korean or Japanese. I said "I am from Korea, and I asked where he was from. He mentioned "India", but I was curious which part of India he was from. "Chennai", he said. I remembered that our guest speaker, JP Samuel, from the summer retreat was from Chennai. I also remembered how to say hello in Tamil. So, I asked him, "Eppiri Ilking eh?" Jack was blown away by the fact that I knew how to say hello in his mother tongue!

Then he went on and asked me how I learned that greeting. Although I felt ill-equipped to share my faith with someone of a different

ethnic group, I told Jack that I learned that from a Christian Church retreat last summer. The most amazing thing was that he was a Christian too, attending one of the large multiethnic churches in San Jose. For the last 18 months of discussions for his idea, we both never knew that we were brothers in Christ!

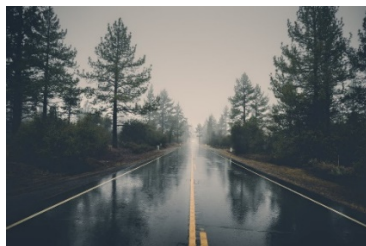
After sharing what was in my heart, I immediately felt the Holy Spirit was among us. I felt that He was trying to encourage me through this random, unplanned encounter with my colleague and brother in Christ over lunch. It was such a blessing to meet Jack, whom I wouldn't have ever known if it wasn't for the Tamil greeting phrase that I learned from pastor JP Samuel. We had many conversations before today, and the one we had today was at a whole new level.

Later today, he sent me a text message with a website URL. He has been sharing God's word on his personal blog. I was thankful and replied how much I was encouraged today from the conversation.

God loves me in so many ways. Today, He showed His love throughout the day through His people. I am asking myself, "How much do I really trust God and His love for me?" I don't think I am doubting this in my mind. But my actions are showing that there are other things that I trust more than Him.

God, forgive me for relying on other things, such as money and my own understanding. Help me develop more trust upon your love towards me.

Yung Kim



My story for 2019/20 comes from developments that occurred prior. Without going into the details, 2017 and 18 were really hard and desolate years...perhaps my hardest years as both a pastor and just in general. The difficulties came in many forms, but perhaps the hardest came from watching decades-long relationships at my church break up due to miscommunications as well as some bad intent. It felt as though I was watching cars hurtling towards each other on a collision course, but no matter how wildly I waved my arms at the drivers to change their course or how loud I shouted at everyone to just stop, the drivers didn't heed my pleas and stayed their doomed courses...and then Crash!...it ended up in mass collision, chaos, and sadness. But this is where, by God's grace, it gets better...

*Do any of the worthless idols of the nations bring rain?
Do the skies themselves send down showers?
No, it is you, YHWH our God.
Therefore our hope is in you,
for you are the one who does all this.*

Jeremiah 14:22

I know that many people dislike cloudy, rainy, wet weather, which I understand.

But I absolutely love rain. I love everything about rain...the sound it makes on my windows and umbrella, the puddles it creates for me to splash in, the way it turns a boring gray asphalt street into a shiny black mirror at night, full of lights and shapes, the way it keeps plants and leaves green and

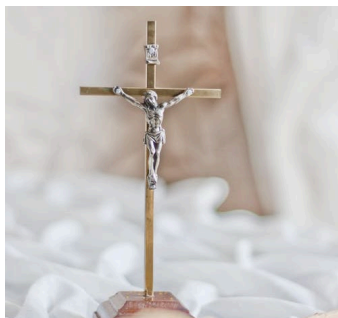
lush, the way it feels on my face, wet and alive. When it rains, I can feel the clouds above falling down on me in sparkling and weighty drops. In a way, it helps me stay connected to the clouds in the heavens where my God and some of my beloved are waiting for me. As a kid, I so loved the rain that I would wait for the first rain of the year, and when it would finally fall, I'd drop everything and run outside just to feel it on my skin and open my mouth and try to drink some water from the skies (before acid rain became a thing, hah).

Well, coming out of that terrible 2017/18 experience, there were things that I was very downcast about...broken and strained relationships, epic failures of church leadership, and my fruitless attempts to prevent it. It got to the point that at some time during each day, I would inevitably end up praying the same thing, "God, help me know that you're still leading me, that that You're still here with me in the midst of all of this garbage".

One evening, I found myself so frustrated and pent-up that I went outside into the cold night to get some fresh air. I prayed this desperate prayer again, "God show me you're with us, cuz I'm feeling pretty miserable". And as I stood there outside my front door and prayed this familiar prayer, I felt an unexpected wet drop on my nose. But it wasn't a tear. It was a drop of rain. The first rain of the season. I couldn't help but laugh with God. Usually I run out to feel the rain after it begins falling, but this time I was outside talking with God before it fell. With all this junk going on around me, rain was the last thing on my mind and yet, God remembered how much joy I find in rain, and He sent it.

Now don't misunderstand, I'm not at all saying that the rain was solely for me. But God did use the rain to remind me of something that the Spirit of God was trying to impress on me in the midst of the darkness; ...that He's God with us...God with me. I was reminded not just in theory, but in a very tangible and weighty way that He is God with us, Eemanu-El. And there in the night rain, as the drops of His grace fell faster and harder around me, God gave me the love and the riches to be able to start forgiving and take some steps forward. And to have hope for the future. Thank you Father.

Justin Yim



From when I was a kid, I knew that Jesus was real. I was raised in a Christian family, went to church twice a week, and grew up with friends I met in children's ministry. I enjoyed church a lot - playing video games with my friends in exchange for sitting in on a boring sermon was so awesome. I half-heartedly acknowledged that Jesus died for my sins, but I never truly believed it nor accepted God as my savior until recently.

As I grew older in the church, I created my own perception of what it meant to be Christian: I had to be respectful, and I had to serve. I kept up this image at church every week, and as a result, began to judge other kids for not being as mature as I was and grew angry at other kids for not serving as much as I did. I lived in this spiritual pride for a long time and soon began seeking the affirmation of people. Throughout high school, I became more involved in serving. I joined our youth group's praise team, became the leader for our youth leadership team, and most recently after our church's split, became New Hope's new praise leader. I did all of this for affirmation. I felt so much joy in the praise of others and the feeling of being needed - I had to be important. God was almost never on my mind and I pushed Him off to the side, saying "God thanks for dying for me, but let me live my life." So, I lived for my own works and praise. However, when I entered college, I lost it all - No one was around to praise me anymore. I was no longer serving, no longer the "godly" older brother, and because my home churches had new members serving in positions I served, I no longer

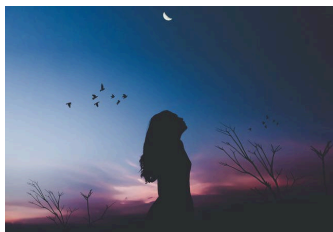
felt important. My heart felt empty - it was an emptiness I hadn't felt before. I attempted to fill that void with earthly things, such as volleyball, my relationship, and academics, but throughout my first semester, I only grew sadder and emptier. And when I came home for Winter break, I was at my lowest point.

One day at New Hope, the college students were sharing prayer requests. I didn't think about it much, so I just asked for prayers about school. But suddenly, pastor JW asked me, "Justin, how is your spiritual life?". I was so shocked by this question; I didn't know how to even begin answering it. For so long, I had always acted "godly" and portrayed myself as someone who could be looked up to, but the emptiness in my heart restricted me from doing so again. Then, God opened my heart to see how tremendously sinful I was and for the first time, I realized how much I needed Him. I was overwhelmed by God's love and grace: How could someone so good chase after some garbage like me? At that moment, I truly accepted Him as my savior. I truly believed that Jesus Christ died for me on that Cross and washed away my sins, and that in Him, I am clean. That night, I prayed honestly for the first time in a very long time, giving up all my sins and emptiness to God, and I experienced a joy that I had not experienced before - a joy that only comes from Christ. From that moment on, God shaped my heart to want to live for him.

Although I still continue to sin, God never stops chasing after me. I am forever thankful for His steadfastness and His unending love. I am proud to stand here today and declare that I love God, that He is my savior, and that I want to continue to live for Him.

*"Whom have I in heaven but you?
And there is nothing on earth that I desire besides you.
26 My flesh and my heart may fail,
but God is the strength² of my heart and my portion forever."
Psalm 73:25 and 26*

Anna Park



Narcissists are shunned and demonized in today's culture. Friends, family, and mental health professionals will immediately raise red flags to caution people to run in the opposite direction as fast as they can without once looking back at their egotistical counterparts, lest they crumble into a pile of martyred ashes.

I am a narcissist, in recovery. And had God never brought my husband into my life, I would still be as self-centered as ever. From time to time, I will see articles cautioning their readers to stay far far...farther still from people like me. While many of the reasons are completely valid, I cannot help but wonder if there is a better way than roping someone off from your life. Because, I do not like to think about who I would still be without my husband, Daniel, in my life. What narcissists need is not distance and shaming, they need the safety of Jesus' healing and redeeming love.

I was not always this way. Growing up, I came to believe everything was about me, because according to my parents, I was to blame for everything. As a child, I hated whenever my parents would call my name. Hearing my name bellowed out immediately elicited fear and my heart would start beating wildly. In a panic, I would rapidly comb over the course of my day, wondering what major offense I had committed, to anger my parents. Because all my offenses were major, and all offenses seemed to be caused by me.

I was always bracing myself, tracking the moods of everyone around me, anticipating the next conflict. Because if I could not control what

I was blamed for and how I would be punished, at least I could be mentally and emotionally prepared for it. As I grew older, I developed a cunning and manipulative way to navigate through the blame game by justifying my actions. I desperately longed for [positive] attention, affection, safe and secure love. When I did not get these, I came to be stunted in some ways and crooked in others.

This gradually evolved into a warped train of sinister thoughts, an insatiable list of toxic needs, and an absolute refusal to accept blame and apologize. I would misinterpret innocent comments or valid critiques, filtering them through lens that saw others' actions and words as attacks on my worth and worthiness to be loved.

While I was still a sinner, God pursued me relentlessly. I ran from Him for years; but after coming to the end of myself one too many times, I finally surrendered my life to Jesus. After a couple of years of sweet singleness and growth, He brought Daniel into my life. When Daniel and I first began dating, all my baggage and sinfulness surfaced in no time at all. We would get into arguments where he could see the fear and anger flooding in my eyes, my fists aimed and ready to fight. I always anticipated the arguments to accelerate into full blown volatile battles.

But his response shocked me again and again and again. He never returned in kind. He never took his own fighting stance. Instead, he would bring his hands up to my shoulders, firmly but gently grabbing hold of them. He would look me straight in the eyes, and tell me, "I am on your side."

To this day, those words bring me to my knees and move me to tears. Those words soothed my raging and hurting heart. Those words let me know that Daniel would not yank back his love depending on his mood. Those words assured me that he was safe, and I could lower my fists. Those words confirmed that he saw all of me and loved everything in me. Identifying and accepting my own brokenness has been a long journey on its own, but the repairs are a lifetime process.

I would cling onto my old self, because it is all I had ever known. Letting go of old and twisted methods of survival felt like I was amputating entire limbs, because they had shielded and protected me for so many years. But facing every day as if I were going into battle was exhausting and too heavy a burden to constantly carry. I slowly began taking one small step at a time, scared out of my wits, full of doubt, but practicing walking in trust.

Practicing trust that no matter what mistake I make, my Father will not condemn me and is always ready to forgive me. Practicing trust that when I apologize, my Father will not shame me and is always waiting with open arms. Practicing trust that my Father will heal me, however long it takes, never growing weary. Practicing trust that my Father will stretch me, but will never break me, never leaving my side. And my Father has never failed my trust, not once.

Each time Daniel - whom my Father gave to me - demonstrates an act of self-sacrificing love to me, it is a confirmation and a reminder of an infinitely greater love. In those moments I cannot help but say to myself, oh Anna, you are so loved by your Abba Father and so precious in His sight. Because my Father knows me all the way through, in every crooked corner, and still loves me a hundred million times over.

I have since forgiven my parents, because they have their own broken stories. I keep discovering new depths of my own sinfulness, and theirs is no deeper. As my Father continues to heal me, I hear Him tell me, "My little girl, do you see my love for you? Do you see that you can trust me? Do you see that I am safe? Do you see that I - the master and creator of the universe - am on your side?"

Christ's love unfurls me. His love shatters me. His love moves me. I want to love someone who is broken, someone who is fearful, someone who is difficult and even painful to love. That I just might be the first person in their life that would not turn away at the sight of their ugliness and sin that they try so hard to conceal. That I would take them by the shoulders, look them in their eyes, and tell them, "I am on your side."

Soosang Park



This is my story of how Revive Church found a new home at the Trinity Church of Sunnyvale campus.

The story starts in the spring of 2011. It was my third year as the English Ministry Pastor at San Jose New Hope Church, and I had travelled to Chicago for the 2011 Gospel Coalition Conference. Pastor Yung was still pastoring in Southern California, and we had agreed to meet in Chicago for this conference. Frank Kim was still early in his ministry training, and he too also flew to Chicago. The theme of the conference was “Preaching the Gospel and Christ from the Old Testament.” It was heady stuff but exciting. Through the Gospel Coalition, Tim Keller, John Piper, and Don Carson were spearheading the vision of Gospel-centered preaching and ministry, and it was starting to gain some traction around the country. Four thousand people had gathered in Chicago, and the spiritual energy throughout the conference was palpable.

It was so easy to get to know people and start conversations. Almost everywhere you went in the conference you were surrounded by Christians who cared about Gospel-centered ministry. I was standing in line waiting to get lunch, and it was crowded. I was being friendly asking people near me where they were from, and in response when they would ask me, I shared that I was from San Jose. An excited voice piped up from behind me saying, “Who is from San Jose?!” A young man moved his way forward in the line to meet me, and he told me that he too was from San Jose. As we got to know one another, we “clicked.” It was instantly clear that we had a connection. Tim Reilly was brimming with passion for the Gospel and an

ambition to reach others for Christ. He was quite happy to meet another brother who also had a passion for the Gospel and for Silicon Valley. Tim has an infectious, joyful energy and also has a talent for meeting people and making connections. So, after meeting one another, he found me on Facebook, connected with me, and we were in touch on and off in the following years.

Fast forward to 2018. Early in the year the elders at San Jose New Hope Church made a momentous decision to have the English Ministry become its own church yet stay in a partnership with New Hope for the sake of the next generations. Our congregation would become a new church, but we did not think we would be moving out and having to solve issues like finding a new space, but as the year progressed the Korean Ministry became horribly divided and dysfunctional and broke apart, which also forced the English Ministry congregation out and wholly on our own before we had anticipated. By the fall our leaders decided to form a Site Search Team, and our new fledgling church, which gained the name Revive, began praying that the Lord would provide us a new place to worship and do ministry.

The Site Search Team looked at all kinds of options, though our preferred choice would have been finding a church to rent on Sunday mornings, but that also would be hardest to find since the vast majority of churches favor a Sunday morning worship time. We looked into schools, community centers, and asked numerous churches if they would be open to hosting us. I personally went to quite a number of sites and spoke with a good number of pastors. For one reason or another something did not quite work out. There was one church with a great location, great worship room, good fellowship hall, and their pastor seemed excited about the possibility of inviting a church that had a predominantly Asian-American members to share their space, but they had no space for children's ministry. I spoke with a principal of a Christian private school, and they were willing to offer affordable rent and were generous with their space usage, but the room for worship was not very good. A small seminary in town that I had never

heard of offered us space. That was actually pretty exciting at first, but we took them off our list because their worship area was simply too small.

In November after prayer and deliberations our Steering (leadership) Team decided that it would be worthwhile to consider having a late afternoon service in a church. We decided to try out a late afternoon service for a couple weeks while we were still at New Hope. After the vast majority of the congregation responded positively to a potential afternoon service time, that opened up more possible avenues to ask. Most churches do not use their building for worship on a late Sunday afternoon. However, I knew of at least 3 other churches that were conducting their main worship times successfully this way.

Earlier in the year Pastor Yung and I had visited a church in Sunnyvale for a pastors' gathering. Yung especially liked this facility because they had a ball pit for toddlers, a great room for youth, and a gym dedicated to the surrounding community! He urged me to ask that pastor. Here is where the story gets interesting. In previous gatherings of pastors in Silicon Valley I had met this pastor, Joel King, and it turns out that he was especially close to... Tim Reilly. After the Gospel Coalition Tim had started gathering a group of young people, evangelizing to reach people for Christ, and this group essentially became a church plant being incubated as they met and were in a partnership at... you guessed it... Trinity Church of Sunnyvale. Not too long ago Tim and his group left Trinity and merged with an older, prominent church in San Jose called Church of the Valley (COV). Since then Tim has become lead pastor at COV, and his church plant, re-established as the new COV, has been thriving reaching many for Jesus. Both Joel and Tim have strong Gospel convictions and long to reach the unreached for the Lord. In fact, Joel was at that very same Gospel Coalition conference in Chicago when I met Tim, but I just had not met him then. But since I had met him later through Tim, he immediately gained an impression that I was a pastor whose Gospel convictions were aligned with his and Tim's.

In late 2018, I sent Joel a brief, simple email explaining that we were a new church plant looking to find a new home. It was among

numerous such emails that I had sent pastors and churches. It was December, which can be a busy time of the year for pastors as churches approach Christmas. At first, I did not hear back from him, so I started to think that perhaps that door was not going to open for us. But a little after Christmas Joel wrote back. The answer was... maybe. He said that he and their elders would need to go through a process to see “if God was in this.” He said that we could start by the two of us meeting to see if he and I and our two churches were theologically and missionally compatible.

I had mixed feelings about this reply of “maybe.” On the one hand, I was quite impressed. Here was a leader and a church who was NOT looking to have a business relationship. I had spoken with numerous pastors and churches, and, yes, some had some spiritual desire to help another church, but many (most?) basically came down to what was more or less a cut-dried landlord-renter relationship. They would provide X, and we were to pay Y. Instead this pastor and his elders were not even looking for a renter; however, they were looking for the guidance of the Holy Spirit and were open to the possibility that God was leading us to them to be friends and partners for the greater advance of the Kingdom. That was remarkable and a very refreshingly different spirit from many others that I had encountered. On the other hand, that left me wondering if this process would take too long, and it might not work out for us because we sensed that the New Hope leaders wanted us out of the building sooner rather than later and thus felt a pressure to make it happen quickly.

It took a few weeks, but Joel and I met for brunch at one of his favored eateries in Campbell. We got to know each other, shared about our backgrounds, theology, visions, and dreams. We hit it off pretty quickly. I could see why he and Tim were close, and it was not too hard to see that Joel had an inkling that I might be a brother like Tim with whom he could “click” in ministry. That morning we spent a lengthy period of time together, and it was great. We both came away sensing that the Holy Spirit may very well be in this. He suggested that I “bring some guys” and take a look at their facilities, and if we liked it, then we could move forward with me meeting with their elders. The following Tuesday we arranged for us,

the Revive/former New Hope pastors to visit Trinity after our usual lunch that we share after our prayer and staff meetings. Joel showed us around, and our reaction, “Oh yes! Please, Lord, let us come here.” After seeing a number of places in which the rooms for the children’s ministry were not so great, I was smitten with how this was a church that clearly had a vision and love for next generation Gospel mission, just like we did. After the tour it was not a hard decision. Yung and I told Joel, “Yeah, we’re interested. Let’s move forward.” Joel then said something which I will never forget: “Guys, this building does not belong to us. It belongs to Jesus. It’s not a question for us whether someone else should use this building to worship and reach people for Christ. The question is whether you guys are the right church to come alongside us to reach people in the city.”

Joel then got back to me with a meeting time with his elders for a Sunday lunch after our service times in the morning. I asked him if there was some specific way, he wanted me to prepare for that meeting. He said something like, “Nah, just be yourself. I think they’re going to like you and what you guys are about.”

We met at Panera Bread in Sunnyvale. After getting our lunches, each of us sat down, and we started with introductions. There were about eight men plus Joel and me. All of them were elders, except for one who was in training. What stood out to me about them was that most of them had been with the church for years, some for 20+ years, and they were all experienced elders. I had forwarded to Joel our vision paper, and some of them had printed it out and brought it with them. Then Joel had me introduce myself and our church. Some memorable moments from this time with them:

a) When I said that we were a “Gospel-centered church,” Joel interrupted me and said, “SooSang, would you please tell us ‘What is the Gospel?’” I was caught off-guard because I had never had another pastor do that before, but I was also immediately impressed. So many churches think of the Gospel as another way of saying generic Christianity, but here was a church whose leadership cared about the Gospel and knew that it was important

that a church had a clear idea of what it was. I gathered myself and then gave them a succinct yet precise summation of the Gospel, and then I saw heads nod around the table.

b) One of the elders said, “Could you give us an example of how Revive and Trinity might do something together that could help advance the Kingdom?” He started by saying that he didn’t mean to “put me on the spot,” but that’s exactly what he was doing. I loved his direct, no-nonsense question. I gave an example of how both of our church members might serve an intentionally cross-cultural evangelistic ministry that our church has a connection within Sunnyvale. Again, heads nodded.

c) At one point I gave a brief description of our Life on Life Missional Discipleship movement, and one of the elders stopped me. He looked deeply moved to find that in a busy city such as ours that a church would pour this much into a few at a time. He said something like: “The investment you are making in these individuals this way is one of the most important things that will happen in their life.”

d) After they had finished asking me questions, there were comments like this: “They sure do align quite well with us.” “I love how they’re both like us but also different than us.” “I love that they sure seem younger than us.” “This is pretty exciting.”

Joel then led us all in a time of prayer. I thought maybe just one or two might pray, and then he would close, and then we would leave soon. It was a time of “popcorn” prayer, so they could chime in as they felt led. Every single man around the table prayed. And those prayers were not short. They were deep, heart-felt powerful prayers, and the prayers continued on and on. Nobody seemed to in a hurry to be finished, and those Godly men poured out Kingdom dreams on behalf of Revive. We sat there in the middle of that Panera Cafe unashamedly praying for a quite a long time, and when we had finished and lifted our heads, it was clear that the Holy Spirit had done an important work. Joel then told me that they would take

some more time to deliberate on their own and wanted to take a month or so to pray over the decision whether to invite Revive onto their campus and “partner” with them.

A little more than a month later the answer was Yes. They let us have our own storage shed on the parking lot. They provided us a dedicated office. We get to use basically the church more or less like our own. All for below-market rent. Oh, and we get them as friends and partners. It’s all been more than we were even looking for when we first started searching for a new home. May the Lord’s name be praised.

Joshua Kim



Hello, my name is Joshua Kim and let me tell you my testimony. My life before Jesus was horrible, I never listened to my parents. I was impulsive, rebellious, and had no self-control. I also looked at church as the place where I ate food and ran around. Church was never the happy house of God to me. I totally disrespected God. I also didn't care about consequences as in hell. I also felt far from my siblings. Due to having a dad that was a pastor I always thought I would just make it into heaven.

Then we moved to San Jose during the summer of 2015. We started to go to San Jose New Hope Church. I already knew this church because this is the church where my parents got married, and I also went here for VBS in the past. But I continued to get in trouble for things I had done out of my lack of self-control or on impulse.

Then in May 2016, I heard this sermon from Pastor Joe that focused on this verse, "Because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved." Romans 10:9. Then he continued to preach about heaven and hell. The consequences of going to hell. A verse he told us was Matthew 13:42, "And throw them into the fiery furnace. In that place, there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth." I realized, 'Well I don't want to go to that place'. So, I thought about Romans 10:9. I realized that my sins were evil and against God. Then as I thought about my sins, I felt like I wanted to hide myself. I felt a huge amount of guilt. But despite my awful sins, God chose to die for me. He took my punishment. He took torture and pain; he took my place on the cross. Why, only because he loved me. He saved me from my sins. That

amazed me that he would take the place of me, a disgusting sinner. He would spill his own blood for me. Then I really believed in God. I confessed that Jesus is Lord. For the first time in my life I understood Jesus and was saved.

Then a few months later on July 28, 2016, I went to my Dad and told him that I believed in God. We talked about Jesus. I told him that I wanted to get baptized. My Dad asked me if I knew why I wanted to get baptized. So, I explained why to him. After that, my Dad made me my favorite food to celebrate, hamburgers. From there, my relationship with my siblings got better. I listened to my parents better than before. Suddenly church was so much more enjoyable. I listened to the sermons from Pastor Joe. I also understood them. For one of the first times in my life, church was not a place to get food and run around. For the first time in my life, I realized that church was God's house, and I belong in His house because I'm His child.

John Har



When I was seeking a new college fellowship at the end of junior year, I did something you're not supposed to do - close your eyes and point to a random passage in the Bible. Nevertheless, He clearly answered me with Acts 2:42 - He will give me a true fellowship of believers. That verse led me to Navigators, and it was an incomparable fellowship experience with honesty, vulnerability and a common pursuit of God like I'd never seen before. In fact, our Navigators staff said years later that many of the students from that era sought to replicate that kind of fellowship elsewhere but never could.

For the first time in over two decades, I found something close to that kind of perfect fellowship through my LOLMD Journey group. It started for me when I got to hear the spiritual journeys of the brothers. It was so raw and, in some cases, unbelievably painful to hear. I wanted to weep for them at times, to hug them. But I was just in shock. I was so grateful, though, to find brothers that were willing to share and struggle together and to see that continue throughout the year.

Admittedly, I haven't grown as close to each of them as I would have wanted to. Unlike in college where I could meet my friends almost daily, LOLMD has really highlighted how I'm too busy for relationships outside of the immediate family. It's really shining a big spotlight on my life and how, beyond just relationships, my life isn't ordered for me to be a missional discipler.

One session that deeply convicted me is the one on sanctity of life - that we are to pursue, defend, and nurture the oppressed and the weak. That session stirred in me a long-forgotten compassion for the handicapped and disabled. As SooSang engaged my heart on this, I felt fear and more importantly regret. Would I be one of the goats in Jesus' parable that not only didn't make it into heaven but also never experienced the full joy of loving Jesus with everything I am and have? I'm still wrestling with this one.

Andy Yang



Ever since having my first child six years ago, I became increasingly aware of a number of huge deficiencies and inadequacies as a father. My children, unfortunately, have had to deal with a father who has a strong tendency and disposition to be unreasonable, harsh, intolerant, and without empathy, and all that without much remorse or regret. By God's grace there's been improvement over the years... much too slowly (you can ask my wife), but thankfully in the right direction. I've thought a lot about these issues over the years, about the underlying causes, my upbringing, environment, nature, etc., which were helpful. And for the last couple years, I've continued to make some progress, with no "new" discoveries about myself or this issue regarding these deficiencies. Same old issue, same old need to change.

But, surprisingly, there was a new and helpful perspective that was recently presented to me in the unit "Your Home as a Hospital." This unit had a number of statements that showed me with such clarity a vast chasm in my parenting.

Statements like...

"It's up to parents to create an environment where children feel they can bring their hurts, discouragement and broken hearts to find a healer's touch."

"Children need parents who communicate understanding about their pain and readiness to meet their emotional need."

"...it is vitally important that you be available for them. This means you must be emotionally accessible to your children."

Did I want these things? Did I want my children to be able to communicate their pains and needs? Definitely. Could I expect this, given my trajectory? No, definitely not.

It was helpful just to be able to clearly see the end result of the way I was conducting my relationship with my kids. I was sowing seeds of no empathy, little mercy, and intolerance of emotional "weakness" ... and the fruit will be children who will never entrust their hearts to their father. Maybe they would trust my advice, my intentions, my desires, my decisions... but they would not be able to open up their hearts to me, even if they loved me dearly.

Already, it's been helpful. I've been opening up channels of communication on this emotional level, something I never had with my parents or brothers growing up. So, in a sense, it's a very new thing to me. But I thank God for showing this to me now, while my kids are young, open, malleable, and still very forgiving. I count it as a gift of grace, totally undeserved, from my generous and empathetic Father.

James Cho



Like me, one of my closest friends from college moved to the Bay Area after graduation. During college, I was not active in trying to share the Gospel with him - it was not the dynamic of our friendship, and I didn't think to do it at the time. But ever since we both relocated to California, that dynamic has changed in what seems like the blink of an eye.

My friend and I had each found separate housing arrangements for the first year and a half of our time in California, but then COVID-19 arrived shortly after his apartment lease ended, making it difficult for him to find a new one. I invited him to crash on the couch at my apartment indefinitely, and my roommate graciously allowed it.

The reason that I'm so grateful to God for this experience is that it gave both myself and my roommate not just one opportunity, but daily opportunities, to shine the light of Jesus' name to his nonbelieving soul. Whatever the form, whether it be streaming a Sunday worship service in the living room where the couch is, praying before eating together, or even just laughing together while hanging out, I'm grateful for this circumstance that Jesus has given my roommate and me, as Jesus' disciples, to practice what Jesus preached.

Even if my friend doesn't come to know Jesus tomorrow, next year, or even in the next 10 years, I'm grateful that my roommate and I could organically plant little seeds and memories of Jesus' love into my friend's mind that may someday sprout into a genuine understanding and acceptance of the Gospel.

Grace Park



This year the Lord continues to have me exercise my faith muscle. As I attempt to follow Jesus in my life, I am too often filled with a lot of fear, fear that I am alone with only my inadequacies and all of the mistakes that I might make along the way. If you ask me, I will tell you that I know and believe that He is with me and that He loves me and loves me unconditionally. I also know of His power. He is the Creator of all, parting seas, healing the lame, and making the blind to see. Somehow even as I believe, I also disbelieve that God's power will be there *for me*. Often, I allow my fear to be big, and in doing so, I realize that I am making God so small. I am thankful for the Gospel waltz and how it guides me into repentance, repentance of not seeing God as He really is for me. I remember all the moments that I sensed Him walking with me despite hard circumstances, such as when my father passed away suddenly. And for the moments when I can't see or feel Him, I am asking Him to give me faith so that I can take Him at His Word.

Anna Lee



It is summer 2019 and someone is calling --
A friend and sister
offering to share life on life
through missional discipleship

What does this look like Lord?
Perhaps you are asking me to slow down, breathe deeply
Taking in your grace filled life and promises
To exhale freely in joy and obedience

Despite the busyness and distractions
You allow time to somehow be carved
Like a road ahead and forged together
With new sisters unknown, unexpected and unique

The first step we take looks backwards
Remembering life apart from You
Some going decades past
Recalling early joys, strivings, darkness, and light
We listen carefully and closely
Though we are all unique
Christ is the center of the story
And we are reminded of His truths

Each sister is a new creation, salvation by faith alone

In a sovereign, almighty, all-knowing, and perfect God
Our hearts are moving toward you
With our feet on solid ground

Layers of new truths are revealed
Our identity in Him
Imprinted with
His everlasting glory
His Word more deeply engraved than before
Seeking your will through scripture
With inadequate attempts to recall verses in perfect memory
Wondrously, your words have been written on our hearts

Challenged to daily prayer
I questioned whether 21 days was possible
Though I missed a few, it was an important challenge and goal to reach
Revealing how I need you and your wisdom always

You opened my eyes to say *have courage and do not fear*
I thought because I was a new creation, I shouldn't look back
Instead you give me courage to trust and go deeper so that all of my failings
can be redeemed
Past present and future

Thank you Lord for my sisters
For their faithfulness, honesty, encouragement, and love
It has been an honor to share this discipleship road together.

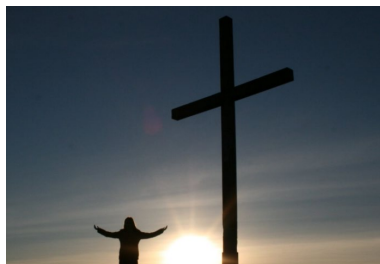
Thank you also to my husband for his ceaseless love and support.

Jenny Lee



It wasn't an easy decision to join LOLMD and I was excited to be closer to God but scared at the same time because sharing my life and being vulnerable isn't something I was looking forward to. I was tested, challenged and confronted by my fears, pride and anxiety at times and struggled between running towards God and away from him whenever I faced them. However, I never regret that decision because God has been faithful and showed me how much he loved me through personal worship time and fellowship with my dear sisters. I still struggle with my fear and anxiety but knowing that I am deeply loved by my savior Jesus Christ, and my heavenly Father not because anything that I have done but because that's who He is gives me peace that no one else can give.

Kathy Xia



Right now, there's a lot of uncertainty and what feels like hopelessness in our circumstances as we read reports or even experience the death count from covid-19, the reality of job losses, rising racism and the list just goes on.

But I wanted to share something that God has been teaching me this past year, which is that no matter what happens, whether it's what I expected to happen or not, according to my plans and what I thought would be best or not, God has a plan and He can redeem our suffering.

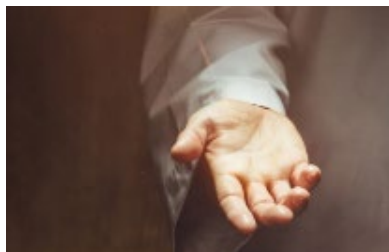
A few months ago, I was at what I would say was definitely one of the lows of my life where things were really tough at work with coworkers and management, which led me to struggle a lot with my self-worth and anxiety. There was a lot of anger and resentment and though I tried different ways of trying to get up from underneath all of this. I felt like I was getting crushed by it.

But God really used that time to reveal a lot of things to me. At first I was so ashamed and afraid to share about my experiences, but then God showed me the comfort and love in truth when I opened up and started sharing with my LOLMD and GLF. He taught me that He had plans for me despite this season and what was going on, that this suffering wasn't all he had in store for me. Furthermore, though I had been hurt by others, God was able to use that hurt to bring to light different idols in my heart that I was holding on tightly to such as placing my worth in other people's approval of me or seeking my own glory. Lastly, the hardest but maybe the

most freeing thing I was able to and still am learning is about forgiveness. What does it really mean to forgive, why do we have to forgive, and how we're able to forgive when others give us absolutely no reason to?

A passage that I held onto during this time was Psalm 27, which ends with "Wait patiently for the Lord. Be brave and courageous. Yes, wait patiently for the Lord." I wait upon God because at the end of the day, He is my strength, He is my hope, and He is my victory.

Yung Kim



One of the ways that God blessed me in my discipleship this year was that I got to witness my discipleship brothers develop in their discipleship, and as a result of that process, I was fortunate enough to experience them living out the 2nd Greatest Commandment: “love your neighbor as yourself”.

One day during the shelter in place, I received a text from one of my LOLMD brothers, and he told me that he was swinging by because he had a delivery for me. Truth be told, it was good just to be able to see someone new during this shelter in place, but the blessing was just beginning. So I walked outside, and it turns out he had brought a birthday gift for me on behalf of my discipleship group. Throughout the past year our discipleship group had been celebrating each other’s’ birthdays by taking the birthday-guy out for dinner and celebrating him. My birthday happened to come during the Shelter in Place, and in the midst of the chaos of adjusting work schedules, kids’ school schedules, divvying up crowded spaces, and keeping up with the Covid news cycles, celebrating my birthday with my discipleship group was not on my mind.

The gift itself was a real blessing for me and my family. But in addition to that, I was also truly blessed by the thoughtfulness of my brothers to take their time and effort out of their own busy lives and to do this very personal thing for me in the midst of a global pandemic. Through their thoughtfulness, I could honestly feel their love. I could feel God’s love. I was humbled by their love, and it filled me with gratitude and a sense of God’s grace upon my life through the love of my brothers. We all

know about the 2nd Greatest Commandment, and through discipleship, I got to experience it, and through my brothers God reminded me that He remembers me, even when I sometimes don't. I don't deserve this grace. It's truly amazing and humbling and inspires me to share with others.

Witnessing my discipleship group practicing their faith in such a pure and simple way gives me great encouragement. The discipleship movement that Jesus started 2000 years ago with the original 12 disciples is taking place right here at REVIVE Church. This is just one of the blessings that our good and gracious God has given to me through discipleship this year.

Gina Har



We are the **Laugh Out Loud Members of Discipleship**.

One day, my youngest kid Christopher asked me right before one of our virtual LOLMD meetings, “Are you going to laugh a lot today too?”

“Yes,” I responded with a smile. And we did.

Because each time we come together to share our lives, we just can’t help but overflow with giggling joy — not because everything is good or perfect but because God’s grace and mercy always shows through our mistakes and sins in unexpected but perfect ways! In the 2 hours that fly by like 20 minutes, we journey through the “LOLMD” elements of our daily sanctification together:

- **Letting go of control over our lives by trusting the Lord our God through daily personal worship time.**
- **Opening our hearts to each other vulnerably, knowing that we will be embraced no matter what we share.**
- **Listening to the Holy Spirit’s “still small voice” (1 King 19:12) in our earnest prayers for each other and people around us.**
- **Making unforgettable memories, whether shedding tears with one another during our one-day group retreat or tasting yummy food at a cooking class.**
- **Devoting our hearts to being better disciples each day by caring for others with the love of Jesus.**

Throughout the year, we grow stronger in our walks, not just with each other but also with Jesus. Together, we sustain our hope and joy in Christ, knowing that in all things God works for good with those who love Him, those whom he has called according to His purpose (Romans 8:28). So, how can we not LOL?

Christy Kim



One of the things that our Discipleship group was deeply challenged about was the unit on Parenting. God was challenging me to be a healer of our kids, a home as a hospital, a place where our children would find rest and refuge. Wow.

When our kids were very little, Yung and I would frequently get on our knees and ask the Lord to forgive us for the way we may have failed our kids in our parenting. And we would often pray “Lord please forgive us, and we pray we did not wound their young hearts beyond Your repair.”

As we entered 2020, my heart was aching at the prospect of having Jeremiah leave for college in the fall and Karis planning to study abroad the following year. I knew our family would never be the same. My heart longed to turn back time and wished to parent them in this version, the older version, a little more patient and mature version. How I wished we could love them more and be an agent of healing rather than pain from my sinfulness. I had many regrets and I would pray for God to be merciful and gracious despite all my mistakes, especially when it came to Karis and Jeremiah.

When the Shelter In Place order was called, there was fear and panic, but also thanksgiving. This time was a unique chance, a time God was giving us. The gift of time with our kids.

During this time, by God’s prompting and providence through LOLMD, I was able to ask Karis and Jeremiah once again for their

forgiveness. We were able to reconcile and receive forgiveness, and they gave it to us with grace and maturity. Isn't our God great?! Only our great God could orchestrate this kind of setting, where parents can ask for forgiveness of the past and where Christ's love would open our children's hearts to forgive and heal. We had many nights of worship and reconciliation together during this time. I will never forget these past few months. I will hold them dear to my heart for the rest of my life as the Lord used discipleship to help me make our home a refuge for my precious children.

Nancy Kim



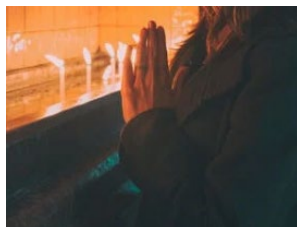
For the last 2 years in LOLMD, I got to walk through some amazing and hard times with some wonderful sisters in Christ. When I started, I was really excited to see what I could get out of this. Who doesn't want to be challenged and grow? Looking back, it was all very selfish reasons. I didn't think much of how I could love my sisters or support them in their own walks.

My highlight this year was learning to receive help and learning to walk in the lives of these wonderful sisters. Marrying a pastor brings a lot of expectations as being "the pastor's wife". There is an expectation of being godlier and knowing more. You go from being a church goer to being someone holier. Honestly, I'm just like any person. I had normal desires, like wanting a stable and secure life. A desire for a baby and to grow a family. Loving people is hard, it takes a lot of work, and in the end, they can still hurt you. I was warned before I got married someone in ministry, how ministry hurts. How people in church will hurt you. It honestly scared me. I was wary of when that day will come to me. Sure, I love to serve, help with events, clean, and do busy work. But being a missionary to my work, neighbors, and others? Really getting into the trenches of relationships sounded like a lot of work. Plus, they can hurt you! No thank you, I was comfortable with how my life was. This year God pushed me to a whole new level of deepness in our group that I never experience with a group of

sisters before. Sure, I gone to small groups since college. Sure, we share prayer request and had some deep one on one from time to time. But to daily walk with the same group of people weekly for 2 years? There is something more God had to teach me through this. Loving people is hard, but there is also great fruit in persevering together. I never knew others could feel my hurts and pain while dealing with infertile for almost 3 years. These sisters cried out to God with me and even started a fasting train with others at church for our baby. In something so painfully and lonely, I lost hope. I was afraid to ask God for a baby at this point because “no” hurt too much. But they said they would hope for me.

When I went through doctors visit, test, etc. they were there with me. In February, when God answered our prayer and I found out I was pregnant, they shared in my joy. We were able to praise God together. I felt like this baby was a part of them too. I learned how letting people in, was another way God loves me. He put people in my life to persevere for me when I could no longer do it. They hope for me when I could no longer pray to God. By learning to let people into my life and heart struggles, I was also blessed to learn to walk a long side these ladies’ life. I won’t share the details of their struggle and joy, but it has been such a privilege to walk with them in some of their deepest darkness and to cry out to God together. It also has been so much joy to share in their answered prayers and ups in life. I feel like God taught me to not be afraid to love and get into the messiness of people’s lives because He is already there in it. And He may just want to use you and me to show His love through it. “Where two or three are gathered in my name, there I am among them.” Matthew 18:20

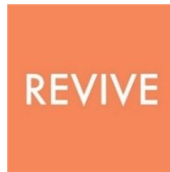
Sally Yang



One of the biggest blessings of LOLMD this year was learning to be desperate before God in prayer. It was such a difficult year for many people around me. Seeing others suffer brought me to pray to God in desperation and faith. I am so grateful for many who shared their sufferings and struggles with me so that I could join them in praying to and pleading with God and rejoicing when He answered.

Another blessing of LOLMD was being convicted by God to be a godlier wife. Completing the marriage lessons and discussing our own marriages with my group helped me to see how I am falling short of God's calling for me as a wife. I realized I had been comparing myself and my marriage to the world, and not to His Word - His standard - His desire. I thought I was doing a good job being a kind, submissive, and honoring wife compared to my own perceived "Christian" standard of a wife that I was taking in from the culture around me. After reflecting, praying, and talking to my husband, I also realized that for many years I felt alone and discouraged in pursuing being a biblically godly wife and settled for what I thought was "above the curve." I now realize I needed (and need) more encouragement from God, my husband, and others to pursue this high calling and not be discouraged and influenced by what I see and experience around me. It *is* hard being the kind of wife GOD calls me to be! But He renewed in me the desire to pursue what HE wants and what HE gives me the power to do. I am encouraged because being the kind of wife He wants me to be is not just for the sake of being a good wife, or so that I can have a healthy marriage, but is a part of His gracious plan of making me beautiful and holy like Jesus.

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