

Even though HCC is also a Chinese church of about the same size as ECC, the environment and cultures are largely different from each other. Simply put, the transition is not simple, and I believe that answering the question of readjustment may require a number of considerations.

First, our college pastor down in Houston stressed to us the importance of being a multiplying, missional community. These words may be interpreted as follows. **Multiplying:** basically, that the fellowships are not stagnant. For our college fellowship model in particular, this meant cell groups periodically growing to the point of saturation, and then spawning off to form a new group. But more importantly, *that the fellowship is regularly bringing in new members and equipping new leaders to serve.* **Missional:** that the church and its fellowship groups revolve around the purpose of not only discipling its members to become more like Christ, but impacting the surrounding community for Christ and welcoming in and showing the gospel to unbelievers. **Community:** members are accountable to each other, love and pray for each other, and are *intentionally* committed to each other's growth in Christ. People make an effort to get to know each other first and see where one another are coming from, and then become committed to spurring one another on. Although people use different nomenclature, I have seen how, Lord-willing, these core values in a fellowship can foster a welcoming environment for insiders, outsiders, and anybody in-between. ***I think that as long as we or any church keeps goals like these in mind, broadly speaking, there is less of a chance that a newcomer or a recent graduate arrives only to feel out of place and without hope of re-assimilating.***

I recognize that this church is not the same church that it was when Seattle still had the Supersonics and before Barack Obama was elected president. Times are different! My hope is that, as a recent graduate--or perhaps more fundamentally as somebody who has gone away to a different environment, grown some, changed some, and now returned--I can both be blessed by and be a blessing to ECC. I understand that I have much to learn from what has been going on here, and I also hope to share how God has been working in Houston Chinese Church, and how He has been shaping my heart. I am sure that God can and will use all of our experiences to further His ministry, and ultimately, to accomplish His goals through us.



ENG FAMILY (L-R): BRIANNA, CRYSTAL, DILLON, RUTH, PAUL

A HEART FOR FAMILIES



SHIRLEY CHU, CHILDREN & FAMILY MINISTRIES

Many people from our church know the friendly face and warm smile of **Shirley Chu**. Most of you know that Shirley is the Minister of EKC Children & Family Ministries, but not many are familiar with her work. In the following, she shares her laborious yet blessed journey that led her to her ministry today. --Interviewed by Mary Cheng.

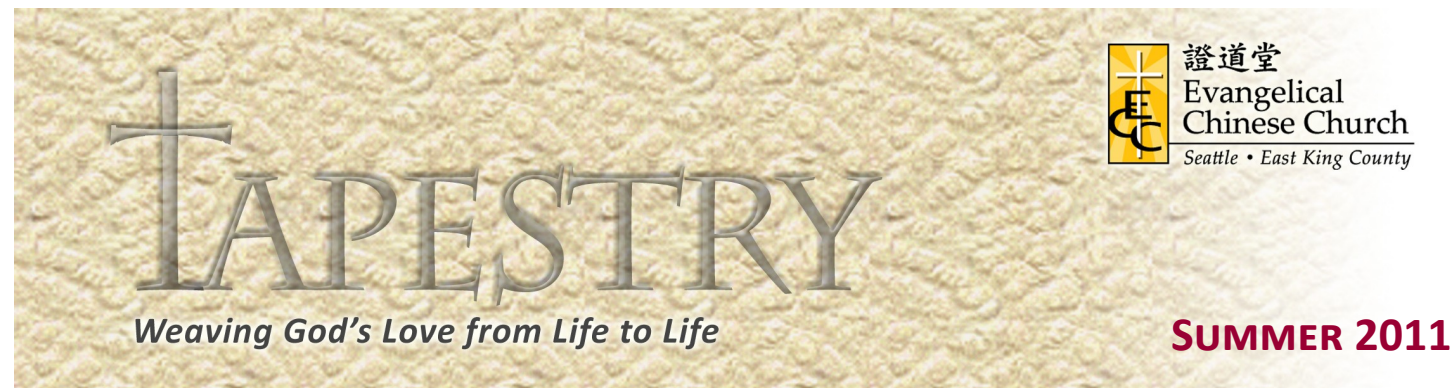
After finishing high school in Taiwan, Shirley moved to the U.S. with her family. She worked at a bank for several years after she graduated from college. She responded to God's calling to join the Chinese Gospel Broadcasting Center in New York where she worked for two years. Because of her passion to serve in a Chinese-speaking church, she attended Witness Theological Seminary in California and received her Masters Degree of Divinity. After graduation, she served at Home of Christ for six years. She felt she needed to get deeper knowledge of the ministry so she went to China Evangelical Seminary in Taiwan. After five years of hard work she received her Doctor of Ministry.

She is currently serving at ECC-EKC as the Minister of Children & Family Ministries. Besides her busy schedule with Children's Ministry, she has also established the Family Ministry. With the help of many dedicated co-workers she has been involved with the planning, coordinating and teaching of parenting classes for young families and has been working with many single parents. Her "Divorce Recovery Handbook" from her Dissertation has already been used in the EKC Divorce Support Group (Olive Branch Fellowship).

For leisure she enjoys walking, cooking, reading, shopping and music.

Her vision is that with the help of our pastors, she can expand a more effective Family Ministry which would offer classes on parenting, marriage counseling for different age groups, and can also support families going through difficult times and help rebuild broken homes. In order to start the expanded family ministry she will soon be taking classes for premarital and marriage counseling.

She asks us to pray for and with her so she can use what she has been equipped with to serve our church and glorify God.



THE MAKING OF A LEADER-SERVANT

It was on April, 2009 that **Minister Gar Nishioka** and his family started their ministry at ECC. Follow along as we interview him on topics near and dear to his heart. --Interviewed by Jessica Chen.

Is there anything that surprises you about serving here?

One thing that surprises me is that we are able to maintain a real family feel for such a large church.

Can you explain what you mean by 'family feel'?

A feeling that we're all connected to each other--that we see each other as 'uncles' and 'aunties', that the younger children can feel that safety and security growing up in the church. True, it's part of the culture here, but there is an intentional desire to want to create that type of feeling or atmosphere. Here, each individual generation is celebrated and there is a real value in each age group and stage of life.

What do you do here besides preaching ministries and what are your current ministry goals and aspirations?

I serve at ECC as English Pastor/EKC Youth Director. The majority of my time I oversee the EKC youth ministries: both the YF (junior high) and YSF (high school) groups. As far as my English Pastor duties, primarily it is preaching and supporting the English ministries on the EKC-side and supporting Pastor Solomon and trying to help out as much as I can.

In terms of ministry goals, ***something that God has placed on my heart and that I have a passion for is raising up and equipping leaders.*** I am convinced that wherever I go and whatever I do in ministry, raising up and equipping leaders will always be a part of my ministry. This can happen in both the youth and adult ministries. I really love teaching and meeting up with new and upcoming leaders in order to mentor and grow their skills and their understanding of what it means to be a leader in the church. My passion includes sharing life-to-life, teaching, identifying others who are gifted in leadership and mentoring them.

How do you see this happening in the church?

It needs to be done at all levels: deacons, elders, small group leaders, Sunday school teachers. It needs to happen in



NISHIOKA FAMILY L-R: CAMERON, MICHELE, GAR, JAYNA

relationships. Meeting one-on-one and sharing life-to-life. I especially love the imagery of a shepherd: gentle, yet firm at times, caring, and a servant. I've had a chance to do this in the past in other ministries for career-age and adults. It's important to use that type of "leader-servant" language in building relationships. It's important that we emphasize the word "servant" rather than "leaders".

Can you explain a little more about this 'leader-servant' mentality?

Leader-Servant: I learned this term from someone on staff at Evergreen Baptist Church of San Gabriel Valley in Southern California, whose position was to solely care for and support all the other pastors and interns. The understanding is that Jesus calls us to ***first and foremost be servants.*** And some of us are later called to be leaders. Servanthood is the embodiment of who we are.

Servant-Leader: This is the more popular term. It implies that some people are first and foremost leaders with a servant heart. I believe that we need to help the church get out of this mode of elevating some people, and lowering others; we need to get rid of the sense of "being better than" or "being in a higher position of leadership than" others. If anything, we are all supposed to be fighting to be in the last spot in line!

Name one food you would never grow tired of eating. Why?

Pizza. It's like the perfect food because you have your veggie toppings, protein (meat), dairy (cheese), and carbs (crust). I like the variety. My favorite growing up was the Godfather's combo.

GOD ANSWERS PRAYERS

Testimony by **Christopher Wu**: EKC-English, entering Gr. 12 this Fall

A lot of people complain and say God doesn't answer prayers. Well God does. God is real, and God is there for you.

On Sunday (4/3/2011), my family headed to Harstine Island after Sunday service. Harstine Island sits near the bottom of Puget Sound. We were expecting a fun-filled weekend spent with our longtime family friends, the Chan family. After an uneventful two-hour car ride down and a Costco lunch, we arrived. As we unpacked, I saw the canoes and kayaks, and we decided to go canoeing. We grabbed boots, canoes, lifejackets and paddles. We paddled out about one mile to another island which took around thirty-five minutes to reach.

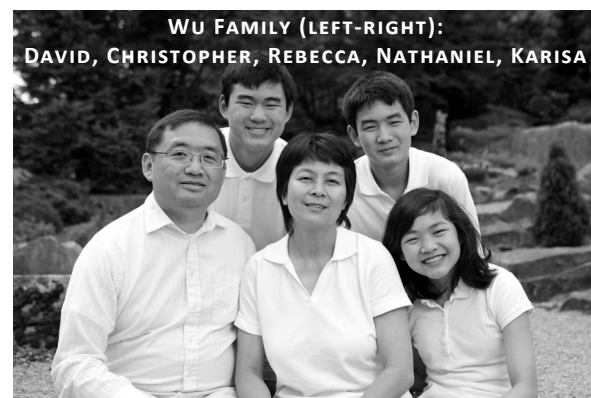
After spending twenty minutes there, we decided to head back because it was starting to get kind of late. We swapped boats, with Isaac and Nathaniel taking the canoe, and with Enoch and I taking the two kayaks. Now the real trouble began. I asked Nathaniel and Isaac if I could just hop onto their canoe and then tie my kayak to the back since I was making no headway. As I drifted my kayak next to their canoe, I got ready to just hop over. I figured nothing would go wrong. And then it happened.

SPLASH..... I fell straight into Puget Sound! I had flipped my kayak, and I was now floating in the forty degree water more than half a mile from land in any direction. I was extremely cold and realized just how bad this was. Enoch was almost back to the house, far out of shouting range. Isaac and Nathaniel tried for a couple minutes to help me back into the canoe, but it was impossible to. If I tried to get in one side, there was not enough weight on the other side to keep the canoe from capsizing. We prayed for a bit, but then we could only wait for Enoch to come back to help us. I prayed the entire time for help.

It took Enoch about twenty minutes to get back to us. After Enoch got back to our canoe, he could provide the weight needed. He held down one side of the canoe, and I was able to climb over the other side and onto the canoe. It took Nathaniel and Isaac another 20 minutes to paddle back to shore even though they were paddling with all their might.

I was shivering like crazy. My teeth were chattering, and I was completely soaked. I wrapped my arms around me and kept my head covered. I dried off and ran back into the house. I was still shivering, and I took a hot shower. Even after that, I was still shivering, and it took another half an hour before I was finally not shivering anymore. I was safe, I was ok, God had answered our prayers.

God's perfect timing through all of this shines through. Once Uncle Abel realized that there was trouble, he went to the neighbors to ask for help. They were in the driveway about to drive away for the weekend, when Uncle Abel approached. The neighbors had a motorboat that had been broken for the past five years, and only the day before, had randomly decided to



have it repaired. So, the neighbor was able to use his motor boat to go out and rescue Enoch. Enoch had been sitting out on the lake ever since he helped me back into the canoe. He was unable to leave because he was still watching the capsized canoe. With the neighbor's motorboat, the neighbor was able to tie both Enoch's kayak and my capsized kayak to his boat. His motorboat brought Enoch back to shore quickly. Without the speedboat, Enoch would have been stranded out on the lake.

Sitting in forty degree water for thirty minutes is extremely bad for your health. Being in forty degree water, the victim only has thirty minutes to an hour before passing out. I was in the water for thirty minutes, and I was starting to feel bad...really bad. If it had taken Enoch another twenty minutes to reach us, I may have been unconscious already. This has strengthened my faith in a deep way. God is a good God. God is the provider, He is faithful, and He holds our hand every step of the way. *Thank You God, for giving me another day to live!*

From the hymn, "I Know Who Holds Tomorrow":

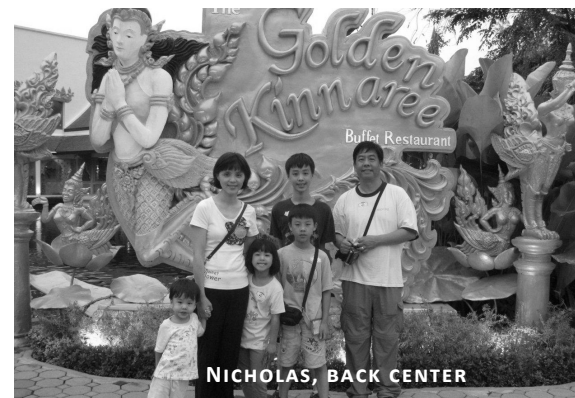
*Many things about tomorrow,
I don't seem to understand,
But I know who holds tomorrow,
And I know who holds my hand.*

WHY BAPTISM?

Testimony by **Nicholas Chu**: EKC-English, entering Gr. 9 this Fall

Hi, my name is Nicholas, and this is why I want to be baptized. Ever since I was a baby, I had one parent who is a Christian, and the other a non-Christian. Mom wanted me to know Jesus as Lord, but Dad wanted me to be like him, a moral nonbeliever. Going to church was hard because my dad didn't approve of it at first and several times mom had to sneak me there. After my mom confessed what she did, my dad let me stay at the church because he wanted me to see my friends. I thank God that He gave me a loving earthly father.

When I was six, I accepted Jesus into my life. At that time, I wasn't really sure what it meant, but I knew it was a good thing, and I wanted it. After that I didn't really feel any different, but ever since then I started to really look into my faith. Soon afterward it was tested as my dad asked me questions about



Christianity. It was not easy because my dad is very good at arguing, and more than once I thought he was right. As I grew older, I started to understand more and was not swayed so easily.

For the past few years, I've been thinking whether or not to be baptized. In many ways, God has shown me His power through what He has done for me. I prayed that I wouldn't need to have foot surgery, and the surgery didn't take place. I also decided to obey God by tithing faithfully. Once, I gave an offering of four dollars and the same week, my siblings and I got four dart guns. You may call it coincidence, but I knew God was blessing me. This has happened consistently--where I was blessed for stepping out in faith. More than ever He showed me He was real. That's what led to my decision to get baptized.

I wanted to be baptized because I felt that as long as I wasn't, I was only partially complete. It was like I had one foot in the Promised Land and the other back in Egypt. I wanted to very badly, but I was afraid of what my dad might say. Every time there was an opportunity, I let it slip past. When this year's Easter baptism came around, I felt that I could postpone it no longer. I asked my mom about it, and she told me to pray and seek God's wisdom through my devotions. Then one day after I finished praying, I felt God telling me that I should be baptized this time around. I knew what I must do, but there was one thing left to do: asking Dad's permission.

It was a big step, and in the days before I asked, my mom and many friends and relatives were praying that he'd say yes. Thankfully, he did say yes in the end. Even though he said it was meaningless to him, he allowed me to go ahead and be baptized. This experience has taught me that through God, I can do all things. I will do my best to live a life that honors God and allows Him to be the boss of my life. Thank you for reading.

BECOMING HOME AGAIN

Testimony by **Dillon Eng**: SEA-English, entering UW Grad School this Fall

Transitions can be challenging, and we as the church would like to do all we can to assist those who return here after a period of absence. Tapestry asked Dillon Eng to share his thoughts with us for this quarter's issue.

Rarely is it totally comfortable to adjust to a new environment. I have attended ECC with my family since childhood, was brought up in Children's Worship and youth ministries here, and was baptized by Pastor Sam during my senior year of high school. Up until seventeen years of age, I had always thought of ECC as my spiritual home, and Seattle as my city. For me, that "new" environment is actually an old one. When I returned from college for good this past May, promptly planted back in Seattle the day after graduation, I came to a somewhat startling realization. Although I knew in my mind that I was home, in my heart, it no longer felt like I was. As I understand that this is a common experience for returning college graduates, I hope to shed some light on where those like me are coming from, and how this feeling might be addressed.

For the majority of the past four years I have been in Houston, Texas, for my undergraduate studies. I attended Houston Chinese Church, a multigenerational, Chinese immigrant church with an English congregation and a college ministry, named Cornerstone Christian Fellowship. As a freshman, my initial transition was pretty smooth. I was surrounded by unknowns, but college freshmen take unknowns for granted. To make things better, I was joined by a nervous and excited group of fellow freshman. Coming from a variety of backgrounds, none of us were sure what to expect from our church or our fellowship; with that uncertainty in mind, however, we looked towards the future with bright eyes. Thankfully, over the next four school years, God in His grace blessed our fellowship. We grew in both quantity and quality. Though we certainly had our ups and downs, our class learned how to serve together in God's ministry. We became accountable to each other, and many of us became best friends as well. We learned how to be vulnerable with each other and to encourage each other; we learned how to live the college version of biblical community. Houston Chinese Church and Cornerstone Christian Fellowship had become my spiritual home.

This past spring, the time came for us to part ways. There were tearful goodbyes, as we realized that the sweet community that we had known for four years had come to an abrupt end. I arrived back at home on Sunday evening, and felt, for lack of a better word, weird. This transition was *not* easy. Although I had come back to Seattle and ECC every summer since college started, this time it just felt, and still feels, different. This time, I know that I am not returning to my college fellowship, and I am slowly adjusting to all that this means.

So, how does a recent graduate adjust to life after college? I do not know that the transition could ever be seamless. My friend group is different, the culture is different, and my circumstances are different. I want to stress that this is not a bad thing. However, any adjustment will simply take some time. I have grown and changed since leaving four years ago and, separately, this church has grown and changed too. In the process of coming to view my church in Houston as my spiritual home, I feel as though I have been slowly fit to a certain mold. That mold included elements particular to my school, my church, and also the region. It has shaped my thoughts, feelings, and expectations for biblical community.