

2023 Youth Ministry Annual Report

Pastor Ivan Yu

Mission: *“To live life as disciples of Christ in four unique ways: Know, Grow, Show, Go”*

Dear CGCM family,

Praise God for another fruitful year of growth in our church! Some big themes observed this year in our Youth Ministry involve building a stronger foundation of understanding in the gospel and biblical beliefs, practicing of discipleship, and fellowshiping and serving in partnership with youth from other churches. Thank you to all the faithful coworkers who served and spent a lot of time with the youth. In this report, we humbly share about all that God accomplished in 2023 through the Youth Ministry!

In Christ,
Pastor Ivan

Youth Fellowship

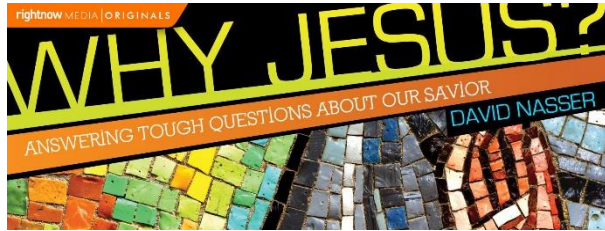


The Friday Youth Fellowships in 2023 continued with our usual format of games in the MPR, worship, sermon/lesson, and small groups in the English Sanctuary.

The year began with the implementation of new assigned small groups. Although we had small groups in the past, what was new was assigning boys and girls to be in the same groups, instead of keeping them separate. These groups remained the same for the whole school year, each with an adult leader, in order to have more opportunities for discipleship and building trusting relationships to grow deeper.

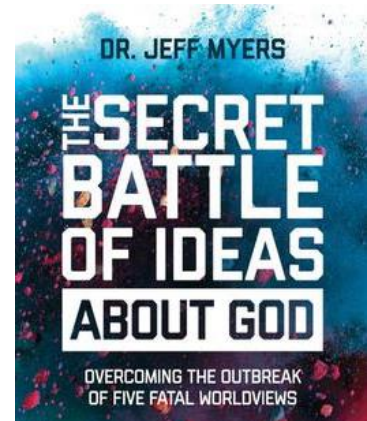
Throughout the year, the youth went through the following topics of sermon series, video series, or lessons:

- January - February – **“Being in Community”** – In light of the implementation of new assigned small groups, Pastor Ivan preached a three-part sermon series from Ecclesiastes 4:7-12 about what it means to be in community. He touched upon 1) how we may reject being in community because of our focus on ourselves and meaningless pursuits, 2) the benefits of being in community, and 3) how a community is kept strong by being in relationship with God. (<https://bit.ly/3vFOAM4>)



- March – **“Why Jesus?”** – A four-part video series by David Nasser. David addresses the tough questions that people have about Jesus and points them back to the scriptural truths about our Savior. Each video session was followed by discussions. (<https://bit.ly/3vNjCA4>)

- April - June – **“The Secret Battle of Ideas about God”** – A seven-part video series by Dr. Jeff Myers. This study addresses five of life’s biggest questions: 1) Am I loved?, 2) Why do I hurt?, 3) Does my life have meaning?, 4) Why can’t we just get along?, and 5) Is there any hope for the world? These questions were addressed by comparing how the worldviews of secularism, new spirituality, postmodernism, Marxism, and Islam would answer these questions with how the Biblical Christian worldview would answer them. (<https://youtu.be/7vkEqZMSjHE>)

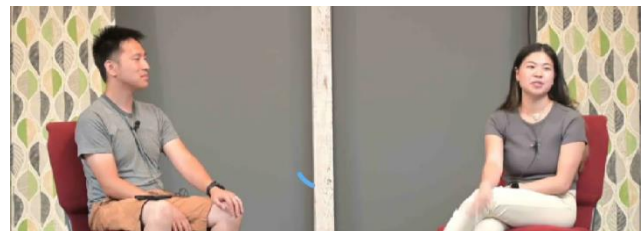


- July – **Interview with invited guests** – This month, Pastor Ivan invited some guests to come visit the youth fellowship and be interviewed about certain spiritual life experiences and topics.

- 7/7 – Thailand Missions Trip Sharing – **Mabel Xu and Allen Zou**



- 7/21 – Avoiding to Live a Double Life – Interview with **Abraham Sisa** (<https://youtu.be/yfMP2-2x5Yo>)
- 7/28 – The Importance of Discipleship – Interview with **Natalie Ng** (https://youtu.be/cAZDeh_k3II)



- August – December – The rest of the year for Friday Youth Fellowships featured various sermons (see below), special events, and salvation testimony sharings of some adult coworkers.

2023 Youth Fellowship Sermons

1/13	Bear One Another’s Burdens	Galatians 6:1-2	https://bit.ly/3OaIDeT
1/27	The Rejection of Community – Being in Community #1	Ecclesiastes 4:7-8	https://bit.ly/495xOCU
2/10	The Benefits of Community – Being in Community #2	Ecclesiastes 4:9-12	https://bit.ly/47K8mlm
2/24	The Community Kept Strong – Being in Community #3	Ecclesiastes 4:12	https://bit.ly/3UcjZ1c
8/25	Moving Beyond a Shadow of a Doubt	Matthew 11:1-19	(No recording)
9/8	Love One Another	Romans 12:9-11	(No recording)
9/15	Imitate One Another	1 Corinthians 4:16; 11:1; Ephesians 5:1-2	(No recording)
9/22	Pray Persistently and Not Lose Heart	Luke 18:1-8	(No recording)
12/1	Prideful Planning	James 4:13-17	(No recording)

We are very thankful to our Youth Ministry Coworkers for leading small groups on Fridays, including Xiaochun Huang, Jun Qi, Angela Shek, Jonathan Shek, Joyce Tseng, Mingxiang Xu, Jingyang Wu. Throughout the year, we had other special fellowship activities and events which are listed in a later section of this report.



Sunday School

This year, we had the following Sunday School classes for the youth.

Winter Semester (1/15-4/2)

- **What Christians Believe (Basic Biblical Doctrines) (1/15-3/5)**

- A class on some important biblical doctrines of Christianity and addressing student-submitted questions on how to live out what we believe.



<u>Date</u>	<u>Class</u>
1/15	Introduction (What is doctrine? What we believe affects how we live our life.)
1/22	Doctrine of Scripture (Authoritative, Divinely-Inspired, True, Inerrant, Sufficient)
1/29	Doctrine of Salvation / Beliefs of Denominations and Cults (Salvation through Faith in Jesus Alone / Theological Triage)
2/5	Is Swearing Ok? (Topical discussion from student submitted questions)
2/12	Why do we go to church? Is it ok to miss church? (Topical discussion from student submitted questions)
2/19	Winter Teen Conference (No Sunday School)
2/26	Congregation Meeting (No Sunday School)
3/5	Doctrine of the Trinity

- **Sunday School Format Experimentation (3/12-4/16)**

- As we realize the size of the Sunday School class getting bigger and recognize the different spiritual needs of youths based on their age and spiritual maturity, for the second half of the Winter Semester, we experimented with different Sunday School formats from Bible Study to activity-based object lessons. Joyce Tseng started to teach some of these classes.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Class</u>
3/12	Sunday School Feedback Survey
3/19	Bible Study: Weaknesses and Failures (2 Corinthians 12:1-10)
3/26	The Parable of the Sower (Matthew 13:1-23)
4/2	The Parable of the Vine and the Branches (John 15:1-15) Plant Seeds and Succulents
4/9	Easter (No Sunday School)
4/16	You Will Know Them By Their Fruit (Matthew 7:15-20) Biblical Literacy Quiz

Taught by
Joyce Tseng

Spring Semester (4/16-6/25)

- During the Spring semester, we separated the youths into two classes for smaller class sizes and more effective teaching.
 - **Class 1** - Pastor Ivan taught one class for those who are baptized or are interested in going deeper into Bible Study. We used the Inductive Bible Study method to study a different passage each week and practice memorizing and reciting Bible verses.
 - **Class 2** – Joyce Tseng taught the second class with a more devotional and hands-on approach to Bible Study. The class went through some aspects of Creation using National Bible Bee curriculum. Youths also made “lap books” which presented different attributes of the Bible.



- We showed the youth videos from the National Bible Bee competition (<https://biblebee.org/>) to show and encourage youth that there are others their age who can be serious about memorizing and understanding Bible passages. On 7/9, we had a **Scripture memory competition** of the verses memorized this semester. Those who recited the 8 memory verses publicly received a \$10.00 gift card.



Fall Semester (9/10-12/17)

- During the Fall semester, we offered three different Sunday School classes for the youth.
 - **Class 1 - Middle School** – Bible Study in the Book of John – Taught by Joyce Tseng and Pei Zhai
 - **Class 2 - High School** – Bible Study in the Book of John – Taught by Xiaochun Huang, Angela Shek, and Fu Li
 - **Class 3 - Those baptized and interested in baptism** – Discipleship Essentials – Taught by Pastor Ivan Yu. Youths learn the meaning of discipleship and practice leading a discipleship group through each lesson of the book. The goal is for them to lead their own discipleship group with other youth in the future.

2023 Winter Teen Conference



This year, we were happy to finally have an in-person Winter Teen Conference (WTC) held at Camp Brookwoods in Alton, NH from February 17-20, 2023. A total of 123 youth attended from 8 different churches including CGCM, BCEC (Chinatown), CBCGL (Lowell), CGCW (Worcester), ACCC (Amherst), SCCC (Springfield), CBCoGB (Quincy), and CCCNE (Brookline). The last in-person WTC was in 2020 right before the shut-down before COVID-19. Since then, we had an online WTC in 2021 and a cancellation of WTC in 2022 due to the Omicron variant.

Our guest speaker for the 2023 WTC was Gregory Hsu, a staff leader for Graduate InterVarsity at MIT and a minister at High Rock Church in Cambridge. Greg spoke on the theme “There is Freedom” and encouraged youth on how they can have freedom in Christ from sin, false desires, and worldly ideas because of God’s transforming love. They can continue to pursue a relationship with God and be used by Him to love and serve others with this freedom. At the end of the conference, it was unfortunately announced that after more than three decades, Winter Teen Conference is discontinued. We continue to pray for future opportunities of partnerships between the youth ministries of these Chinese heritage churches.



Photos: <https://bit.ly/48UVLwM>

Slideshow Video: <https://youtu.be/XnxiKAJgEzU>

2023 WorkCampNE

This year's WorkCampNE was held at a middle school in Berlin, NH from July 9-15, 2023. CGCM participated with 23 youths and 4 adults alongside CGCW and other churches from different states. Youths were placed in one of 21 crews to work on a resident's home including interior/exterior painting, deck building/staining, roofing, and yardwork.



The theme for this year is "We Champions". We were taught that through Jesus Christ we are more than conquerors and can have victory over sin and trials of this life because He has overcome the world (John 16:33).

During the week, one of our youths accepted Christ as his personal Savior after talking with the guest speaker. Two youths considered getting baptized when we returned. Our group meetings each evening gave us an opportunity to discuss important spiritual matters that we wouldn't usually be able to talk about during a normal Friday or Sunday at church. One of the topics we addressed was about sharing our faith with our friends and inviting them to church. After the

trip, we had the youths write a one-page testimony and share it with others in the fellowship. Thank you to Yi Miao, Jun Qi, and Mingxiang Xu for serving alongside with our team this year.

Photos: <https://bit.ly/4bktCkL>

Workcamp videos:
<https://bit.ly/3U4ZkMx>



2023 Vacation Bible School – Stellar

This year, we returned to having a week-long Vacation Bible School (VBS) and partnered with the youth and adult coworkers at CGCW to serve. VBS was held at CGCM from June 26-30, 2023. The theme was called “Stellar” and taught children to shine Jesus’ light in different hard situations of life. Praise God that we had a total of 42 children to share the gospel with and help from 35



youth and at least 27 adults to serve them not only during the VBS, but also for the various culture classes in the afternoon.

Photos: <https://bit.ly/3Ue2Ynh>

Slideshow Video:

<https://youtu.be/lsgYNDMpeUM>

2023 CGCM & CGCW Youth Retreat

After CGCM had its first Youth Retreat last year, we partnered with the CGCW to plan one for this year. The Youth Retreat was held from October 6-9, 2023 at Pine Brook Camp and Conference Center. We had a total of 59 people attend, including 42 youth. We invited Pastor Dominic Chan from the Austin Chinese Church to be our guest speaker. The retreat theme was called “First Things First”. Pastor Dominic addressed the priority of pursuing Christ first in a world full of demands for students to juggle from school, parents, friends, and extracurriculars. We can do so through the spiritual priorities of Scripture, personal character, and obedience to God.

First Things First.



2023 CGCM & CGCW Youth Retreat
Pine Brook Camp and Conference Center
October 6-9, 2023

CGCM and CGCW youth all had a great time worshiping, fellowshiping, and serving with one another. During the Prayse Fire on the last night of the retreat, one youth made the decision to be ready for baptism! One of the things that made this year’s retreat special was the involvement of seven college students who were willing to come and serve as small group counselors for the youth and spend time with them during one-on-one huddles. We thank them and the other adult volunteers who were involved in leading the Student Ministry Teams.



- **Pastor Dominic's sermons** may be streamed or downloaded here: <https://bit.ly/3HvuepQ>
- **Photos:** <https://bit.ly/48KqLQ6>
- **Video Slideshow:** <https://youtu.be/rZWDYfFiynQ>

2023 Events and Fellowship Activities

- **2/17-20** – Winter Teen Conference
Photos: <https://bit.ly/48UVLwM>
Video Slideshow:
<https://youtu.be/XnxiKAJgEzU>
- **3/24** – Joint Game Night with BCEC, CBCGL, CGCW, & CGCM
Photos: <https://bit.ly/3Hq834q>
- **4/8** – Easter Fellowship Potluck
Photos: <https://bit.ly/3S50yEZ>
- **6/2** – Senior Celebration
Photos: <https://bit.ly/496PxcY>
- **6/19** – VBS Decorating
Photos: <https://bit.ly/3vDSJOQ>
- **6/26-30** – CGCM & CGCW Vacation Bible School
Photos: <https://bit.ly/3Ue2Ynh>
Video Slideshow:
<https://youtu.be/lsgYNDMpeUM>
- **7/9** – Scripture Memory Event
- **7/10-16** – WorkcampNE
Photos: <https://bit.ly/4bktCkL>
Videos: <https://bit.ly/3U4ZkMx>
- **8/11** – Fellowship at Auntie Lanting's House
Photos: <https://bit.ly/3OcxIBW>
- **9/16** – TheSEND Conference at Agganis Arena
- **9/29** – Small Group Competition Night

- **10/6-9** – CGCM & CGCW Youth Retreat
Photos: <https://bit.ly/48KqLQ6>
Video Slideshow:
<https://youtu.be/rZWDYfFiynQ>
- **10/28** – Simply Worship Training Event
- **11/10** – Operation Christmas Child shoebox packing event *
Photos: <https://bit.ly/47T8Eqc>
- **11/18** – Youth Family Thanksgiving Potluck Fellowship
Photos: <https://bit.ly/47LiyKl>
- **11/25** – Yardwork for Zhou family
- **12/8** - Christmas Decorating in the church
Photos: <https://bit.ly/497kaiF>
- **12/8** – Dice Gift Exchange
Photos: <https://bit.ly/497kaiF>

* 34 youths and 10 adults participated in the shoebox packing event. A total of 125 shoeboxes were packed by the whole church and delivered to children in the Dominican Republic.

Miscellaneous

- **8/13** – Evidences for the Resurrection – Pastor Ivan Yu (<https://youtu.be/IkiMFx050QU>)
- **Baptisms:**
 - 4/9** – Christopher Wang and Jonathan Wang
Photos: <https://bit.ly/42p8buN>
 - 7/23** – Terry Chang and Andrew Wang
Photos: <https://bit.ly/3HwEzlr>
 - 11/26** – Ivan Chan
Photos: <https://bit.ly/3Hse54j>



- **Graduation:**

6 seniors from the Class of 2023 graduated High School. Congratulations to Madeline Jiang, Christopher Wang, Jonathan Wang, Cozette Weng, Daniel Zhang, and Dorothy Zhang!



Selected Photos



Worship Team during Fellowship



Playing "Steal the Bacon"



Preparing Children's lunch



Preparing Children's lunch



Playing "Tug-of-War"



Easter Sunday



Making Decorations for VBS



Fellowship and Worship at Auntie Lanting's



Operation Christmas Child Shoebox Packing



Donut-Eating Competition during Thanksgiving Potluck Fellowship



Christmas Decorating at Church



Dice Gift Exchange