



Greetings from Hong Kong! Our LCMS Asia Pacific team has gathered here to enjoy some fellowship with each other and to meet with members of our region's new leadership team.

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Well, Thanksgiving has now come and gone and we are well into the Advent season, but please allow me to keep the Thanksgiving season going, because I have much to be thankful for:

1) I am thankful for God's relentless love for me.

*"Oh give thanks to the LORD, for he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever! Let the redeemed of the LORD say so, whom he has redeemed from trouble and gathered in from the lands, from the east and from the west, from the north and from the south."* -Psalms 107:1

As the psalmist writes, no matter the physical or emotional place I have wandered to; no matter the trouble or brokenness or sin I have found myself, the LORD of the universe has and continues to gather me in. I am grateful to be counted as one of the redeemed.

2) I am thankful for my wife.

*"An excellent wife who can find? She is far more precious than jewels..."* "Charm is deceitful, and beauty is vain, but a woman who fears the LORD is to be praised." -Proverbs 31:10;30

God has shown his love to me in an incredible way this autumn season. He has blessed me with a wife who is charming and beautiful, but who above all loves and trusts the Lord. Coco Yang Wei and I were married on October 26 at Shanghai Community Church, followed by three reception banquets: 1) The evening of the wedding ceremony in Shanghai, 2) the following weekend in Coco's hometown of Yangzhou, and 3) two weekends after that, November 16, in Merced, CA -- where my brother Jon and his family live. Through all these celebrations, we were surrounded by our wonderful family, friends and spiritual community. We have enjoyed more fun, love and joy than we can handle. We are truly blessed.

You can see photos of the Shanghai ceremony and reception here: <https://vimeo.com/78506328>

3) I am thankful for my LCMS and CWEF teammates.

*"How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings good news, who publishes peace, who brings good news of happiness, who publishes salvation, who says to Zion, 'Your God reigns.'"* -Isaiah 52:7

This past weekend spent with most of our LCMS Asia team has reminded me of what a blessing these men and women are, and what a pleasure it is to serve with them. Several of our team members are completing their time with us in Asia and are returning to the places in the U.S. where God is sending them next, including:

- John & Susan Mehl; John has provided leadership and guidance as our much-loved regional director.
- Fung Lo and his wife Kalia, who has been working with us as CWEF's Cambodia country director.
- Meredith Wright and Faith Behnke, who have been working with us as CWEF service coordinators in China.

Please join me in thanking the Lord for them, and that he would send more co-workers to serve with us here!

4) I am thankful for the work God has called us to.

*"Let the favor of the Lord our God be upon us, and establish the work of our hands upon us; yes, establish the work of our hands!"* -Psalm 90:17

After such a long time of wedding planning and celebration, I am now catching up and settling back into my work with CWEF. It is great to be back. This past week, I had the joy of attending a ceremony at Target Corp.'s sourcing office in Shenzhen, China to accept a grant renewal. Since 2009, Target has partnered with CWEF to support the education of 50 young women from poor families in Guangdong province. I was joined by our CWEF Guangdong office staff (Dolphin, Lynn and Faith), as well as Jen, a young woman we supported through high school and who is now attending university, along with two current high school scholarship recipients (pictured above). It was a joy to see the warm and supportive relationships our staff have developed with these young women. Together with our partners, CWEF has sponsored the tuition needs of over 700 students in China's Guangdong and Yunnan provinces from 2006 to the present. I thank God for the opportunity to be a part of this work.

5) I am thankful for an amazing support team!

*"And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ."* -Philippians 1:6

Continued thanks to all of you for walking with me and encouraging me with your words, with your prayers, and with your gifts. The Lord has done great things through you, and I am confident that he is not done yet.

In Him -Josh