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suddenly and for several weeks. Some children in our congregation have a parent who may work abroad for long periods of time. These situations give us opportunities to pray for safety during travel and to try to help emotionally support children left at home. Our cultural mix sometimes lends us 'new' holiday like Chinese New Year to celebrate. It's fun to have another holiday in the winter and to wear Oriental style clothes alongside the children of Chinese descent. We also get to experience new foods as multicultural congregations have amazing potlucks! Our children get a chance to try curry from Indonesia, empanadas from the Philippines, Japanese sushi, as well as beans from Iran and standard Canadian fare. In the midst of such diversity, even my scalloped potatoes suddenly seem more unique!

'Multicultural' means language difficulties occur where we misunderstand each other or need extra patience to reach that point of understanding. Sometimes an immigrant child becomes a discipline challenge because he simply feels left out and bored in not understanding English just yet. Some teachers or parents born overseas encounter difficulties speaking to Canadian born children, and may find themselves being corrected in their pronunciation or diction. This can be daunting for volunteers, but can also be a chance to foster understanding and appreciation on the part of our children. For example, when my son studied Japanese at school, he was able to practice his newly learned phrases greeting a Japanese lady the following Sunday.

I am looking forward to finding more ways to express our multiculturalism. It might mean celebrating our heritage through intentional activities or by experiencing variety in varying points of view, but it also might just be the simple opportunity to catch a glimpse of what a wonderfully diverse and colorful place heaven will be!



## Compassion and Kids

Dulce Dabalos, River of Life Alliance Church, (Calgary Filipino Alliance Church) Calgary, AB

Two years ago, we decided to teach our people compassion for needy Third World families. One of the things we did was to ask Compassion Canada for files of children who had been having little success in getting sponsored. So, a dozen files, complete with photos, were sent to us at the beginning of 2004.

At our February 2004 appreciation lunch for our C.E. volunteers, one of the highlights was asking representatives from our kids' classes to choose Third World kids whom they wanted to 'sponsor'. Seven needy kids, one for each of our classes, were chosen. Although the church paid the yearly sponsorship fee up front for all the kids, we asked our children to raise money through their Sunday offerings for these needy children from seven different countries. They also sent them letters, cards and little mementos from Canada.

After a year, these seven Third World children were turned over to interested families in our church. Some of them were adopted by couples through the prompting of the children in our C.E. program. A fresh batch of seven new Compassion Canada kids were adopted by our church again at the beginning of 2005. Again, our C.E. kids were there to choose seven. We want to make this a yearly tradition that teaches our children compassion and at the same time makes them aware of needy children living in other countries.

## Purim Party



Joanne Leggat  
Bayview Glen Alliance Church,  
Thornhill, ON

In Thornhill, Ontario, we have a strong population of Asians, Iranians, and Jewish people. Recently, we have seen many more Asians and Iranians attend our church. The Jewish community is a little more difficult to reach, but we do have several Jewish families at the church. Some time ago, one of the Jewish mothers expressed to me her occasional sadness that her children were missing out on some of the Jewish celebrations that were a part of her upbringing. During the course of our discussion, she began to tell me about the Jewish celebration of Purim which is the celebration of God's salvation of the Jews during the time of Esther. It sounded like fun, so I decided to put on a Purim Party this past Spring where the children came dressed as kings and queens. When they arrived, they were given a 'grogger' noisemaker and as the children watched a humorous play about Esther, they sounded their groggers and cheered each time characters like Esther and Mordecai appeared, but when the villain Haman appeared, they sounded their groggers and boomed. After the play, the children were served princess cupcakes and "hamantashen" (Haman's hats) cookies. As they left, each child received a great loot bag and a balloon. As we wrapped up the evening, we talked about celebrating with the Jews that our God is a great God. Jewish families within our church were encouraged that their heritage was celebrated and Jewish guests were pleased that Christians had celebrated with them in a sensitive manner. Many of our Caucasian families reported having very positive conversations with other Jewish contacts as they explained that they had attended a Purim party at their 'church'. We celebrated what was familiar to the Jews, and to our delight they came!

## Where in Winnipeg is 'Waldo Wong'?

Kerry Klassen, Winnipeg Chinese Alliance Church, Winnipeg, MB

Figuring out how to do outreach at Winnipeg Chinese Alliance Church has been a learning experience for me that started almost three years ago, and continues to this day.

### 1 The Geographical Hurdle

Not being a typical 'community' church, we have had to be creative in connecting with our target audience, the some 20,000 people living among Winnipeg's Chinese community. Since our church's vision is "to bring Christ to our family, friends, and the Chinese community here and abroad," we can't just make up a nice flyer to drop in the mailboxes surrounding our church building to advertise and invite people to our events. How will we even know how many of the mailboxes belong to a Chinese family? In order to overcome the geographical hurdle one year, we combed through the white pages and 411.ca searching for as many Chinese names as we could think of to create an outreach database. For outreach purposes, we selected a few geographical areas and sent out mailings inviting families to join our programs.

### 2 The Relationship Hurdle

We thought the database was a pretty ingenious idea, but unfortunately, it was not as successful as we had hoped or expected. We learned an important lesson – the Chinese are a relational people. To overcome this second hurdle, we have found that our best method of reaching out is by personal contact – 95% of the unchurched kids who came to our daycamp last summer were personally invited by a family in our church. Parents need to have a relationship in order to trust the organization behind the activity. To further help meet this relational need, we are experimenting with two responses:

- We're hosting a series of 'Friendship Events' once every few months to give families a chance to invite friends to non-threatening fun events at the church throughout the year leading up to daycamp. This way, the first time families encounter WCAC, we are not asking them to leave their kids with us for an entire week. It has allowed new families to get to know our church and feel comfortable with the care we will provide for their children. These events also serve as part of our follow-up for daycamp allowing us to stay connected to the kids who were invited to the church.
- An 'Explorer Club' has been set up especially for new Mandarin speaking immigrants from mainland China. These children meet twice a month on Saturdays for Bible lessons and field trips. They have learned about Chinese calligraphy and the Chinese New Year festival among other things.

### 3 The Transportation Hurdle

A final hurdle for us to overcome is how to actually get the kids to our church. Often we find that new immigrants are hesitant to drive around in our city, therefore, they need assistance to get their children to our programs. Having willing volunteers to transport these children to and from the church is a key element to any event we host. Also, back in the 80s, the church had a very effective outreach/bus program that brought in many kids from unchurched families – the parents were not willing to attend church, but wanted their kids to attend! These kids were brought to church and many of them, now adults, continue to grow in their relationship with Jesus at WCAC. This is something we still do on a smaller scale, but need to reconsider expanding the ministry.

They're hurdles, but not obstacles. There is always much prayer to be done when we embark on an outreach mission, because ultimately in the end we know that it is God who calls the Chinese kids in Winnipeg to Him, and we continue to trust Him to do His part as we seek to faithfully serve Him in this community.



## People Panorama

I have an 'idea file' I keep in an expanding file that contains magazine clippings and photographs. Originally I started it as a reference for my drawing and painting, but later I found it was a great tool for my preschool Sunday school class. We used the pictures for visual aids, art projects and to make bulletin boards. Now that I teach mostly Asian children, I have made a concerted effort to search out clippings of Asian children and adults. These were especially useful around Mother's and Father's day when we made cards. We could all start files on God's children and title it 'People Panorama'!

Wendy Anderson,  
Westwood Alliance Church, Coquitlam, BC

# Bridging the Gap

## Meeting the Challenges of 1st & 2nd Generation Ministries

Language and culture are critically linked and need to be considered as you meet the challenges of 1st and 2nd generation ministries. Each Chinese character is a word or a picture. Each picture tells its own story. The Chinese character for family involves two main components. There is a roof and a pig(s). There is no quantifier for pig – it can be one or many. A pig or many pigs under one roof depicts a family. And so it is with our Chinese Alliance Churches – many under one roof. Under the shelter of the same roof are those who function in Chinese and others in English, yet English Ministry is essential to the survival and development of the Chinese Churches. Each is in need of the other. Each also has expectations of each other. The challenge comes in balancing the needs for both sides.

Many from our first generation love the Lord deeply, yet due to language, cultural and generational gaps, are unable to pass their faith along to their kids. Others meet Jesus in Canada and struggle to bring Jesus into a home that was formed without Christ at the center. In the spiritual realm, idol and ancestral worship can be a heavy weight of personal baggage. Dealing with the issue can become a complete turning around of lifestyle.

Many from our second generation have enjoyed the blessings of growing up in a Christian home, but now face the common issues of lacking ownership of their faith. Others have met Jesus and struggle to introduce him to the rest of their family, yet they lack the basic communication skills to express what's deep in their hearts. Living for Christ is not always easy, especially if you don't have support at home.

Our role as a Church family is to bridge the gaps that exist between both groups. We need to help each side love each other with Christ's love. We need to be an actual translation of Christ's love into one another's lives. We need to demonstrate that it is possible to live as one body under the same roof and that Christ is above language or culture. And when we put it that way, I guess we're not all that different. Let's work together to bridge the gaps!

Karen Quan, Richmond Chinese Alliance Church, Richmond, BC

## next level learning

In your role as leaders in children's ministries, it is important to continue to pursue learning and leadership development. To encourage this, we have decided to include 'Next Level Learning' opportunities for you to consider.

Alliance University College has an undergraduate degree that includes courses on Models of Children's Ministries, Leadership and Leadership Development, Children's Ministry Skills, Psychology of the Family and Child Development. For information on the Bachelor of Ministry: Children's Ministries program, follow this website link.

[www.auc-nuc.ca/student\\_information/undergraduate/ministry\\_school/academics/programs/bmincm.html](http://www.auc-nuc.ca/student_information/undergraduate/ministry_school/academics/programs/bmincm.html)

