

*"Pardon for sin and
a peace that endureth,
thine own dear presence
to cheer and to guide,
strength for today and
bright hope for tomorrow;
blessings all mine,
with ten thousand beside!"*

你赦免我罪过， 赐永远安宁，
你常与我同在， 安慰引领；
求赐今天力量， 明天的盼望，
从天降下恩典， 福乐无穷。

Hi friends,

Last week, I (Josh) made a trip to the capital city of the southwestern province where much of CWEF's work has been done through the years. I was there to spend time with our team and to attend an annual meeting with the provincial government department that serves as our oversight authority. When I arrived at our office from the airport, my colleagues surprised me with some quite challenging and disappointing news about one of our key local partner organizations, in relation to their deteriorating relationship with local government officials. The news could have serious implications for the 2022 Activity Plan we are submitting for approval, and it also signals even deeper challenges for an organization like ours in this country. My colleagues said they had a hard time sleeping the night before. I surprised myself with what came out of my mouth next: "God will provide."



With fellow NGO reps at recent government meeting

I share this story not to try to make myself look holy, but 1) because we do need you to ask Him about a solution for this issue, and 2) as a testimony to the work God has been doing in our lives, and the growing strength and confidence that His faithfulness has brought. I can say with certainty that if I had heard similar news this time two years ago, I would have had a very different (and much more panicky!) reaction.

Looking back to Summer 2020, our family was smack in the middle of our 9-month unplanned sabbatical in the US. We had been on the farm with my brother's family in Southern Illinois for several months and had started to shop for houses in the area, still very unsure of when we might be able to return home

to Asia. In that strange time, God was very kind to us and provided the opportunity — with encouragement from the team at MCN — to begin meeting weekly (online) with a ministry coach. For the next 3 months, we received the gift of slowly sharing, reflecting, praying, and attempting to plan for what might come next.

Here are some excerpts from what we wrote during that time, related to what we perceived as our "family mission":

"Family" - As our kids are now entering the school years, we have a new opportunity to develop relationships with other families in our neighborhood, school, and church communities. We want to focus on encouraging and strengthening parents, while connecting new friends to Christ. Coco and friends have a vision for parenting courses to connect more deeply with fellow mothers.

"Professional" - Josh will continue to help lead CWEF through the current transitional phase, and will focus on guiding the organization to survive, thrive, and move into its next stage of service. In considering the changing needs, we have a vision to develop a new platform (with online and offline components) that would help youth and young adults to strengthen resilience and mental health.

It has now been over a year since we returned to our neighborhood, school, and church (arriving to our apartment on the evening of Thanksgiving Day last year!), so we have naturally been reflecting and marveling at what God has done and continues to do.

If you follow our [private group on Facebook](#), you may have seen the following update several weeks ago:

"Please pray for Coco and a few local Christian friends today! God has given them an awesome opportunity to connect with and serve a group of parents inside the office of a major global technology company. They've been invited to their office here to do a trial workshop session of the Alpha Parenting course for a group of 20+ people, and if it's well-received could be extended to more people. Some of you may be familiar with the Alpha course for people exploring the Christian faith. Coco participated in the Alpha course in her 20s and it was a key part of her journey to coming to know and love Jesus. The course that Coco and friends are facilitating was developed by the same Alpha organization from the UK, but focused on healthy mindsets and skills for parents, based on Christian values and principles. Thanks for your support! God is doing a new thing over here and we are happy to be a part of it, with you."

That was the end of October. The day after Thanksgiving, Coco and her team wrapped up their third session at the same company's office, and the response has been very positive! Our friend at the company has even asked if we could help connect them with a team who does the same course at their company's office in another major city. Not only that, there might be an opportunity in the future to run similar parenting courses at the

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offices of another major tech company, where we also have friends on staff. This is super cool. Praise God!

On the "professional" side, He has provided for CWEF in ways we couldn't have imagined, both in terms of finances and new opportunities. The "platform" mentioned above has not yet come to fruition, or at least not in the way we thought. However, through the local nonprofits we partner with, we have been able to support the type of work we imagined last year. Our friend Summer and her team at the Shining Star organization (who are the CWEF High School Scholarship program graduates I have shared with you about many times) are now planning to build a platform that will equip other groups to replicate and multiply their successful GROW program, which focuses on building resilience and improved mental health for "left-behind" children and disadvantaged youth.

Summer recently shared [this update](#) with our congregation, which also supports Shining Star:



There are likewise exciting opportunities for CWEF in 2022 and beyond, which you can learn more about in [this video recording](#) (including an interview with Phanna, one of our impressive University Scholars in Cambodia) from a recent "Community Gathering" — the regular online event we have begun hosting for CWEF Partners and members of The Community, the core group of people who give regularly to CWEF. If you'd like to get access to these regular online gatherings, please write to me at josh@cwef.org.hk to request being added to the list!

Reflecting on the past two years, all our thoughts and emotions are hard to adequately put into words, but perhaps the best thing to say is: "**Great is thy faithfulness, O God my Father.**" Of course, those words are the opening line of the classic hymn by the same name, which was sung at the end of our wedding ceremony over 8 years ago. We love it because it gives a beautiful picture of our unchanging and merciful God who graciously gives us His gifts of "*strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow*" in JC. The hymn also inspired our theme for the 2021 year-end campaign for CWEF, which you can learn about [here](#), or on CWEF's [Facebook page](#).

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Of course, one of the main ways we have experienced God's great faithfulness over the years is through your faithful prayers and support! We can never properly express our gratitude. It is so fun and such a joy to be your partners in sharing JC and joining Him as he continues his work in Asia.

PRAYER POINTS

- For the local partner organization mentioned earlier, that their good work could continue. For our CWEF team here as we determine next steps for our 2020 Activity Plan.
- For Coco and the Alpha parenting course team, as they continue to follow the path that He is leading them on.
- Give thanks for answered prayers for grace and direction for Josh for recent messages (from 2 Timothy 3 and Psalm 90) given at our congregation the past few months.
- For our congregation's upcoming Christmas gathering. We have 180+ people registered, including many visitors!
- For faith and courage for all our CWEF team members.
- For the gift of faith for Coco's family, and for their physical and mental health.
- Finally, for Coco and Josh – pray for an abundance of faith, hope, and love from the Lord and for each other.

*In His Love,
Josh & Coco, John & Sophie*

Would you join us with a special year-end gift? We are seeking partners to pray with us for the people He brings into our lives. We're also inviting people to join a growing team of families and congregations who commit to a monthly or annual investment in His work here. We currently have 34 partners; we hope to reach 50. Click [here](#) to join JC on his mission through MCN, CWEF, and our family. Thank you!