



## *The First Wives of Ministers Retreat*

Forty wives of Chinese Baptist ministers met in the San Francisco Bay Area, September 26-28 2019, to attend the First Wives of Ministers Retreat. Excitement filled the air as they gathered at the Four Star San Francisco Marriott Waterfront Hotel in Burlingame, California for their two-nights three-days break from ministry. They came from all over – Anaheim CA, Berkeley CA, Chicago IL, El Monte CA, Fremont CA, Hattiesburg MS, Honolulu HI, Houston TX, Irvine CA, Los Angeles CA, Milpitas CA, Minneapolis MN, Phoenix AZ, Salt Lake City UT, San Jose CA, San Francisco CA, Seattle WA, Tulsa OK, and Vancouver CN.



This first retreat was organized in collaboration with the Northern California Chinese Baptist Association and together, with some fund raising, provided the funds needed to bankroll it with non-local participants paying just their airfare to attend. Some received scholarships for their fares.



Speakers at the Retreat included Senior Clinical Research Coordinator and Dermatology Nurse sister Jasmine Leung, Clinical Psychologist Dr. Catherine Kot, Retreat Co-Organizer Mrs. Kate Leong, President of the Northern California Chinese Baptist Association Rev. Andrew Wu, and our Executive Director Rev. Amos Lee.



The Chinese Baptist Fellowship views this ministry as key to caring and support for ministers and their families who serve in our churches. It is through gatherings such as this and many more that serve to affirm and encourage a special group of ministers who serve faithfully alongside their minister-husbands week after week with minimal or no recognition of their role in ministry.



The event brings into focus what collaborations between regional Chinese Baptist Associations and the Chinese Baptist Fellowship can look like and accomplish for the greater good of the Chinese Baptist family in North America. It helps regional Associations with resources to “think and do kingdom”, reaching out and blessing those who have needs. It fosters a unity of spirit in doing the Lord’s work in “...spurring one another on in love and good works.” (Hebrews 10:24)



**We are Better Together!**



## ***My Take:***

"I am elated to a part of the Wives of Ministers Retreat. I have gained much from it. The activities enabled me to meet new friends and to reconnect with my old pals. We shared about our joys, concerns, burdens and the heavy responsibilities of caring for our families. Although we come from different places and with different backgrounds, I am amazed that we could candidly share with each other and feel encouraged. On our first evening together, I was sitting with another sister and she shared about how she was dealing with a family member who has cancer and the need for treatment and the feeling of helplessness. I could empathize with her because I went through the same experience the last five years. I am still having to deal with a family member's course of treatment. Another sister shared with me some tips about taking care of myself. I learned a lot from her.

I also had the opportunity to relate with some wives of our church planters. From them I learned about submission, humility and trusting God completely. My encounters with them helped me to refresh my memories of my time with my late husband when we memorized scripture together. "For I know of the plans I have for you ... plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." (Jeremiah 29:11)"

Mrs. Anita Choy ( Chinese Baptist Church Honolulu)



"Thank-you Chinese Baptist Fellowship for your care and support. Thank-you Pastors for your encouragement. Thank you Mrs. Kate and Mrs. Sarah for all the arrangements that allowed us to have such a memorable Retreat to get to know each other and support one another that go a long way to reduce stress and overcome depression. I have learned much from those I have met, especially the humor of Mrs. Kate, the humility of Mrs. Sarah and care given by my Group Leader Mrs. Rita."

Mrs. Rebecca Kwo (Faith Hope Love Chinese Baptist Church)

"First of all, I want to thank God for allowing me to be a part of this Retreat and also to serve as a Group Leader. I have learned much from it. The organizers have arranged for us to stay at a comfortable hotel, provided us with scrumptious meals, and the schedule was light and relaxing. It was a stressless environment for us to learn and to share.

Although I am a Group Leader, through the sharing of the different wives of ministers, I have learned so much about the love and the grace of God that had enabled them to overcome problems and hardships. All of us were deeply touched. May we come to know more about this God who loves us so much that we too can come to trust Him to provide us with His grace and strength to help our minister-husbands to face the unknown together. We will then become their "backup force" so that they would not have anything to worry about in ministry."

Mrs. Rita Ho Lee (Vancouver Chinese Baptist Church)



"... Thank God that I am able to attend the Retreat. I have really learned a lot. Twelve years ago, when I assumed the role of a wife of a minister, I had no idea what it was all about until after I attended this Retreat. I am thankful for the sharing of the more senior wives of ministers whose life experiences and life examples have encouraged me. They are like "a great cloud of witnesses" surrounding me and urging me on. I am willing! May God's name be glorified!

Mrs. Owen Koon (Sharon Chinese Baptist Church)

"... I am deeply blessed and encouraged listening to the sharing by the elderly wives of ministers of their struggles in ministry and how God took care of His maid servants. May the love and grace of Christ encourage us as we move forward until we see Christ face to face. All glory to God!"

Mrs. Dawson Zhang (Hattiesburg Chinese Christian Church)







### 第一屆師母退修會

四十位華人浸信教會的師母於 2019 年 9 月 26 日至 28 日在舊金山灣區參加了第一次的師母退修會。她們心懷興奮地在加州伯靈格姆的五星級舊金山萬豪海濱酒店裏享受了三天兩夜的休息。她們來自 – Anaheim CA, Berkeley CA, Chicago IL, El Monte CA, Fremont CA, Hattiesburg MS, Honolulu HI, Houston TX, Los Angeles CA, Minneapolis MN, Milpitas CA, Phoenix AZ, Salt Lake City UT, San Jose CA, San Francisco CA, Seattle WA, Tulsa OK, 和 Vancouver CN.



講員包括臨床心理學家葛琳卡博士, 皮膚臨床研究護士梁林紫珊姊妹, 退修會籌辦人之一梁曹潔清師母, 北加州華人浸信會區聯會主席吳天凱牧師, 及美加華浸聯會總幹事李英柏牧師。師母們彼此交通, 享受灣區的美食, 及一個下午的「海上遊」。

這首屆的退修會是與北加州華人浸信會聯會合作組織的；也藉著一些籌款活動，籌集了所需的資金，讓非本地的參與者只需支付機票費用即可參加。其中有部分參加者的機票費也獲得幫助。

美加華人浸信會聯會視這事工為關懷那些在教會服侍的牧師和他們的家庭的重要的一環。這退修會及其他的聚會，能使許多每周寂寂無名地忠心地與她們的牧師丈夫們服侍的師母們得著肯定和鼓勵。



此次聚會讓我們看見地區華人浸信會聯會與美加華人浸信會聯會能夠如何合作來使北美華人浸信會大家庭更為蒙福。在這事工中，有能力的區聯會有著“國度的心思和行動”，去關懷並祝福那些有需要的教會及傳道人。在主裏的事奉中培養了合一的精神，並激發愛心，勉勵行善。（希伯來書 10:24）

讓我們一起侍奉取得更美好的果效！



## 回應...

「很高興有機會參加這個退修會，真的獲益良多。這次的活動讓我認識很多新朋友也與一些舊朋友相聚。我們這班主內姊妹不單分享我們的喜樂、憂傷、負擔、和照顧家人的重擔。雖然我們來自不同地方，背景和年紀都不一樣，但能很坦誠彼此傾談、彼此鼓勵。第一天晚上與我同坐的姊妹分享她在面對家人患癌，需要治療和自己無助的感覺。我很了解她的心情，因在過去五年多我也經歷、面對親人治療的過程，我現在還在適應當中。我告訴她我會每天求主賜力量來面對。另外一位姊妹與我們分享她的養生妙方，讓我從她們身上學到很多寶貴功課。」

我也有機會與幾位植堂的師母傾談，讓我從她們身上學到更多順服、謙卑和全然交託的功課。也讓我想到了先夫和我時常讀的金句來彼此共勉。「我知道我向你們所懷的意念是賜平安的意念，不是降災的意念，要叫你們末後有指望。」（耶利米書 29:11）」

蔡周婉華師母(檀島浸信會)



「謝謝浸聯會的關懷與支持，牧師們愛的鼓勵，梁師母、招師母的安排，給我們有這麼好的一個退修會，讓師母們有彼此認識，互相扶助的舒壓機會，減少我們患憂鬱症，自閉症的機會。從各位師母的身上學習到很多，特別是梁師母的能幹與風趣，招師母的謙遜，李賓來師母對組員的照顧，讓我得益良多。謝謝。」

郭義師母(羅省信望愛華人浸信會)

「...听了很多年长师母们的分享，看到虽然服事道路上有辛劳，有挑战，但神的眼目始终眷顾祂的仆人使女，愿基督的爱与恩典继续激励我们前行，直到见主面的日子！荣耀归主名！」

张道山师母(哈提斯堡華人基督教會)

「...這一次的師母退修會，首先要感謝天父，讓我能參與其中，更有機會成為組長。在這次的聚會中，我獲益不少，特別是大會安排了上好的酒店，住得舒適；豐富的美食，美味無比；節目安排方面則簡單輕鬆，在沒有壓力之下又能有所學習。」

然而作為組長，更從不同的師母們的分享，藉著她們曾經歷在事奉及生活中的困難及重擔；都是靠著那愛我們及恩典無窮無盡的神，都一一平安渡過。藉此我及眾師母們都深受感動和得著激勵，讓我們對愛我們的天父有更深入的认识和了解，好讓在往後的日子，我們同樣能靠著神的恩典與能力幫助牧師們面對前面不知的日子，並讓我們作為他們的後盾，使他們無後顧之憂，得以專心事奉神。」

李何玉英師母(加拿大溫哥華華人浸信會)



「...感謝神讓我有幸參加這次數日退修會，我受益良多。12年前剛開始了師母這個身份，真的不知道怎麼當一個師母，到現在還是一直在問同樣的問題，直到這次的退修會，終於得到了解答。感謝眾位師母前輩，無私的分享她們的經驗和鼓勵，妳們用生命的見證所豎立的榜樣，像雲彩一樣圍繞著我們，我也願意繼續追隨，願神的名得榮耀。」

官國璋師母(三藩市沙南華人浸信會)

