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Christmas Sharing –
“A Christmas Embrace”

A Christmas devotional by Rev. Lorne Trudgian



“He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God.”

John 1:11-12

Can you embrace Christmas from a distance? That sounds like an oxymoron, doesn't it? Those of us who absolutely love Christmas and all it means, wonder how can Christmas be kept at a distance and not be embraced? Easier than you think!

The characters of the original Biblical Christmas drama give us four different reactions to the incarnation of Christ. Two reactions are foolish and two are wise. Which one best describes you?

The Innkeeper Neglected Christ. When Joseph and Mary knocked on the innkeeper's door and explained their plight, he largely neglected them. Yes, the inn was crowded with guests. Didn't they see the “No Vacancy” sign? But perhaps he could have slept in the barn and given his room to the couple. Perhaps he felt he had done all he could. Did he think they were only Jewish peasants, and the baby would be just another Jewish kid? Why should he get involved in their problems when he had enough of his own? How typical of many people who will celebrate Christmas this year! They too will neglect the One who is the reason for this season. Embrace Christ do not neglect Him.

King Herod Rejected Christ. The innkeeper probably saw no importance in the birth of Jesus, but King Herod knew better. This child, reported to be the coming “King of the Jews,” could threaten his kingdom. Herod simmered with envy and took steps to destroy Jesus. Since he could not find Him, he passed a law ordering the slaughter of all Jewish males two years old and under. Herod wanted no competition. He craved supreme power and killed all competitors. Even today, many who celebrate Christmas will reject the Christ of Christmas. Embrace Christ do not reject Him.

The Wise Men Expected Christ. These “magi” from the East expected this birth with its stellar signs. They followed a strange light in the dark sky to search for Him. When they found Him, they fell and worshipped Him. They returned home changed people. That is a beautiful picture of what happens when people today seek and find the Savior. Be wise and expect Christ.

The Shepherds Accepted Christ. What a night these shepherds spent! The sudden appearance of a brilliant angel announcing good news of a Savior’s birth. A heavenly angelic choir filled the night sky with praise to God sent these shepherds to their knees in worship. And off to see and meet this newborn king they went. The shepherds embraced Christ and accepted Him.

John 1:11-12 gives both good and bad news about Christmas. The good news of the Gospel message and Christmas is Christ can be accepted and embraced. The bad news is the Gospel and Jesus can be rejected today as He was over two thousand years ago. “*He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him*” is the most tragic expression and response to Christmas and the incarnation of Christ. The Lord Jesus came into our world He created and to a people He loved, and He was rejected. Will this Christmas bring good or bad news for you?

How about you? Which one of these four different reactions to the incarnation of Christ best describes you? What is your attitude toward Christmas this year? Neglect, rejection, expectation, or acceptance? Avoidance or embrace? This Christmas, how are you embracing God’s gift of Jesus? Are you embracing God’s gift from a distance? Are you spurning His love? Or are you confidently, convinced of the faithfulness of a promise-keeping God? Are you holding God’s gift without emotion or gratitude? Are you coming to this Christmas without joy or enthusiasm? If you are an unbeliever, will you receive Christ this Christmas? If you are a Christian, will your life be marked by a singleness of heart for Christ?

Perhaps you need a renewed vision of the Savior. Preoccupation with Jesus, the reason for this season, is the key to a joyful Christmas. Embrace the Christ of Christmas. When you embrace Christ, you embrace Christmas. God stands ready to embrace you when you embrace His Son. Merry CHRISTmas!



Summary of 2025 Annual Conference

A wonderful conference was held in Brooklyn in the sanctuary of the New York Evangelical Free Church with co-hosting from Second Evangelical Free Church of Brooklyn. The meeting was attended by over 30 delegates from 22 churches, in addition to many from local congregations of First and Second New York EFC churches as well as from Dorcas Ministry.



The event opened with moving remembrance service to Wilson Mo, member of New York EFC, strong facilitator of the Dorcas Ministry as well as former ANACEFC Board member.

Excellent worship was mostly led by Grace Mo and worship team of New York EFC with piano assistance from Bridges Community Church of Fremont, CA.

There was generous amount freshly, custom prepared meals of authentic

Chinese breakfast, lunch and dinner meals from the members of the New York EFC, and attendees were treated to a dim sum lunch at the local East Harbor Restaurant.

The main speaker was Rev. Caleb Huang, who is a descendant of the first converts of Robert Morrison, and pastored churches in Taiwan, Rutgers Community Christian Church in NJ and most recently of North Congregation of the Atlanta Chinese Christian Church. His four sessions titled: "Working together with the Lord in one Spirit", "Walking in step and laboring with the Lord", "Partnering and laboring together with the Lord", and "Key principles for Working with the Lord" featured excellent exegesis from the Gospels of Matthews, Luke and John to strongly encourage and instruct the attendees to work towards what God has in mind for ministry, not what man has planned nor for human riches. He strongly reminded the attendees to rekindle our love of God, who has shared his divine plans through Jesus, who has regarded those who believe as friends and not as mere servants. The one workshop session allowed the attendees to digest well what has been heard and share with all their insights.



The Conference also featured community walks: one through the local Chinese neighborhoods in Brooklyn and the second through the adjacent Jewish neighborhood. The writer of this summary attended the Jewish neighborhood walk and was impressed as to how the more religious Jews lived harmoniously with the Chinese often with ethnic stores intertwined in business area. It was sober to see all Jewish business closed for Yom Kippur and plywood shelters being built outside of homes in preparation for Sukkot. The local Jews in religious attire so warmly greet those of us who visited near their synagogues and hospitals.

An added feature to this year's Conference was a NYC night bus tour. To nearly twenty-five passengers approximate two-hour tour was a great way to get a quick overview of the "Big Apple." With Grace Mo as our informative and humorous tour guide, Grace pointed out many of the attractions that have made her city one of the most visited US cities in all the world. Attractions included a drive down Broadway, Times Square, sights of the Empire State Building and even a stop on Wall Street to take photos of the "charging bull," a popular bronze sculpture and symbol of financial optimism and prosperity. A word of appreciation to Grace and those who organized the tour which helped to bring NYC to life.



The Annual Meeting finished with a ceremony honoring Dorcas Ministry's 30th anniversary. A fitting closure to Wilson Mo's Christian legacy.



2026 MAIN EVENTS

PASTOR AND SPOUSE RETREAT



DATE: MAY 4-6, 2026 (Mon-Wed)

LOCATION: Colorado Springs, CO

**GLEN EYRIE
CONFERENCE CENTER**

**Registration and Fees information
will be followed. Please reserve
time for this event.**

道與禱

講員: 北美中華福音神學院院長
劉孝勇 博士/牧師
REV. SAMUEL LIU, PH.D.
(華語講道)

SEPTEMBER 23 - 25, 2026

1111 S. ATLANTIC BLVD.,
MONTEREY PARK
CA 91754
U.S.A.

ANACEFC 2026 Annual Conference 華聯會年會 2026

Date 日期: September 23-25

Main Speaker: Rev. Samuel Liu
講員: 劉孝勇博士/牧師

Location: CEFC of Los Angeles
地點: 羅省華人播道會

主題 Theme: 道與禱
(華語講道)

2026 BUDGET (in USD)**Summary of 2026 Budget:****TOTAL BUDGET: \$112,000.00**

Church Planting - \$18,000.00
 Ministries and Projects Support - \$34,500.00
 Seminarian Funds - \$20,000.00
 Conferences - \$12,500.00
 Board Members Travel & Meetings - \$15,000.00
 Other Expenses - \$ 2,000.00
 Contingencies - \$10,000.00

	Amount (in USD)
I. CHURCH PLANTING	18,000.00
II. MINISTRIES & PROJECTS SUPPORT	
a. Dorcas Ministry	6,000.00
b. Itinerant Pastoral Program	3,000.00
c. Liaison Officer	2,500.00
d. Hub Center(s)	2,000.00
e. Pastors & Spouses Retreat Sponsorship	5,000.00
f. Church Care*	8,000.00
g. Healthy Church Development*	5,000.00
h. Training (Discipleship & Leadership)	3,000.00
Total of Ministries & Projects Support	34,500.00
III. SEMINARIAN FUNDS	
a. CESNA Scholarship	10,000.00
b. Others	10,000.00
Total of Seminarian Fund	20,000.00
IV. CONFERENCES	
a. Spring Mini-conference	1,500.00
b. P.A.C.E. Conference (Pastors & Spouses Retreat)	5,000.00
c. Annual Conference	6,000.00
Total of Conferences	12,500.00
V. BOARD MEMBERS TRAVEL & MEETINGS	15,000.00
VI. OTHER EXPENDITURES	
a. Operations:	
Zoom Annual Subscription	200.00
Turbify Annual Renewal	60.00
Website Domain Subscription	300.00
b. Administrative charges:	
EFCC Ministry Allocation Fees (10%)	910.00
Bank Charges	15.00
Periodic Report Filing	25.00
IRS tax form filing	40.00
Mailing or Postage	100.00
c. Office supplies	50.00
d. Miscellaneous	300.00
Total of Other Expenses	2,000.00
VII. CONTINGENCIES	10,000.00
TOTAL BUDGET 2026	112,000.00

ANACEFC
Statement of Financial Income and Expenses
January 1, 2024 to December 31, 2024

(* Exchange Rate of CAD to USD - 0.7300 as of December 31, 2024. The annual average exchange rate was published by Bank of Canada.)

INCOME	USD	CAD	Consolidated in USD
REGISTRATION FEES (RETREAT & CONFERENCE)	4,080.00	2,300.00	5,759.00
CHURCHES/INDIVIDUALS SUPPORT			
Church Contributions (Bank: Wells Fargo)	32,094.42	-	32,094.42
Church Contributions (Bank: TD)	-	15,300.00	11,169.00
Church Contributions (EFCC Holding)	-	8,200.00	5,986.00
Individual Contributions	3,000.00	-	3,000.00
Total Churches/Individuals Supports	<u>35,094.42</u>	<u>23,500.00</u>	52,249.42
OTHER INCOME:			
Bank Interest	-	50.52	36.88
Honorarium Receipts	3,530.00	200.00	3,676.00
Miscellaneous:paid back	475.90	138.37	576.91
Total Other Income	<u>4,005.90</u>	<u>388.89</u>	4,289.79
TOTAL INCOME	<u>43,180.32</u>	<u>26,188.89</u>	62,298.21
EXPENSES			
CHURCH PLANTING	-	-	-
SPECIAL PROJECTS SUPPORT			
Dorcas Ministry	6,000.00	-	
Liaison Officer	616.04	-	
Hub Center Support	-	832.47	
Total Special Projects	<u>6,616.04</u>	<u>832.47</u>	7,223.74
SEMINARIAN FUNDS	10,000.00	-	10,000.00
IPP (Itinerant Pastoral Program)	984.93	-	984.93
P.A.C.E. Conference (Pastors & Spouses Retreat)			
Retreat site Rental & Catering	-	-	-
CONFERENCES (ANNUAL & OTHERS)			
Speakers' Honorarium	-	1,600.00	
Speaker's Transportation	-	-	
Meals	-	3,766.62	
Handbook Printing	-	-	
Books (as gifts)	675.18	-	
Conference Stationery	-	296.82	
Others: Misc	-	197.24	
Total Conferences	<u>675.18</u>	<u>5,860.68</u>	4,953.48
TRAVEL & MEETINGS			
Board Travel	9,490.80	16,532.66	21,559.64
CONTINGENCIES	-	-	-
OTHER EXPENSES			
Bank Charges	-	1.50	
EFCC Administration fees (7%)	-	592.75	
Operations:Subscription	174.38	136.28	
Copying Fees	-	-	
Office Supplies	23.25	-	
Mailings	-	-	
Miscellaneous	120.00	224.00	
Total Other Expenses	<u>317.63</u>	<u>954.53</u>	1,014.44
TOTAL EXPENSES	<u>28,084.58</u>	<u>24,180.34</u>	45,736.23
NET INCOME	<u>15,095.74</u>	<u>2,008.55</u>	16,561.98

ANACEFC
Statement of Financial Position
As of December 31, 2024

* Exchange Rate of CAD to USD - 0.7300 as of December 31, 2024.

The annual average exchange rate was published by Bank of Canada.

	<u>in USD</u>	<u>in CDN</u>	<u>CONSOLIDATED in USD</u>
ASSETS			
Current Assets			
Wells Fargo	\$ 138,568.22		\$ 138,568.22
TD Canada Trust		\$ 119,490.28	\$ 87,227.90
EFCC		\$ 156,324.78	\$ 114,117.09
Total Current Assets	<u>\$ 138,568.22</u>	<u>\$ 275,815.06</u>	<u>\$ 339,913.21</u>
TOTAL ASSETS	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 339,913.21
LIABILITIES AND EQUITY			
Current Liabilities			
	\$ 124.47	\$ -	\$ 124.47
TOTAL LIABILITIES	\$ 124.47	\$ -	\$ 124.47
EQUITY			
Opening Balance Equity	\$ 23,744.98	\$ 41,942.84	\$ 54,363.25
Unrestricted Net Assets	\$ 99,603.03	\$ 231,863.67	\$ 268,863.51
Net Income	\$ 15,095.74	\$ 2,008.55	\$ 16,561.98
TOTAL EQUITY	<u>\$ 138,443.75</u>	<u>\$ 275,815.06</u>	<u>\$ 339,788.74</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	\$ 138,568.22	\$ 275,815.06	\$ 339,913.21