

Bishop's Message

To the Richmond Church Plant:
Anglican Network Church of the Good Shepherd (Richmond)

May 2, 2010

Dear Friends in Christ:

“Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.” Phil.3:13-14 NIV

Paul encourages Philippian believers to set sight on what is before them, and not to linger in the past. No matter what the past was – be it glorious moments or suffering days, experiences to take pride in or times of great sadness, everyone must look ahead. We must take Christ's calling as our only goal and move forward in persistence. At the end we will receive the prize promised by God.

Chinese culture is characterized by “looking back” – a virtue of not forgetting our root in the past. However, when this virtue of remembering the past becomes a lingering in the past, worse still a fixation in the self ego, it may turn into an inflated pride (of past glories) or unresolved bitterness (of past hurts). Either one mode is completely unhealthy. Therefore, Paul exhorts himself to forget what is behind, straining toward what is ahead, and press on toward the goal. A healthy life will shine forth a healthy testimony, which will glorify God and edify people.

“The Anglican Network Church of the Good Shepherd” is an important name. You have corporately chosen your name, “The Anglican Network Church of the Good Shepherd (Richmond),” after soul-searching considerations and earnest prayers. Good Shepherd, Vancouver, has a very long history, birthed from three Chinese missions in British Columbia, and flourished as the only surviving missionary community. (The three Chinese missions were Good Hope Mission, Good Samaritan Mission and Good Shepherd Mission.) This community was the early Church of the Good Shepherd, an example of God's grace over pastoral ministry among the Chinese people in Canada.

Today, the Church of the Good Shepherd, Vancouver, celebrated her 120th anniversary in thanksgiving to God for his saving grace and protection over Chinese Canadians, setting a landmark for gospel ministry among the Chinese in Canada. When ANiC plants the third Chinese church in Richmond, named “The Anglican Network Church of the Good Shepherd (Richmond),” the Anglican Church of the Good Shepherd in Vancouver resolved to be their sponsoring church.

Therefore, you, the Anglican Network Church of the Good Shepherd (Richmond), have to continue along the path of our predecessors: participate in the Richmond community, witness to

the good news of Christ, and live out the gospel of God's grace, salvation and peace in the neighbourhood.

May God bless you and guide you in your mission endeavour for his Kingdom.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "+ Stephen Leung". The signature is written in a cursive style with a small cross at the beginning.

The Rt. Rev. Stephen Leung
Bishop (Multicultural Ministry)
Anglican Network in Canada