



20 reflections **19**

L I T E R A R Y J O U R N A L



**ARTIST
CIRCLE**

A MINISTRY OF
THE MOODY CHURCH



The content does not necessarily reflect the opinions of The Moody Church

Copyright © 2019 The Moody Church
Foreword copyright © 2019 by Tim Stafford
Introduction copyright © 2019 by Andrea Garcia

All Rights Reserved

Family Days Remembered by Debbie Dixon. Copyright © 2019 by Debbie Dixon
Treasured Father by Debbie Dixon. Copyright © 2019 by Debbie Dixon
Family Invite by Debbie Dixon. Copyright © 2019 by Debbie Dixon
The Song Becomes Salvation by Greg Osbeck. Copyright © 2019 by Greg Osbeck
Sown in Dishonor, Raised in Glory by Greg Osbeck. Copyright © 2019 by Greg Osbeck
How Can I See You This Morning? by Greg Osbeck. Copyright © 2019 by Greg Osbeck
Tribute to my Mother by Julia Gómez. Copyright © 2019 by Julia Gómez
The Chosen Forgotten by Matthew Terry from I Came to You in Weakness. Copyright © 2019 by Matthew Terry
George by Matthew Terry from I Came to You in Weakness. Copyright © 2019 by Matthew Terry
Divine Reservation by Maria Esther Maymi. Copyright © 2019 by Maria Esther Maymi
Almighty by Michael Baznik. Copyright © 2019 by Michael Baznik
Not in Vain by Michael Baznik. Copyright © 2019 by Michael Baznik
Only You Lord by Patience Walters. Copyright © 2019 by Patience Walters
Humility by Patience Walters. Copyright © 2019 by Patience Walters
Unaware by Rose Reeve. Copyright © 2019 by Rose Reeve
A Mother's Prayer by Anita Moss. Copyright © 2019 by Anita Moss
The Family Torn Until Adoption (Sonnet 1 of 2) by Chloe Tyler Winterbotham, M.D. Copyright © 2019 by Chloe
Tyler Winterbotham, M.D.
The Family Benefit of Adoption in Christ (Sonnet 2 of 2) by Chloe Tyler Winterbotham, M.D. Copyright © 2019
by Chloe Tyler Winterbotham, M.D.

Executive Editor: Tim Stafford
Managing Editor: Andrea Garcia
Poetry Editor: Carl Colvin
Proofreader: Aimee Lilly

Design: Bryan Butler



Digital version also available at moodychurch.org/artist-circle

“Family is the theatre of the spiritual drama, the place where things happen, especially the things that matter.”

– G.K. Chesterton



Table of Contents

- 4 **Foreward**
- 5 **Introduction**

Poetry

- 8 Julia Gómez
- 9 Maria Esther Maymi
- 10 Anita Moss
- 11–13 Greg Osbeck
- 14 Rose Reeve
- 15 Patience A. Walters
- 16–17 Chloe Tyler Winterbotham, M.D.

Lyrics

- 19–20 Michael Baznik
- 21 Debbie Dixon
- 22 Patience A. Walters

Pros

- 24–26 Debbie Dixon
- 27–31 Matthew F. Terry

For this reason I kneel before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name. I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever! Amen.

—*Paul the Apostle (Ephesians 3:14-21)*

May God the Father, God the Son, and God the Spirit make us one.
In holiness, let us unite, that we may know the Risen Christ.

—*Keith Getty and Phil Madeira (2003)*

Foreword

The word “family” is loaded with meaning and memory for all of us. Family represents the people we love and to whom we belong. It is the story of our lives. We did not choose our parents, our siblings, our cousins or grandparents. God ordained them for us. We were born into relationship with them. It is fundamental to our being.

In a similar way, when we receive Christ and believe in His name, we become God's children, born of God (John 1). We are also adopted as sons, making us fellow heirs with Christ (and one another), sharing in all the inheritance Christ is to receive (Romans 8). Like our biological family, we were also predestined by God to be a member of this Biblical family (Ephesians 1). What an incredible thought!

Romans 12 is famous for its description of how we worship God, but those brief verses are immediately followed by the truth that we are members of one body and the admonition to live out our oneness in love. We all know that “family” takes work! Unity requires us to hone our focus on shared Biblical values, deferring to one another in love, and not returning evil for evil.

We hope this year's exhibit and journal grow our appreciation for one another and for our individual stories and backgrounds that, when seen together, weave a beautiful testimony of God's grace and sovereignty over us as a church family. Let's discover together the blessings of our God-ordained relationships to one another and our Spirit-enabled work of building the kind of unity that displays Christ to all those around us.

Since 2013, our creative writing journals have inspired us and connected us to one another in new ways, while demonstrating God's grace and creativity and beauty. We owe a huge debt of thanks to Andrea Garcia and her editing team for their skill and dedication to this project, along the Artist Circle Leadership Team. We are so blessed by this unique gift to our community.

The Moody Church Artist Circle seeks to foster growing relationships between fellow artists, to encourage them in their craft, and also to create awareness and appreciation for the arts within our church family. We pray that this journal will be used toward these ends for the glory of God.

Tim Stafford

Pastor of Music Ministries

Introduction

When you see the word “family,” what comes to mind? For some, it might bring back memories of games nights or reunions. Others might see the word and be reminded of family they’ve chosen for themselves, whether through child adoption, or close friends, or other relationships that are deemed close enough to be family.

And while all of these connections might be associated with the word family, a connection not yet mentioned is a spiritual one, one that those who know Jesus as their Lord and Savior can own: part of the family of God.

Some of the poems and prose within this edition of the literary journal focus on earthly families, or are dedicated to family memories, or share memories of the past. Others have an underlying understanding of a shared relationship with God our Father and Jesus His Son.

I hope you are encouraged by the pieces you read in the journal; encouraged to share you love with those you call family and to praise the one we can call Abba, Father.

Andrea Garcia

Managing Editor, *Reflections*

P O

Julia Gómez
María Esther Maymi
Anita Moss

E T

Greg Osbeck
Patience A. Walters
Chloe Tyler Winterbotham, M.D

R Y

Tribute to my Mother

By Julia Gómez

To the one
whose hugs can heal
any wound

To the one
whose laugh transcends
any border, any language,
and any creed

To the one
who loves unconditionally,
gives without restrictions,
and cares selflessly

To my Mother,
Doña Julia.

Divine Reservation

By Maria Esther Maymi

My one heavenly reservation
gives me great elation
as I foresee a holy nation.

A holy nation redeemed from the darkest pit,
to be crowned with love and perceived as fit;
yet not apart from Divinely Spoken Wit.

Divinely Spoken Wit for deep contemplation;
come, let us now ponder;
it resonates and affirms God's revealed will.
Fear not, look up yonder;
promises of life rest in our propitiation.

Propitiation! O holy propitiation!
For mankind there is propitiation.
Repent from sin and in your heart believe;
you'll then discover His glorification.

Yes, I see a holy nation
and Jesus has made me a reservation.
I'm going to go and have a feast with Him in my heart.

A Mother's Prayer

By Anita Moss

On a whisper of hope, from a breath of the Spirit, you are God's gift to me.
He knitted every finger, counted every hair before you came to be.
Long before I spoke or felt you move, He knew your very soul,
sung your first lullaby, rocked away your fears, He made your body whole.
Now in His most perfect grace He has laid you in my arms,
bestowed on me your precious kiss as I sing you prayers and psalms.
What legacy can I leave you now, what is left to be fulfilled,
except to tell you of His love and lead you to His will?
How long or short your journey here, I only have one prayer:
that when we are gathered in His name I will turn and find you there.

11 **How Can I See You This Morning?**

By Greg Osbeck

Reflections of an emergency room social worker

I see you slumbering peacefully in an ER gurney, your face bloated, scarred and worn.
They found you drunk on the streets of Chicago, the officer maybe recognizing you from
several Past encounters,

“Here we go again to County Hospital with you; they know you pretty well there, too.”

We’ll keep you here all night, feed you, then send you back to the streets where you
came from.

What losses have you known through the years? Was there a lover, a pleasant home,
a decent job?

A father gone to prison, a brother killed, your self-respect lost?

How did you end up living on the streets, becoming a “hopeless drunk”?

“Hopeless”— ah that word so easily used, that word with such power!

How it makes you invisible, someone to pass by on the street!

Yet is that word true, does it really define you? Can there yet be a goodness, a dignity inside
Beneath your filthy clothes and tired eyes?

Does not your God, in whose image you were made, still love you and call you by name?

As you start to wake up, and I come to talk with you, what can I offer you?

Already maybe you’ve been to detox, and rehab programs, all kinds of programs
you may know.

They gave you food and respite and patted themselves on the back for “servicing” another
wretched soul.

Yet you are no better.

So what can I say to you as you stumble out of the ER? Maybe better question, how can I
look at you?

I can let my heart experience your pain, let my soul know you as a brother, let my spirit
Believe there is hope.

As once the Lord walked on this earth, and looked upon lepers, the wretched, the poor,
The Gospels say he was “moved with compassion,” and somehow, His look made
them whole.

So may my eyes see you on this morning, though I have not such power and purity
as the Lord.

But if I let Jesus see this man through me, just maybe can he make a new start?

Sown in Dishonor, Raised in Glory

By Greg Osbeck

First Corinthians 15:43; in memory of my dear dad, Kenneth Osbeck, who I shall look forward to seeing in glory.

My Dad was strong in my eyes, like a lion roaring, he defended his clan;
like the moon, he was dependable as a glow in the sky,
though he shown with a brightness not from himself,
but as the moon reflects the sun, he reflected brightness from the Lord he loved.

It pained me to see his steps grow unsteady, his mind more confused,
he who heard my first prayers, his hearing now dimmed;
he who watched my first steps now faltered in his gait;
but I loved him still.

Though the brightness of the moon is oft obscured by clouds,
he still shone through the fog as it lifted.

His words still dependable, though softly he spoke,
there was music in his heart even when his voice was weak.

And I'll see him again, no longer feeble and stumbling,
but stronger and younger than everbefore,
standing like a conquering warrior !

He'll be singing more gloriously, shining more brightly,
and playing the piano more rapturously!

And I'll thank the Lord for giving him to us these many years.

13 **The Song Becomes Salvation**

By Greg Osbeck

He speaks to us in poetry to grasp the deepest truths,
The evening news could not express the greatness of His Being,
But He captures our hearts with songs of His love, He opens our eyes
with pictures of mercy.

He calls Himself Shepherd and we are His sheep, needing His voice to
lead in true paths;

He calls Himself Father, who knows what we need; He's also a mother
with sheltering wings.

And His sonnets of grace speak of something so real: when we hear
His deep words,

What to do but to kneel?

And this great unseen Artist who has molded the earth, condescended
so humbly to appear in a birth;

Then the Word became flesh in our Savior so real, who has walked on
this earth, and our pain He could feel.

The Composer was willing for dying to face, so we who are sinners
could clearly hear Grace.

Unaware

By Rose Reeve

Each day we waken to our routine,
totally blind to what's unseen.
We go about our daily tasks
and we ignore what God does ask.
He loves us more than we know
and wants to warn us of things below.
The adversary sits by and grins;
he thinks this life is his to win.
But, Jesus Christ, upon that tree,
gave His life for you and me.
The devil's hold has no power
for Christ arose that third day hour.
The tomb was empty, the cloth was there;
no sign of Jesus, the soldiers swear!
He later appeared to hundreds who cared,
the resurrection story they have shared.
His Word is Truth as we do read,
He entered this world to set us free.
The only way that God could forgive
the sins of His people and let us live.
God's own precious Son paid the cost
for a world full of sinners who were lost.
Come to Christ while there is time.
Prepare to gather with Him we'll dine!
He will forgive, we need only ask;
and change our ways, Jesus' hand we clasp.
He paid the price no one else could.
We can't get to heaven by works or by goods.
Only one way by Christ's blood alone!
Cleansed and forgiven our sins atoned.

Humility

by Patience A. Walters

On the sixth day God created the beasts of the field and all animals.
He also created human beings.
The opposite of humility is pride.

Do animals know what it means to be humble or proud?
Do animals know what it means to be obedient or disobedient?

Were animals created in the image of God?

God gave us superiority over all living things, He gave us

Ruling authority, subduing authority, replenishing and beautifying capability.

When Satan the devil arrived on the scene of God's beauty and glory in the earth, he adulterated God's creation, and made everything that was good, bad.

The all-wise, all-knowing, all-powerful, full of glory, majesty and honor God, had a plan to redeem his creation from the evil one, Satan the devil, the originator of pride and sin.

Humility was on our heavenly Father's mind. A kind of humility the human mind is still trying to understand.

From generation to generation, books have been written, songs sung, sermons preached, but this kind of humility has yet to be understood.

The almighty God, came down to earth in human form, was born in a manger in the presence of animals (sin-free creatures), whose blood paved the way for this grand occasion on many sacrificial altars.

The King is born. God's grand plan of redemption has begun.

Kings from the east came to worship him, bringing gifts fit for a King: gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

These kings knew he came down to take us up.

His journey from the manger to the cross, spells one word.

Humility.

The Family Torn Until Adoption Sonnet 1 of 2

Chloe Tyler Winterbotham, M.D.

Confluences of bloodlines flowing toward
each generation's offsprings' beaten heart,
Yes, beaten, mashed up, pump the carved out fjord,
where wading, etched out, waiting forbears chart
the next scar of destruction, tearing, keen
for better kin. Adopted water falls
in torrents, eager, rushing to convene
collaterals, the delta's digits, sprawls
in family threads to bond, unite as one,
enfolded into trust adoptees crave.
But God invited all through Christ His son
to join His family, take His gift to save.
We doctors see per stirpes' loss good Stops,
when bloodlines outweigh grace, and kindness drops.

Inspiration: Romans 8:23, Ephesians 1:5-8.

The Family Benefit of Adoption In Cchrist Sonnet 2 of 2

Chloe Tyler Winterbotham, M.D.

But God, predestined, plans to quell, submit
the arrogance of generations' pride
in who they are, discrete from Him. Admit
they must. Their sins convict themselves. Inside
the hearts made open eagerly receive
adoption, body's freedom, elevate
to praise His glory, wisdom, to retrieve
His son's redemption through His blood, relate
to corporate inheritance agreed
that we adopted might be first to cope.
Deposit, Holy Spirit, guaranteed
The mystery fulfilled we're called to hope.
His realms unending, present every hour
we sons adopted glorify His power.

Inspiration: Romans 8:23, Ephesians 1: 5-14, 17-23.

LYR

ICS

Michael Baznik
Debbie Dixon
Patience A. Walters

Almighty

By Michael Baznik

Like the rising of the sun
 He will surely come
 In the twinkling of an eye
 His Presence from on high
 The arrival of that day
 Like a thief in the night
 Without warning, without time
 To fulfill the grand design
 And for once Truth is shown
 All the liar's schemes exposed
 There will be brilliant light
 When the Almighty returns again

There's nothing that is hidden
 That won't be disclosed
 Nothing left that is concealed
 All things will become known
 Like a mighty river
 A never ending stream
 His righteousness revealed
 His Glory all will see
 And for once politicians without words
 Scoffers' laughter won't be heard
 There will be blinding light
 When the Almighty returns again

Voices heard in the darkness
 Brought forth into light
 Words whispered in the ear
 Proclaimed from up on high
 A reed swayed by the wind
 He would never break
 Glowing embers by the fire
 He will keep alive
 Until His final coming
 A day that all will see
 Until He leads all justice
 Unto the victory
 All people and all things

All places and all times
 Every word and every deed
 In the Hands of the Most High
 And for once finally seen
 That the end does justify the means
 There will be fiery light
 When the Almighty returns again
 When the Almighty returns again
 When the Almighty returns again

Not in Vain

By Michael Baznik

Oh my God
 Oh my God
 Oh my God

Oh my God! You are so powerful.
 Oh my God! Created all things.
 Oh my God! You are so wonderful!
 Oh my God! The Risen King!

You are the Great I Am.
 You are the One Redeemer.
 You are the Everlasting
 Savior of the world.
 You are the Guiding Light.
 Came down to us from heaven.
 You are the only One above everything.

Amen!

Oh my God! Came to the world.
 Oh my God! Freed us from sin.
 Oh my God! Your blood upon the cross.
 Oh my Jesus! The Risen King!

You are the Great I Am.
 You are the One Redeemer.
 You are the Everlasting
 Savior of the world.
 You are the Guiding Light.
 Came down to us from heaven.
 You are the only One above everything.

Amen

Oh my, oh my God.
 Oh my, oh my God.
 Oh my, oh my God.
 Oh my, oh my God.
 You came to the world. Amen!
 To free us from sin. Amen!
 You poured out your blood. Amen!
 And rose up again! Amen!
 The Risen King!

Treasured Father

By Debbie Dixon

A father steps in and he saves the day; a father steps up and he makes a way.
 Arm 'round his shoulder, her hand in his; there's nothin' like this.
 There's nothin' on earth quite like this.

No arm. No hand. No voice like his.
 He solves their problems with smiles and grins.
 His heart is protective; he don't let troubled things in.
 His eye is discerning; seeing things as they are.
 His mind thinks of his children even when he's afar.

Adjusting a tie and walking the aisle; from infant to grown-up, steady and true.
 We say on this day, "Father we need you."
 Providing and serving, "Father we love you."

And so we say on this day, Happy Father's Day.
 Father, we love you. Happy Father's Day.
 Father, we need you. Happy Father's Day.
 Father, so faithful and true, so brave and so strong in all that you do.
 Happy Father's Day, Father; we say today, Father, thank you.
 To the woman
 who carried me in her belly
 for nine months

To the one
 who, in silence, cried for her marriage
 to be saved

To the one
 who, with pain in her soul,
 left her older children to rescue her family

To the one
 who worked endless hours
 to provide, protect, and support her children

To the one
 who prays after each meal
 and blesses her children at night

Only You Lord

by Patience A. Walters

Only you, Lord, only you.
Only You, Lord, only you.
You are the reason we live, give, and forgive.
Only you, Lord, only you.

Angels bow before thy throne.
Elders cast down their crowns.
All the saints worship you.
Only you, Lord, only you.

Only you, Lord, only you.
Only you, Lord, only you.
You are the reason we love, trust and obey.
Only You, Lord, only You.

Only you, Lord, only you.
Only you, Lord, only you.
You are the reason we pray, orship, and praise.
Only you, Lord, only you.

Angels bow before thy throne.
Elders cast down their crown.
All the saints worship you.
Only you, Lord, only you.

Only you, Lord, only you.
Only you, Lord, only you.
You are the reason for joy, happiness, and peace.
Only you, Lord, only you

Angels bow before thy throne.
Elders cast down their crown.
All the saints worship you.
Only you, Lord, only you.
Only you, Lord, only you.

P R

Debbie Dixon
Matthew F. Terry

O S

Family Days Remembered

By Debbie Dixon

Whether we realize it or not, we're making memories to be enjoyed in the future—in the spectacular and special times to be sure, but we're also making memories in the mundane activities of our everyday lives. In both cases, our activities are creating memories to be enjoyed in the future.

A family holds your hands and lifts you up over the cracks in the sidewalk...Mom on one side and Dad on the other, each doing their part to produce endless squeals of joy from the little one suspended in midair.

Together, a family watches the wonderful spectacle of recently purchased pinwheels twirl endlessly in the wind, constantly displaying new aspects of their brilliant, metallic colors. The oohs and ahhs from little lips will compensate for all the whining and backseat fights endured on the way to the dime store. (For those wondering what a dime store is, it's a reference to a delightful way of shopping, dining, and enjoying delicious fountain drinks from another era.)

A family flies kites together. Sure, Mom and the kids try at first, but it's always Dad's expertise that makes them swoop and soar to unbelievable heights. Little ones stand amazed for hours as the wind carries dragons and boxes through the air, all thanks to Dad's expert reeling in and letting out of the kite string.

A family tirelessly hauls young ones and their sleds up steep hills again and again without complaint in exchange for the sound of laughter and thrills to be remembered for years to come.

A family enjoys the sound of wind chimes together and notes the various sounds from different materials such as glass, metal, and wood; each with their own unique appeal, much like that of a family. Joy is mutually shared as they delight in each other's favorite chimes.

A family enjoys car races and football games, cheering on their favorite athletes and teams. Delicious food is enjoyed and many shouts are heard from edges of seats and from fans leaping to their feet.

A family protects their weakest members from bears and wolves, from neighborhood dogs, and from cars that don't see a little one playing in the pothole.

A family enjoys watching the birdie (shuttlecock to be precise) soar past the roof, which was used as a badminton net when playing with Dad. What delight to make it to this expert level of the game.

A family enjoys weekends out on the boat, whether above- or belowdecks. What delight to be surrounded by water as far as the eye can see. With water safety strictly observed (except for the time the youngest was caught on camera running on the pier), no end of fun is had.

A family enjoys singing and dancing to the latest tunes, playing cards, board games, and charades. And then there's the bird watching in silent fascination over God's beautiful creation. Silent, that is, until squeals of wonder or any number of sudden moves puts feathered friends to flight.

And then there's chores. Deadlines, bribes, accusations and fights, chucking the contraband mess under beds and in closets with hopes of not being discovered, and yes, being discovered, or "caught red-handed," as some would say.

Families ride bikes together and help each other up after one tumbles head-first over the handlebars. Families are there for each other through thick and thin, through ups and downs, and through it all.

When a family suffers the loss of one of its members, they grieve together, cry, feel the weight of the emptiness from the loss of their loved one's presence, and even dare to laugh through tears together as they reminisce, courageously laughing at the humorous moments of yesteryear when their loved one yet numbered among the living. A family recalls their walks down gravel roads together, canoe fishing trips...remembering episodes of nearly capsizing and endless inquiries if it's time for lunch yet, shore side picnics and games, and seaweed encounters as they stroll down memory lane.

A family shares and sacrifices...gives and takes. A family loves and forgives. Whether a family of origin or a church family, a family is a family, and they are there for each other.

Not ideal by any means. And by no means perfect. But in every case a family is a gift from God.

Family Invite

By Debbie Dixon

It's a family invite. I'm hoping you will attend! We got a family thing going on here. We love each other here. Please reconsider and join me. I love you, sis! I want to be with you! Please come.

This is no ordinary invite. This invite is from Jesus, from God Himself, and He invites us to the cross with Him to exchange our sin for His righteousness through His sacrificial death. He invites us to die (to self, that is) and to suffer with Him. He bids us come. Sis, I don't want to spend eternity without you!

And so is the anguish when one sister believes and the other doesn't.

Where will you spend eternity?

Christ bids you, also to come.

What will you do with His offer of salvation from your sin?

"For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him will not perish, but have eternal life." John 3:16 NIV

The Chosen Forgotten

By Matthew F. Terry

An excerpt of I Came to You In Weakness.

*I Came to You in Weakness is a narrative non-fiction memoir using arcs
that took me from a dreaded corner office in downtown Chicago to a joyful classroom in
Guǎngzhōu, China.*

Under these arcs is an undercurrent that I fear, admire, respect.

The movement starts slow, but stay with me, it gains speed.

Feel free to move about the ship.

Explore. Wander. Discover. Trust.

Contemplate the view from the balcony mast;

ponder the sounds of those you hear below.

Don't fret the rough waves.

May gwan see.

I know the Navigator. He knows the course.

He understands the waves. He designed the vessel.

You may not see Him, but He is there steering the ship, taking us safely to our destination.

Have faith.

I did.

*He opens shafts in a valley away from where anyone lives;
they are forgotten by travelers;
they hang in the air, far away from mankind;
they swing to and fro.*

Job 28:4 ESV

Say *nǐ hǎo* to Ah-Yu.

She is an orphan.

The best guess is that she has cerebral palsy;
nobody at the orphanage knows with any certainty.

Ah-Yu is my 'Lineman'.

The Peizheng English teachers and I
are at a local orphanage
to spend time with the forgotten chosen.

These overlooked Chinese children,
abandoned by parents, are deemed useless, wasteful.

However, GOD saves them out of nowhere fields
(birth mothers leave them there)
and graciously puts them into orphanages.

We serve these children of God with games of tag and hide and seek.
 We bathe, dry, and comfort the little ones in our arms
 with genuine hugs, kisses, clean blankets, and
 plenty of love.

*He called a little child to him and placed the child among them.
 And He said: "...whoever takes the lowly position
 of this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.
 And whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me."*

Matthew 18:2-6 NIV

Ah-Yu is too young to realize her world.
 She is so quiet, yet oh so restless.
 Her tiny body is tense and wired.
 Her affliction tightens muscles which makes it difficult for her
 to relax the body.
 Her little-bitty fingers are so tightly curled into her palm,
 especially the thumbs,
 that it seems impossible to loosen her digits.

Oh, her head, too.
 Her neck cannot withstand the weight of her head.
 When I cradle her head and body in my arms
 Ah-Yu's head at times bends
 backward so far that I cringe.
 I do my best though.
 It seems to bother me more than her.
 As I gently carry her it becomes apparent
 that little Ah-Yu enjoys seeing life
 looking up and going backward.
 She smiles.
 I weep.

As she tires I lay her down in her crib.
 Ah-Yu's body is still wired, active, and awkwardly fidgeting.
 I hold her tiny hand and gaze into her eyes.
 My weeping turns into a full-blown cry.
 I talk to God out loud.

*My GOD, this is not fair.
 Why has she been forgotten?
 Please GOD, give me the power to heal her and find her a home.*

Of course, I cannot.
 I do, however, the best I can
 with my limited resources.
 This resource is my smartphone
 loaded with music.

As little Ah-Yu jiggles, twists, and turns in her crib
 I decide to play Glen Campbell's beautiful ballad
 "Wichita Lineman."

It works.
 She is beginning to sleep.

Her tiny Chinese eyes become smaller as they hide behind lids.
 Twitching stops and soft snores replace the lyrics.

And the Wichita Lineman
 is still on the line.

*My Dear GOD, sometimes song lyrics touch my heart
 as much as Your word.
 Please watch over her.
 Keep her in Your fold.
 Her life is limited, but yours limitless.
 Bring her into Your Kingdom.
 Thank you, God, for giving me Your comfort
 so I can give Ah-Yu mine.
 Thank you for Glen Campbell, too.
 Amen!*

Somewhere near Guangzhou China
 October 8, 2013, 10:52am

George

By Matthew F. Terry

An excerpt of I Came to You In Weakness.

I Came to You in Weakness is a narrative non-fiction memoir using arcs that took me from a dreaded corner office in downtown Chicago to a joyful classroom in Guǎngzhōu China.

Under these arcs is an undercurrent that I fear, admire, respect.

The movement starts slow, but stay with me, it gains speed.

Feel free to move about the ship.

Explore. Wander. Discover. Trust.

*Contemplate the view from the balcony mast;
ponder the sounds of those you hear below.*

Don't fret the rough waves.

May gwan see.

I know the Navigator. He knows the course.

He understands the waves. He designed the vessel.

You may not see Him, but He is there steering the ship, taking us safely to our destination.

Have faith.

I did.

They entered the house and saw the child in the arms of Mary, his mother.

Overcome, they kneeled and worshiped him.

Then they opened their luggage and presented gifts: gold, frankincense, myrrh.

Matthew 2:11 MSG

What can I say about family?

What can I say about George?

He is husband of Mimi, sister of my wife Ming Chu.

Mimi went out of her way to purchase a few items
to give to George so he can pass them to me.

George and Mimi live in Manila Philippines.

This weekend George is in Guangzhou on business.

He makes time to visit me.

He persuades his friend Mr. Lau
to drive out to Peizheng.

George brings gifts of paper towels (which are difficult to find here in China),
a 'Rolex' watch and dried mangoes.

These are more meaningful than gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

The best, of course, is spending time with family, albeit extended.

We eat Wǔcān (lunch) together.
 Mr. Lau teaches me to properly use chopsticks
 even though I have been using them for decades.
 We all giggle at my ineptitude of not using them the 'Chinese' way.
Méi guān xi.

Afterwards, we shop for some
 second-hand Japanese machinery in Guǎngzhōu.
 That's George's business: buying, repairing, reselling.
 He's quite good at it too.
 My brother-in-law is such a kind, fun, and generous man.
 It is easier to understand why their children
 Dennis Ivan, Dixon Ian, and Dollie Joy
 are such delightful nephews and niece.
 As my father says: *They come from good stock.*

I ask again.
What can I say about family?
What can I say about George?
Not enough.

Dearest GOD - Thank you for my family.
Thank you for friends.
Although some may not be believers
Your works are nevertheless instilled in them.
Like You, they give of themselves selflessly.
Today My Dear Lord I praise you for George.
He is one of Your better ones.

Amen!

October 19, 2013
 Guǎngzhōu, China



THE
MOODY
CHURCH

1635 N LaSalle
Chicago, IL 60614
312.327.8600

moodychurch.org/artist-circle

