



# Operation Dawn Canada

加拿大晨曦會

Oct Newsletter 10月通訊

[www.operationdawn.com](http://www.operationdawn.com)



## Itinerary for Rev. Lau's visit to Toronto

(Welcome to join us and meet with Rev. Lau)



### October 21, 2023 (Saturday)

4:00 pm **Hamilton Chinese Alliance** (Youth Fellowship)  
50 Breadalbane Street, Hamilton, ON

7:00 pm **Hamilton Chinese Alliance** (Gospel Night)  
50 Breadalbane Street, Hamilton, ON

### October 22, 2023 (Sunday)

10:30 am **Hamilton Chinese Alliance** (Sunday Service)  
50 Breadalbane Street, Hamilton, ON

5:30 pm **Solomon Christian Business Fellowship** (Gospel Night)  
1271 Denison Street, Unit 64, Markham, ON

### October 24, 2023 (Tuesday)

10:30 am **North York Chinese Baptist Church** (Fellowship)  
685 Sheppard Avenue East, North York, ON

### October 27, 2023 (Friday)

8:00 pm **Toronto Mandarin Christian Community Church** (Fellowship)  
2230 Birchmount Road, Toronto, ON

## **October 28, 2023 (Saturday)**

Full day **Rev. Lau's Guest Room - for Supporters and Friends** (Operation Dawn Centre in Aurora)  
Welcome to contact Warren Li at 437-808-3480 to schedule a time

## **October 29, 2023 (Sunday)**

10:00 am **Toronto Chinese Methodist Church** (Sunday Service)  
8 Metropolitan Road, Toronto, ON

2:00 pm **Mississauga Grace Missionary Baptist Church** (Sunday Service)  
377 Burnhamthorpe Road, Suit 116, Mississauga, ON

## From a Drug Dealer to a Pastor – A Life Transformation Story !

***Although Andrew attended church since his childhood, he had little understanding of the Christian faith. By his teens, he became involved in a gang and started a life of drug addiction and trafficking. This destructive path eventually led to arrests, sufferings, despairs, and broken relationships. When life seemed to come to a dead end, his parents found out about Operation Dawn and introduced him to their drug rehabilitation program. Andrew's life began to change as he discovered Christ's love, forgiveness and transformative power in his drug recovery. After Andrew finished the rehab program, he received God's calling***



***and surrendered his life to help others by entering Tyndale seminary pastoral and theological studies. His miraculous conversion from a gang member to a pastor is a real life story that shows God's abundant grace and power.***

My name is Andrew and I currently serve as the Youth and Children's Pastor at Toronto Mandarin Chinese Community Church (TMCCC). I grew up in Scarborough and as far back as I can remember I had always attended church with my family. From a young age I had been taught all the Bible stories and memory verses. I learned all the songs and how to pray. I knew how to do all these things, but I never bothered to understand why. What was the purpose of reading the Bible, why do we sing to and pray to God? As a child, I never understood the relationship aspect of the faith. My view of church was that it was just school on Sunday. Gradually, I lost interest in the repetitive stories and songs and as I entered my teens I stopped going to church completely.

In high school I was introduced to an entirely different world. I was "recruited" into a gang within the first two weeks. I immediately embraced this new lifestyle and identity to the fullest. I was drawn to the life of crime, to the money, to the "power" and "respect" that came with being a gang member. I was drawn to drug dealing and the drugs themselves. My grade 9 year was spent experimenting with just about every drug there is. The drugs of choice became for me: marijuana, ketamine and ecstasy. Initially I was using every weekend at parties and clubs, but things escalated quickly

and very soon I became a daily user. I then began selling the drugs I was using, and this caused me to further spiral as I always had substantial amounts of drugs around me. By grade 10 I was a full-out addict and my life revolved around drugs.



I did not experience any of the consequences associated with drug use until I was in my twenties. When it finally started to rain, it poured. My body began to break down and I experienced serious health issues. I was getting arrested on a regular basis. All my meaningful relationships with others became severed at this point. And as I was at my weakest mentally and physically, this was when the addiction grew strongest. I was convinced that all my troubles would disappear once I sniffed some more K and popped a few pills. I spent my days and nights in a friend's

basement getting high in an attempt to numb out the physical pain and any troubling thoughts. Obviously running away from problems through drug use does not solve anything, it only adds to the problems. So, I was stuck in this vicious cycle.

It was during this time that my parents reached out to me. It broke their heart to see how their son had turned out and they pleaded with me to get help. They reintroduced the idea of Operation Dawn. They arranged for Henry, the first Toronto brother to complete the OD program in Taiwan, to come and share his testimony with me. I was more than intrigued: how was this person able to overcome his addiction? I needed to know more about this rehab program that was able to help Henry beat addiction with only the Gospel and nothing else. And so I agreed and entered the OD program in 2012.

When I first got into the program, most brothers were on their way out and about to graduate. This gave me a lot of time to be alone, time to reflect and study. Most importantly, it gave me the time and the place to cultivate my relationship with Christ. After wandering off and running away from God for so long, the time spent at Operation Dawn became my return journey back to Him. During my time in recovery I truly experienced the Gospel, I experienced fully the love, the forgiveness and redemption we have in Christ. I was able to witness firsthand how powerfully God answers prayers, how he heals and transforms the lives of those who follow and put their trust in His Son. And I understood then what Henry meant when he told me that the Gospel alone saved him from addiction. It was truly Christ alone who saved me from my old life, and it is he alone that gives me new life.

Near the tail-end of my time at Operation Dawn, as I began making plans for what I would do once I was back in the “real world,” God placed in my heart a specific calling. After so many years of hurting myself and others, God was calling me now to help others in the same way I was helped. Instead of focusing on a career and making money, God was calling me to instead pursue a vocation that would help make a difference. When I left OD, I applied to Tyndale as a mature student and by God’s grace I was accepted. As I followed and trusted God’s calling for me, He continually laid the path out for me, opening every right door and closing all the wrong ones. Once integrated back into the TCCC church community, God gave ample opportunities for me to learn and serve in various ministries and internships.

After finishing my undergrad studies, I took one year off before returning to Tyndale to pursue my M. div. In 2019, amid my studies, I was offered a pastoral internship at the church that I grew up in! God had truly brought me full circle taking me back to the church I had left, back to the same community and building where I spent my childhood. Like in the Parable of the Prodigal Son, after so many years wandering away, God was welcoming me back home and back to Him.

*“For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found.” (Luke 15:24)*

I’ve served at TMCCC now for four years now and I thank God every day for the blessing of being able to serve in this neighbourhood and in this church. To be able to serve, to preach and teach in the same place where I was taught and served by so many others as a child is still a bit surreal to me at times. When I tell old friends that I am a pastor, half the people laugh and the other half don’t believe me. Going from a gang member to pastor is indeed a radical change, but it just goes to show what a radical God we have and how radically He is able to transform our hearts and make new our lives.

*“I will give them a heart to know that I am the LORD, and they shall be my people and I will be their God, for they shall return to me with their whole heart.” (Jeremiah 24:7)*

To God be all praise and glory forever.

## A Criminal redeemed by Christ to become God's Servant

***John endured years of bullying from his friends in high school while at home suffered beatings and scoldings from a cruel father. At age 16, he decided to take revenge by entering the criminal world. He engaged in serious crimes such as theft, robbery, drug trafficking, smuggling firearms and even murder. On September 20th, 2014, after spending a decade in prison, he found hope in Jesus Christ through Operation Dawn. He was reborn in Christ and became a new creation that bore witness to God's redemptive power. He was once despised, but now is used by God to serve others with humility, grace and purpose.***



My name is John Jia, and I am 66 years old. I live in Kaohsiung City, Taiwan, and I am the youngest in my family. My life took a different path than that of others, why? Because I lived in fear of bullying for about two years during my junior high school years. At that time in Taiwan, regional and provincial conflict was very serious and schools were no exception. In addition, I often took on the role of class captain in the class, so when local Taiwanese students got in trouble with the teacher, they often mistook me as the person who reported them. Therefore, I, a kid from other provinces, became the prey, even the plaything, of the local school gangs in school. Not only did I become the target of bullying by my classmates, but I also became the target of bullying by anyone in other classes who wanted to bully me.

I remember those days after school, I would always ask myself, "Which way should I take home today?" I remember that every time I was kidnapped by them, beaten, verbally insulted, spat on, wet with urine, forced to crawl under other's pants and so on, the hatred and anger grew day after day in my heart which press my heart hardly. What makes me even more angry is my father! Because my father was my only person who could save me from those misery at my age. When I told my father about my school life, instead of protecting me, he assumed it was because of my misbehaviour and he even beat me up. At the time, I told myself that this father was not someone on whom I could rely.

Therefore, after being bullied and humiliated for a long time, when I was 16 years old, I decided to become a gangster and join the underworld. I remember that my decision was a serious one and had made a plan for it. I even thought about how I could join a mafia organization somewhere? How should I realize my revenge plan in the future? It was very true.



All in all, the above is the beginning of my determination to give up my studies, my family's expectations and love. After that, I joined a powerful gangster family as I wished, and from then on I started a life of stealing, robbing, abducting, cheating, killing, intimidating, abducting people for extortion, collecting protection fees, training in gangster camps, and going in and out of jail until the end. As I got older, the worse I became - taking drugs and buying drugs, smuggling firearms, and torturing others for my own pleasure, and I enjoyed doing them.

August 5, 2014 was the very last time I entered prison in my life; the day I was released from prison on parole which is the most memorable day for me. Because, after being released from prison on September 20, I went to the Operation Dawn and got to know Jesus. From then on, I am a child of God !

Thank you Lord for His unfailing love. He blessed me with a mother, my second older brother and sister-in-law who all devoutly love the Lord. I remember on September 20 when my second brother pressured me to join Operation Dawn in Tainan Village. At that time, I joined very reluctantly just to maintain family ties, especially with my brother. Because my brother said: "If I don't follow their arrangements this time, and continue my bad habits like drug use and do evil things, the Jia family will completely cut off all ties with me, even if it means I die on the street." And I really knew Jia family's characters well and they meant what they said. However, given my history of repeatedly going in and out of jail, I wasn't sure if I could change for the better and leave my criminal past behind. So, I decided to obey them temporarily and give it a try.

However, thank God, I have been in Operation Dawn for 9 years now. When I think back to the time when I started from a person whose body and mind were filled with rude thoughts and disapproval, filthy words, violent temper, underworld thinking, and prison culture. During three years of being stubborn and rebellious in the village, I engaged in numerous wrongful behaviours. However, God's love is among my many sins that should not be forgiven, tolerated, or accepted by others. I firmly believe that God's will requires me, Lord, to thoroughly see, accept, know, think about, and understand my own corruption and unworthiness; and then allows me to face it again and again as the servants sent and used by Him. His forgiveness, acceptance, gentleness, and encouragement really touched my heart. What's more,



the wonderful lives of the pastors, preachers, and teachers I have pastored have made my heart as full and longing for God's love and the Lord's saving grace as the sea, and as firm and stable as a mountain.



Today, I believe in God's love because of the Lord's redemption, and the Holy Spirit's inspiration hits me like a wave. Every day, I believe that God's loving Spirit inspires me, and I strive to pursue His anointing, presence, breaking and building, discipline and love, and will and perfection. I thank God that even when I was a mess and looked like a worm, He still loved, cherished, saved, and resurrected me from the dead. I thank God that I have been blessed and blessed to become a child of God through the salvation of the Lord Jesus, the cleansing of the

precious blood, and the mercy and indwelling of the Holy Spirit. Now I thank God for allowing me to become a new creation in Christ, a person who has been changed, moulded, and reborn by the Lord, from a corrupt, filthy, sinful person who was originally despised by the world and regarded as garbage. I can receive the Lord's mercy and be perfected before I die, becoming a person who loves the Lord, fears the Lord, loves God, and loves others.

Today, I am even more grateful for the Lord's grace, which allows me, an unworthy person, to learn the work of serving the brothers in the midst of His provision and grace. Especially serving in the United States and Canada which has kept my loving heart burning. My heart says : "Glory to God in the highest, and peace on earth to those who please him!" Peace be with you all.

Grace from the Lord  
John Jia





## Thanksgiving & Prayer items

We come to you with an earnest and humble plea for prayers.

- Pray for Rev. Lau's upcoming trip to North America between mid-October and early November. Rev. Lau will be joined by our former rehab graduate, Pastor Andrew, to visit Vancouver and the United States to share messages and testimonies. Pray that Pastor Andrew works well with Rev. Lau and that God will be glorified through their mission.
- Pray for our two young pastors, Andrew and Justin who completed the Operation Dawn rehab program a number of years ago and now serve in two different churches. Please ask God to give them strength and use them to show His love to others. Another beloved graduate, Johnson, has recently completed his summer internship at his church. He is currently pursuing a master theological degree in counselling. Please pray for God's guidance for him.
- Please pray for Canada - The government's permissive stance on drug abuse is causing significant problems among many young people and making their addiction situation worse. The government has exacerbated the drug abuse crises by legalizing marijuana and decriminalizing the possession of small amounts of hard drugs, like methamphetamine and heroin. In view of the need to help people to overcome their addiction problems and start a new productive life, we urgently seek a full-time pastoral staff in our rehab centre, who ideally is trilingual (English, Mandarin and Cantonese) to take charge of teaching, pastoring and accompanying the students, and even staying with them overnight at the centre. Your prayers can help us find the right person for this vital role.

Your prayers are powerful, and we believe that together, we can make a big difference.



### Your Support matters

Let us make a difference together in the fight against addiction ! Your support is crucial. Please donate now at the following link. Thank you for joining us in this meaningful ministry.  
<https://www.operationdawn.com/donate>



### Passionate Volunteers Wanted

Your passion can make a big difference. Be part of our Life Changing team. Volunteer now and be a guiding light for others. Please contact Warren Li at 437-808-3480