

CCIC-CU LIFE Newsletter

O Happy Day! Congrats!

Congratulations to 14 of our youth who got baptized on Fri 5 Dec 2025. You are all such an encouragement! Praise God!



Bella Zhu
Bryan Zhang
Derek Jin
Erica Lu
Esther Zhang
Eugene Chen
Johnny Zhang

Joshua Sheng
Kate Zhao
Matthew Hung
Melody Tang
Naomi Chen
Ryan Tseng
Terence He



Insider Insights

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Dec 2025 Youth Ministry Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3 Music Practice (7:00 PM)	4	5 Baptism + Youth Group (7:30 PM)	6
7 Impact CF: Curtis Lowe (9:30 AM)	8	9	10 Music Practice (7:00 PM)	11	12 Youth Group (7:30 PM)	13
14 Impact CF: Pastor Owen (9:30 AM)	15	16	17 Servant Team Mtg (7:00 PM)	18	19 Christmas Party (7:30 PM)	20
21 Impact CF: Pastor Owen (9:30 AM)	22	23	24 Cancelled: Music Practice (7:00 PM)	25	26 Cancelled: Youth Group (7:30 PM)	27
28 Impact CF: Pastor Owen (9:30 AM)	29	30	31 Sleepover at CCIC-SJ (9:30 PM)	1 Sleepover at CCIC-SJ (9:30 PM)	2 Cancelled: Youth Group (7:30 PM)	
COLOR KEY Youth Bonding ImpactCF AWANA			Parents No Youth Group Missions			

Register for our NY sleepover via QR code



God's Perspective of Me

Baptism Testimony by Bella Zhu (8th)



Hello, I'm Bella, and I've been alive for 14 years now. However, I only started to value my relationship with Christ recently. I was blind for so long to what God was doing, but now I have someone to thank for the good in my life, and for making the future less daunting, no matter how scary or uncertain it might appear.

Looking back, the first significant memory I have with Jesus was in kindergarten. My family didn't talk much about religion, so it was hard to familiarize myself with Christianity. I definitely attended different churches before CCIC-CU, but here at the AWANA was the first time I actually knew that I was, in fact, attending a church.

Around the same time, my mom gave me a cross necklace, and I remember that interaction very vividly. She told me, "If anyone asks why you wear this necklace, just tell them that you are a Christian." At the time, I don't think I truly understood why or the meaning behind it. All I knew was that I liked the necklace, and it was small (so like, yay, extra points for that, I guess).

I was not someone you would call a typical "good Christian." For the longest time, all I did was go to church and maybe pray before sleeping, but I didn't go out of my way to read the Bible or truly get to know God. Even as a child, I was such a mess. My emotions were everywhere. I would constantly bother everyone and was generally a "brat" to my brother. So when I actually started to mature and got introspective, I really hated myself. If you asked me to describe myself in one word, I would confidently choose the word "pathetic" every time.

It was really in the past two years that I started listening to God and became more open to what He had to say. There was just something about Elanor, Fred, and Peter's teaching that made me think more about my relationship with God and what I wanted that to look like. It wasn't until I attended Sunday School did I finally realize how much I truly wanted to know God. I wanted to understand why I felt so comforted when praying to him, how the church could be such a united community, and what made the act of worship so joyful.

Worship music actually played the most significant part in my journey. The simple act of listening to the music and singing along brought warmth and comfort. It didn't matter if I was alone or having a bad day. The music reminded me that God was working in our everyday lives. Our lack of ability to see it didn't change the fact that He was working, He is working, and He continues to work.

I felt so much joy in hearing God's Word because GOD WILL ALWAYS LOVE YOU, no matter what your "supposed value" is. When I started truly pursuing Jesus Christ, I had peace. God gave me a purpose in life: to embrace and praise Jesus in the way I lived by learning and following His Word. I want people to find the same joy that God has given me. Jesus Christ saved me. Even when I turned my back or acted selfishly, He saved me. He gave me His grace.

If you ask me that question again now (i.e., describe myself in one word), I would still answer the same. I'm still pathetic, but now the difference is that it's not my perspective that matters; it's God's. In Matthew 19:26, Jesus said, "*With man [salvation] is impossible, but with God all things are possible.*" God loves me, God sent Jesus Christ to save me, and through my faith in Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior, I now have eternal life. I am now a daughter of God. I am a Christian, and I will follow him to the ends of the earth. --

Christian-ish to Christian

Baptism Testimony by Derek Jin (7th)

I grew up in a Christian household, in a family that would regularly attend church in Tucson, Arizona, years before I was even born. In 2013, my family moved to San Jose, California, and we started to attend a church called CCIC-Cupertino. For most of my childhood, I went to church only because my parents made me go, and also because my friends were there. I never really took my faith seriously until middle school.

When I became a sixth grader, I joined the youth programs at church. I started to try paying more attention to the sermons and would interact with students and leaders who had devoted their life to serve God.

That very same year, Pastor Owen taught a “Christian-ish” series on Sunday mornings. It helped me reflect on the true meaning of being a Christian. I learned that being Christian didn’t just mean reading the Bible and praying to God, but also having faith and believing that God had sent Jesus to die for my sins.

This has inspired me to try taking my faith more seriously and pursue a life with Christ. I believe that Jesus is always faithful to me, even when I am not very faithful, and that Jesus not only has the power to save me, but to guide me in an amazing plan for my life. --

Congrats to our youth who publicly proclaimed their faith in God by baptism on Friday 5 Dec 2025!



(Front to Back, L to R): Derek Jin (7th), Naomi Chen (9th), Terence He (8th), Melody Tang (8th), Erica Lu (7th), Kate Zhao (8th), Esther Zhang (11th), Ryan Tseng (9th), Bryan Zhang (8th), Eugene Chen (8th), Matthew Hung (9th), Joshua Sheng (11th), Bella Zhu (8th), and Johnny Zhang (10th) (Photo: J. Zhang).



Faith, Grace, and Healing

by Erica Lu (7th)

Life as a Christian is all about Jesus. We should praise him, study his Word, and look up to him. There's also so much to be grateful about. (I know Thanksgiving has passed, but we must be thankful 24/7, for things like food on the table, family members, and the fact that Jesus lived to die for us.) Even if it's something that you're unhappy about, you probably still get some joy and gratitude out of it. For example, failing your test can motivate you to improve on future tests.

Thanksgiving to God improved my relationship with him. Thanking him for what he has done for me on that cross helped me reflect the pain and suffering he has gone through for us.

If you ever feel down from events in life (and you did actually fail your test), remember that God is watching. He's watching the tears that are rolling down your cheeks. He sees the disappointment in your heart. He wants you to know he's there. He can heal you if you just ask.

Faith is difficult to have when you doubt. Personally, I doubt his power sometimes. I also occasionally doubt his existence. If you really think about it, the existence of God is pretty unbelievable, and there are so many unbelievable things in the Bible, like a flood that wiped out the entire world, Jesus's miracles, and extremely long lives of people in the book of Genesis! Noah, for example, is said to have lived to be 950 years, while humans today are expected to die at around 70-80 years old. To me, it sounds crazy, but when you have faith, everything is possible (Matt. 19:26).

When I fall short before God, I feel convicted of my guilt, and I immediately pray. I kept sinning, I kept apologizing, and I kept thinking, how does God forgive me so many times when I keep failing him (Col. 1:13-14)? I can doubt his grace and forgiveness, but God's love is so abundant, and his mercies are new every morning (Lam. 3:22-23).

To conclude, I want to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and to remember it as Jesus' birthday. --

Thoughts About Counselors

by Peter Hwang (Youth Staff)

First of all, if you have not already, please join me in encouraging and praying for our youth group counselors. They have been incredibly faithful towards our youth and their well-being and growth in knowing Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior.

Second, as a quick reminder, their primary role is to serve as Christian role models for the youth, specifically for their respective grades (aka, small groups. They help lead small groups, bonding events, and occasionally help with our youth programming (e.g., music, A/V, retreat, missions). Counselors also meet monthly to review teaching content, check-in on our students, and plan future activities together.

Counselors help provide our youth with adults (other than their parents) who they can confide, trust, and share openly with, and who can guide them towards a life with Christ. Continue to pray that God will protect and honor their hearts in serving our youth! --

CCIC-CU LIFE Newsletter

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Our goal is to share monthly reflections and update about our CCIC-CU LIFE youth ministry to encourage and build up the body of Christ (Eph. 4:1-16).

LIFE Event Photos (Nov 2025)

In November 2025, the entire CCIC-Cupertino church went to Missions Springs for a three day retreat. Our youth group participated in the English ministry retreat with the Connect Young Adults, and we learned about God's active presence and working in our lives through the book of Ruth. Our church youth volleyball teams also went to the playoffs in the Santa Clara First Baptist volleyball league, and won the championship for their division! Congratulations, CCIC-CU (Chen) team!



L to R: Lucas (9th), Victor (11th), Michael (10th), Mikayla (10th), Ivy (10th), Roger (8th) high five after getting a side out in their volleyball match (Photo: J. Zhang).



Erica (7th) and Josh (Counselor) stop on "Red" with everyone else while we all play Red Light, Green Light as an icebreaker at retreat (Photo: J. Zhang).



Colin (12th) served as one of our two emcees at retreat, ensuring that we are aware of activities, meals, registration, and more (Photo: J. Zhang).



Edward, Cindy, Hope (12th), Michelle (counselor), and Danny (counselor) lead a night music session at Winter Retreat (Photo: E. Chen).

Right: Pastor Elliot Sands teaches from Ruth, reflecting on God's faithfulness (Photo: J. Zhang).



December 2025 Events

ALL-CHURCH BAPTISM FRI 5 DEC 2025, 7:30 PM



Starting on Sunday 2 Nov 2025, we hosted baptism classes for students who are interested in better understanding baptism, what is the significance of baptism, and what life looks like after baptism. We had 14 students commit to getting baptized. For future baptism classes, please contact Peter H (peter.hwang@cciccu.org).



SERVANT TEAM MEETING WED 17 DEC 2025, 7:00 PM

@Youth: Join us for our monthly Servant Team Meeting (Room 104) to talk through ministry opportunities and updates, kick off projects for each ministry, and to read the Bible and pray together! See you all there! :)

CHRISTMAS PARTY FRI 19 DEC 2025, 7:30 PM

For our last youth group of the year, we will be celebrating Christmas through our annual White Elephant Gift Exchange!

@Youth: Please bring a wrapped gift (< \$10) to the gift exchange, and we will celebrate the coming of the birth of our Lord. If you forget to bring a gift, we will have some extra prepared!

NEW YEAR'S SLEEPOVER WED 31 DEC 2025, 9:30 PM

REGISTER using the QR code

We will host a joint sleepover at CCIC-SJ for three (3) youth groups! Festivities include snacks, Nerf gun war, games and breakfast, all for FREE! Students are welcome to bring games and snacks to share, and sleeping essentials. More info in the QR code above!



NO YOUTH GROUP (2X) FRI 26 DEC 2025 FRI 2 JAN 2026

Fri 19 Dec 2025 is our last youth group of the year, as the follow two weeks (26 Dec 2025, 2 Jan 2026) are cancelled. We do have a New Year's sleepover (see below). Enjoy the break! :)

IMPORTANT!

- **31 Dec 2025 to 1 Jan 2026:** Joint New Year's Sleepover (CCIC-San Jose)
- **13-16 Feb 2026:** Snow Retreat (Camp Chinquapin)
- **16-23 Jun 2026:** Mexico Missions (Ensenada, MX with YWAM San Diego / Baja)
- **31 Jul to 3 Aug 2026:** All-CCIC Summer Youth Retreat (Mount Gilead)



Prayer Requests



High School Seniors

Pray for endurance and persistence as they finish up their college applications and school semesters. Typically, second semester is way lighter and easier, and we can't wait for all of them to have more time to spend with each other and with our youth group! Pray for strength, rest, and peace!

Female Youth Staff

Pray that our church finds a female youth staff that can support and minister to the young women in our youth group. Pray that we would find someone that works well alongside our church staff, volunteers and parents. Pray that this person is like David, someone after God's own heart (1 Sam. 13:14).

Praise God for Baptism

Praise God for the baptism of fourteen of our youth (including two more at their local church)! Praise God for an incredibly encouraging night of baptism, testimony sharing, and celebration for the newness of life in the Spirit given to those who put their faith and trust in Jesus as their Lord and Savior!

New Years Sleepover (12/31 to 1/1)

Pray for the preparations for the upcoming sleepover event at CCIC San Jose. Pray for volunteers who are willing to help stay up and prepare food and snacks, and pray for the students that those who attend will have a memorable night in fellowship with brothers and sisters across multiple CCIC churches (Cupertino, San Jose, and Central San Jose).

Youth Leaders and Volunteers

Continue to pray for our youth leaders and adult/parent volunteers that they continue to recognize that their service demonstrates God's love to our youth and to the world, for Jesus said, Just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another" (John 13:34-35 ESV).

Physical Healing

Pray for those who are dealing with physical ailments and injuries that they would get clarity on the issues at hand, resolution to the issue, and time to recover and heal. Pray that they continue to trust in God's timing, Pray also for those who are caring for them, that they felt seen, recognized, and loved by God and others.

Youth Servant Team Ministry

Continue to pray for the faithful service of our students who have volunteered to serve others and follow the example of Jesus Christ, our Servant King. Pray for flexibility and willingness to learn as we make changes to our A/V setup, focus on our Senior students, and plan for the upcoming year (2026).

From 2025 to 2026

Pray that our community finishes the year well – in love, peace and gratitude. Pray that all of us demonstrate the fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22-23), and live out our new life in Christ by going first in love. For 2026, pray that we plan thoughtfully and carefully for our youth ministry, and that everything we do reflects Jesus Christ!