

April 2026 Newsletter

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## Buona Primavera a tutti!

That means, "Happy Spring, everyone!" Spring has sprung in our part of the world, and it has been lovely. We hope that wherever you are you are being blessed with good weather, and more importantly good spiritual and physical health.

This newsletter is about a week or so late, my apologies for that. But, let us tell you what we've been up to lately.

### Chinese Studies

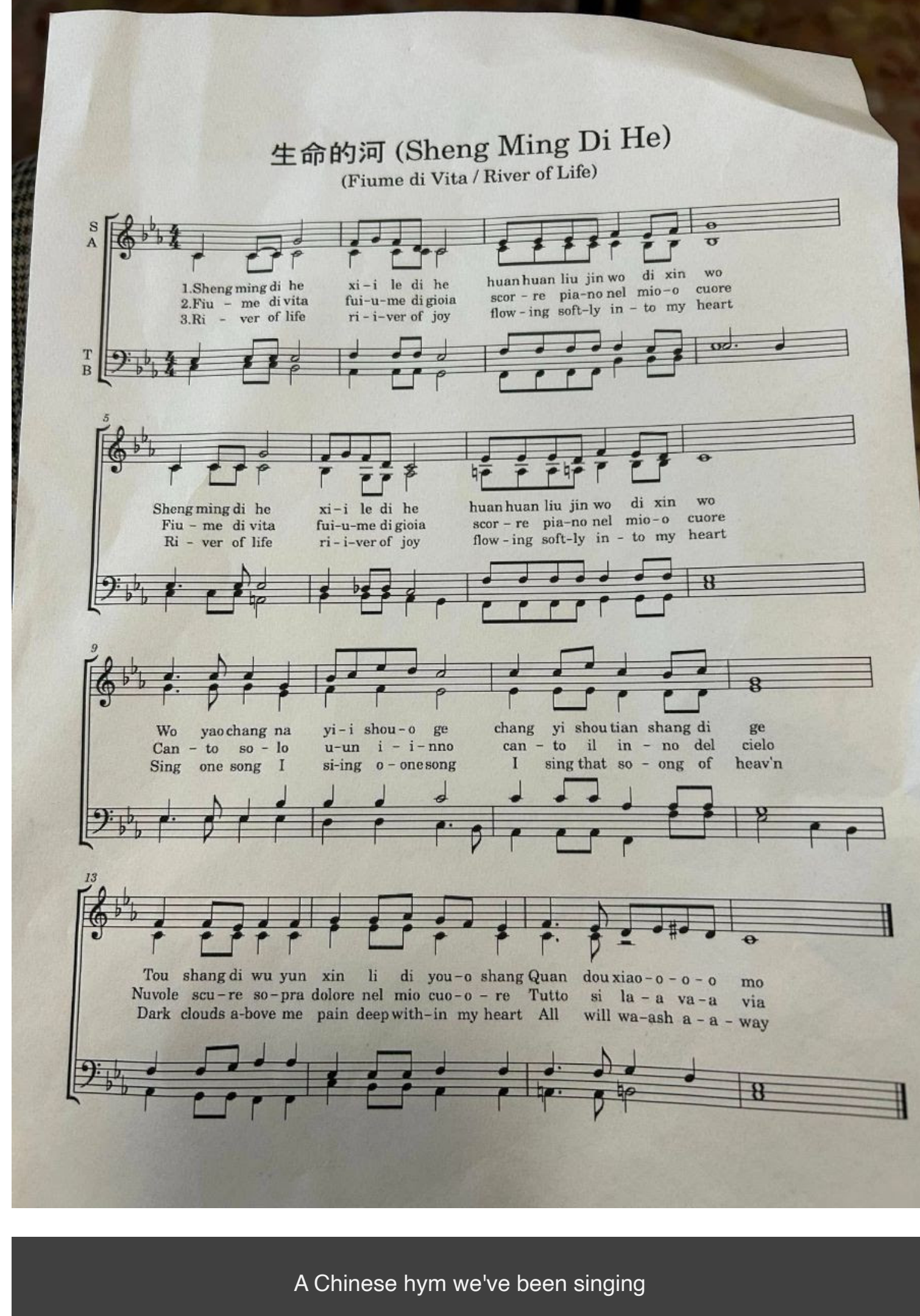
My Chinese speaking ability has reached unprecedented levels! Someone recently told me, "I've never heard anyone pronounce words so poorly." See, unprecedented! But our work with the Chinese is going well. We concentrated a lot of March working with this special group that continues to come to worship with us. As you can imagine, it is difficult communicating with them. Face to face Bible studies are nearly impossible. This is not just because of the language barrier, but also they have very little free time. Most of them work more than 10 hour days, 7 days a week. It is a wonder that they can make it to worship most weeks. In order to work around that, we started a Bible study group on Whatsapp (for those of you who don't know, Whatsapp is a web based texting service. Most people in Europe use it, as texting is not generally free on phone plans). We have 18 in the group that are studying regularly. Basically, I write a lesson in English, then I use an AI program to translate it into Chinese. Then I use another AI program to translate it back to English to make sure the first program did it correctly. Every now and then it will change something and I have to figure out how to reword it, but by and large it has been helpful. We have been concentrating on basic doctrine, like the authority of God's word, the church of the Bible and, "What must I do to be saved." We have answered many questions on baptism.

Thus far, none of them have obeyed the Gospel, but they are all continuing to come to worship every week. One of the things that made us very happy was, after setting up the group Bible study chat, I explained that we are trying our best to sing songs in Chinese each week and to make them feel welcome in our congregation. One of the men responded by saying, "Thank you for seeing us." They go so often being ignored, or looked down upon, that they are grateful that we have been open and loving towards them. This is not just my family, but the whole church.

Please continue to pray for these efforts.



Some of our Chinese students at a recent potluck.



A Chinese hymn we've been singing

### Flyers and Websites

We are continually trying to reach out to the lost in our area. We have been concentrating on two resources for this recently - distributing flyers, and setting up two different websites. The flyer distribution is two fold: one is a flyer advertising the church itself, and the other is advertising English through the Bible lessons. We have had a few people visit worship in the past few weeks as a result. We almost never had visitors off the street before, so we are very happy about this.

As for the websites, we have two that we are working on - First, one that will advertise English through the Bible lessons. Second, we are developing an online correspondence course for Bible study. Unfortunately, I have no expertise in this area. Fortunately, I know a lot of people who do. One of which I will meet with today (as of this writing) to help me get the websites where I want them to be, and to help me with learning how to advertise them better.

Please keep those efforts in your prayers as well.

### Two things I would rather not have to write...

In March we received bad news for us, but good news for two precious friends.

First, a few weeks ago we learned that Asher Abraham, a very faithful member of the church in Pohnpei, had a massive stroke and was in critical condition. Medical care in Pohnpei is not great, and the hospital there is not equipped to handle such. I am not sure that Asher could've been helped much anywhere, but certainly not on Pohnpei. Asher was one of our favorite people on earth. He was always kind, and willing to do anything that was needed to help the church. A few years ago our successors in the work, Wayne and Kristy Parker, helped Asher go to a preaching school in Fiji. Asher, despite being nearly completely blind, excelled in the program and returned to Pohnpei. He became the preacher of the congregation there and worked tirelessly in personal evangelism. Unfortunately, though he hung on for a few weeks, he did not survive the stroke. We are confident that he is secure in the arms of the Lord, where he always wanted to be, and that "his work follows him" (Rev. 14:13). Please keep the congregation in Pohnpei in your prayers. They are definitely going to need help if they will continue to exist as a congregation (by the way, if you or someone you know is interested in full time foreign mission work, please contact me immediately).

Second, we also heard the news that Yvonne Bettis, who is part of the family that brought me to Christ, also passed from this life in March. Yvonne was the widow of Eddie Bettis who brought me to the Lord and mentored me as a very young Christian. Eddie and Yvonne showed me constant kindness, and had me in their home often. When I first became a Christian I was either at their house, or their daughter and son-in-law's house most every day. Eddie and I would lead a prison ministry Bible study together on many Friday nights, and after we'd go to his house and eat dinner. Yvonne prepared many of those meals, and she was a fantastic cook and host. Yvonne was quiet, and dignified and a wonderful example of a Christian wife and mother. One of the things I always loved about her was her laugh. If you could get her going she would crack up until tears were rolling down her face. I am sad that I won't get to see her again in this life, but I know that if I am faithful I will see her again. I also know that she is much happier than she has ever been, and that she is delighted to be reunited with Eddie. She leaves behind two daughters, Lorrie and Alicia, and four grandsons. Please keep them in your prayers as they continue to mourn their loss.



Asher preaching towards the end of our time on Pohnpei.



Eddie and Yvonne Bettis, my father and mother in the faith.

### Family Stuff

We are doing well. We continue to meet with a homeschool group every Thursday in Lucca and have started to get close to many of the other members. We are trying our best to be good examples of Christians before them. Some are spiritually minded, while others are somewhat antagonistic to faith. We are hopeful that our friendship will help them come to know Jesus.

Violet has a big exam coming up on May 13th. This will be her first year to take it. There are two parts: a written exam that covers Italian, math and English, and an oral exam. For the oral exam she has to make a presentation on a subject of her choosing (she chose SCUBA diving) in which she has to incorporate: history, math, science, geography and Italian language while discussing it. We are a little nervous about it, so please keep her in your prayers.

That is all for now, thank you for all you do for us!



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