

Long before we set foot into New Life Covenant Church I believe God was preparing our hearts to come at just the right time. My family and I have been attending NLCC for 6 months now but it feels like a home with a family we have always been a part of.

In the beginning of last year John, my husband and I were in search of something vital that was missing in our lives. Around this same time my friend Sarah who lives in Korea kept sending me links to the sermons from her church. She attends a charismatic, English-speaking church that is open to the spirit. I ignored them at first but then I noticed a vast change in her. I knew Sarah as a shy and awkward girl but here she has transformed into this fearless, spiritual warrior-woman who was praying for me over the phone and giving me prophetic word. I was intrigued by this transformation so I watched a sermon. I was hooked! I was binge watching sermon after sermon; I would watch 3-4 sermons a week. I was mesmerized by the passion of the congregation. Their worship services were on fire! The only other time I've experienced this kind of passion was in high school during my youth group days. As I got older, got married, and had a couple kids, church shrunk into a convenient social club. Everyone around me normalized this culture of a country club church, soon this became my normal – this must be what church and Christianity is like as you get older; a quiet inner faith that does not offend anyone. When I saw that there was a church with my peers who were speaking in tongues, raising their hands, prophesying, and weeping because they could not contain their emotions I realized that God should not get smaller but bigger as we mature.

I told Sarah that we needed a church like this in Chicago. Sarah then said she has a friend Jane Cho, who attends a spirit-filled church. Immediately I ran to NLCC's website and clicked on the sermon. Even before the sermon began we saw a group of people who came to the front of the church to pray for an individual. I was not used to this kind of liberal use of Sunday service time. Then Pastor Joon started preaching; to be honest it was very difficult to concentrate on the sermon. The sound quality was not the best and the picture was a bit dark and dull. We still gave the church the benefit of a doubt and thought we needed to be there in-person to feel the spirit moving.

We soon left the church we were attending at the time and started visiting all the different churches in the area. In the spur of the moment one Sunday we decided to check out NLCC. It was exactly what we watched online. We thought this place was the typical multi-ethnic church that we have seen before. After the service we went to the fellowship hall and found my 4-year-old daughter Sofia, running around with the other kids laughing hysterically. I have never seen so much joy expressed from Sofia at any church.

We did not give NLCC much thought after that Sunday and started attending a mega church with some friends of ours. We attended the mega church for a couple months and it was great; we were blessed by the sermons and it was an easy place to be. Unfortunately, Sofia did not like going into the children's ministry and we could tell there was no joy or excitement on Sunday mornings for her. We were then reminded of NLCC because the image of Sofia's laughing face was burned into my mind. So we decided to try out NCC one more time for Sofia's sake.

It was this Sunday morning that we saw and experienced what God had been planting in our hearts for over a year. We felt the presence of the Holy Spirit through the unity, passion, and love that radiated from the congregation. These were people who came to church not just to socialize but to come together to worship the one true king. I have been amazed and shocked at how everyone's desire to live out the love of Christ seeps out from their actions. We had only been attending the church for a

couple weeks when P. Joon found out that my parents were moving. On the day of the move P. Joon announced to the church that my parents were moving and asked if people could help us out. There was no hesitation and there were plenty of volunteers that got the job done quickly. I was especially touched and blessed by P. Joon. He was the first one that rolled up his sleeves and was not afraid to get dirty! The following week I was casually sharing with Jane Cho and P. Tim about some struggles I was going through. People always say, "yes, take heart I will be praying for you" but right there on the spot Jane said, "okay, let us pray for her." I have never encountered that kind love from people that I barely knew; they sensed a need for prayer and prayed over me. These examples are just the tip of the iceberg but they were the ones that made the first impressions on me.

John and I decided that we needed to be a part of whatever was happening at this church. We did not fully understand but our heart and soul knew this was the place we had been searching for. This was the place that would equip us to live a life of living and dying for the gospel. Even though we have only been attending for 6 months the movement of the Holy Spirit in our lives has been transformative-we truly are living new lives.