An Interview with Pastor Lee Ju Wan of Cheongpa Church, Seoul, South Korea

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Cheongpa Family Church in the Seoul North District is a community where young adults in their 20s and 30s take the lead in nurturing their faith together. Through worship services created by the young adults themselves, a variety of small groups, and sharing activities in the local community, Pastor Lee Ju Wan is building a community where members support one another and grow together. WithU spoke with Pastor Lee about life in a church shaped together with young adults, his vision for a community in which members take ownership, and the dreams he hopes to realize. - Editor's Note



Question: Could you briefly introduce yourself and Cheongpa Church?

Hello. I'm Lee Ju Wan, pastor of Cheongpa Family Church in the Seoul North District. I live happily with

my beloved wife and our adorable son - a family of three.

Cheongpa Church is a community where young adults in their 20s and 30s gather to worship and grow in faith. In particular, we're building a church where young people who've moved to Seoul for school or work can lean on one another and grow, so they don't have to feel lonely in an unfamiliar city. It's like a nest - a place anyone can drop by comfortably to laugh, talk, and share the joy of faith.



Question: We understand Cheongpa Church is centered on young adult members. What makes it unique?

Our church is a community led by young adults in their 20s and 30s and by young blessed families.

These days, many young people have left their hometowns and have to adjust to life in Seoul on their own. Adapting to a new environment is hard enough; if they also had to sustain their life of faith alone, the loneliness would inevitably be great. That's why I wanted Cheongpa Church to be a warm shelter for them.



Our vision is "a community that grows together and lives out faith with joy." We hope faith will become not a burden or an obligation, but a real source of strength and joy in life. We don't want to stop at simply gathering and having a good time. What Cheongpa Church dreams of is feeling True Parents' heart in every relationship, learning love from one another, and growing more and more alike in that love.

Question: With so many young adult members, Cheongpa Church must have its own distinctive worship atmosphere and approach to faith.

The biggest difference is that young adults plan and create the worship services themselves. They voluntarily divide up the roles - praise, running the sound and video systems, photography, ushering, cleaning, and even preparing meals.

Preparing a service takes a lot of work, so every time I see members step forward on their own, I feel truly grateful and reassured. When I prepare sermons, I also reflect deeply on the real concerns young people face - career paths, finding a job, relationships, anxiety about the future. Rather than handing down answers one-sidedly, I try to wrestle with these questions together with them, centered on the Word, as we search for meaning in life. Through this, I hope they will experience faith not as a duty they must keep, but as a precious value in their lives.

Question: We hear Cheongpa Church runs a variety of small groups, such as the Cheongpa Running Crew and the Cheongpa Hiking Club.

We actively support all kinds of small groups so young adults can enjoy the things they love together.

Some examples are the Cheongpa Running Crew, which runs through different parts of Seoul to build health and friendship, and the Cheongpa Hiking Club, which climbs mountains and offers devotions in the midst of nature. Our knitting and Tong-Il Moo-Do groups are also very active. When people share hobbies, even first-time visitors naturally open their hearts, and those connections often grow into deep relationships. If you have a hobby you love but no one to enjoy it with, feel free to knock on Cheongpa Church's door anytime. (laughs)



Question: How have these groups usually been planned and run?

Most of them start from the young adults' own ideas. To support that, we provide space and activity funds - once a week, 10,000 won per person, for up to 10 people - through a community support program called "Let's Gather in the Cheongpa Forest."

The aim is to help young adults become not mere participants but the "main characters of the community," planning and leading programs themselves. I believe a pastor's role is to set the stage and

cheer them on. Going forward, we want to be the first church young people think of whenever there's something they want to try, such as book or film discussions or playing musical instruments.



Question: We also heard that you share toast with university students near the church.

Through the [WE:하자] support program of the Social Contribution Department of FFWPU-Heavenly Korea, we run a morning toast-sharing activity called "Good Morning Cheongpa." Our goal is to reach out warmly to university students, young adults, and local residents near the church by offering them breakfast.

As we hand out toast we've made ourselves and greet people, local residents give us a lot of encouragement. Rather than hoping this activity will immediately lead to more church members, we put our hearts into it in the hope that Cheongpa Church will be remembered in the local community as "a neighbor who is always warm and friendly."

Question: Cheongpa Church seems to put a lot of effort into social media. Could you tell us about it?



We connect with young people through YouTube and Instagram. We don't just post event announcements; we create content that shows our members' honest everyday lives and faith.

In particular, our podcast "Cheongpa ON sofa" is a talk program where we sit comfortably on a sofa and

talk about the lives of blessed families and the concerns of young adults. I believe that, rather than special or grand stories, the simple lives of people who worry and laugh just like everyone else feel closer to people's hearts. I hope social media can become a way for us to share our happy lives of faith with one another.



Question: How can a church create an environment where young adults naturally gather and connect?

It's important to create a space where young adults want to stay, but in the end, what brings them back is people and relationships.



We need more warm bonds - people who rejoice together in happy times, reach out first when someone is struggling, and share a meal. If Heavenly Parent and True Parents are at the center of those relationships, we'll become more than just a group of close friends. We'll become a strong community that feels love

through one another and grows together.

Question: Have you noticed any changes in the young adult members or the church atmosphere through these activities?

We've been trying many things since March, so it's still too early to point to any big, visible change. But one thing I've clearly realized is that a pastor can't build a church alone. Even when a plan falls a little short, I've seen the results go beyond expectations when members come together in heart, and I feel deeply grateful and reassured because of them.

Question: What kind of church would you like Cheongpa Church to become? Please tell us about what you're preparing and your plans for the future.

Above all, I want to build a church where each and every member is truly happy. So the vision I most want to realize at Cheongpa Church is "a church where members are the owners."

Rather than a structure that only moves when the pastor pulls from the front, I hope a culture will take root in which members, as owners of the church, think things through together, propose new ideas, and build it together. Instead of relying solely on the passion of one particular pastor, I hope members' own hearts of love and responsibility for the church will grow strong. Even if we don't see big results right away, I believe that if we keep moving forward step by step with our members, we will one day become a deeply rooted community. I'd love for it to be a place where people look forward to Sunday, where there are people they're glad to see when they come to church, and where they can feel the true joy of life as they live out their faith together.

There's one more thing I've been thinking deeply about and preparing. For young adults to be happy, the parents who love and support them also need to be happy. So an event I'd really like to hold soon is a "Worship Service Honoring Parents."



Parents who have sent their children to Seoul from other parts of the country or from overseas must worry a great deal. They're probably always wondering whether their children are eating properly and whether they've met good friends and are keeping up their life of faith. I'd like to invite those parents to Cheongpa Church to worship together with their children and see for themselves what kind of warm community their children are part of. If parents could feel reassured, thinking, "My child is doing well among good neighbors," it would make me truly happy.

I also want to be a pastor who learns and grows together with young adults. I hope Cheongpa Church will be a home of faith that young people can always return to comfortably, and a blessed place where we sincerely love one another and come to know the heart of Heavenly Parent and True Parents. I will give my utmost to building a church where each and every person can be happy.