

faces *of* faith

In this first episode of *Faces of Faith*, we visit **St. Jacobi Lutheran Church** in Sunset Park, Brooklyn, where a congregation serving Chinese immigrant workers has built a Mandarin-language ministry around a radical act of listening — asking not when we worship, but when our neighbors can. Through the witness of **Pastor Hoshea Huang** and lay leader **Fragrance Chen**, we see how liturgical tradition coupled with a willingness to let go of the familiar can become a seed of renewal. We invite you to watch, and then to use the questions below to reflect on how your own congregation to meet its neighbors where they are.

1) St. Jacobi worships on Monday and Tuesday mornings. Weekday services might raise eyebrows among some Lutherans but are exactly right for the restaurant workers, construction workers, and healthcare workers the congregation serve. **Think about when your congregation gathers for worship. Who can easily be there? And who, because of their work schedule, their family situation, or their life circumstances, cannot?**

2) Fragrance Chen described the lectionary and liturgy as a steady anchor during a period of uncertainty and change at St. Jacobi. **What role does liturgical tradition play in the life of your congregation? When has familiar worship helped carry your community through a difficult season?**

3) St. Jacobi's story shows what a congregation can do when its lay members step up — especially during pastoral transitions and moments of crisis like the COVID-19 pandemic. **Who are the lay leaders in your congregation? In what ways do they already lead, and where might there be room to empower them further?**

4) St. Jacobi made a courageous choice: to focus exclusively on Mandarin-language ministry, even if it meant letting other things go. Through focusing on this ministry, the congregation has become the fastest growing church in the synod. **What is something in your own life or in your congregation's ministry that you feel called to grow? What might you need to release — a program, an assumption, a habit — to make room for it?**

Closing Prayer:

Gracious God, stir in us the passion to cultivate all that is alive and growing, and grant us courage to release what no longer serves your people. May we find comfort in the familiar and remain ever open to the light and change through which you are making all things new. Amen.