

May 2019



CANNING GARDEN METHODIST CHURCH

FAMILY FOCUS

GROWING DEEPER IN CHRIST,
IMPACTING &
TRANSFORMING LIVES !

But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

John 1:12-13



MESSAGE from the Editor...

Shalom brothers and sisters in Christ.

This Easter season, we were blessed by the presence of Ps Isaac Lim from Singapore during the Holy week. His sharing reminded me of the depth of suffering that Jesus went through on His journey to the cross. He was the King of Kings, yet He wore the crown of thorns, both painful and humiliating as His authority was mocked by Roman soldiers. He bore the stripes from the flogging, and His torn flesh brought us healing (Isaiah 53:5). His death was one of prolonged torture as He hung on the cross with nails in his hands and feet, dying slowly from tiredness, pain and asphyxiation.

I was again reminded during the redemption history seminar by Dr Philip Lee's sharing about God's salvation plan for us. Jesus is the eternal high priest, for He lives forever. Because He has a permanent priesthood, only He is able to save us completely! (Hebrews 7:24-25). No amount of animal's blood sacrifices can be a substitute for the blood shed on the cross for our redemption from sin and death.

As I pondered on this, I could only imagine the grief that Jesus went through during His journey to the cross. Knowing all that was about to happen, He longed for his closest disciples to pray with Him at the garden of Gethsemane, yet they fell asleep during his darkest trying moments. Similarly, I too have taken our beloved saviour for granted, spending time with Him at my convenience.

My heart's desire is to be like John, who called himself the disciple whom Jesus loved. He leaned at His bosom, listening to His heartbeat as He spoke. Let us remember His great love for us, and be followers after His own heart!



Editor

Li Fan

CANNING GARDEN

Methodist Church

Worship Celebrations

SATURDAY

08:00pm English

SUNDAY

08:45am English

09:00am Chinese

10:30am Bahasa Malaysia

Sunday School (*English*)

Sunday School (*Chinese*)

03:00pm Youth Fellowship (*English*)

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About Family Focus...

Family Focus is published 3 times a year (in January, May & September) under the Membership & Evangelism (M&E) Committee of CGMC, Ipoh.

It seeks to fulfill the church's theme of "Growing deeper in Christ, Impacting and transforming lives" by sharing Christ with each other and strengthening the community of Christ through writings and testimonies.

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We welcome you to submit your articles & testimonies to us for the coming issues.

Each article should preferably be less than 1500 words and can be submitted to any of the editorial team members above, to the church office or emailed to cgmcipoh@gmail.com.

All articles should be accompanied by the author's full name, contact number and cell group where applicable.

We reserve the right to edit the articles, keep the articles for subsequent issues, or withhold the articles from publication.

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MESSAGE from Rev. Dr. Andrew Tan

Easter has come and gone. The Zone Leaders met over a retreat in Frasers' Hill recently and we reaffirmed the importance of Cell Group (CG) ministry in CGMC. CGMC launched her CG ministry in the year 1996, and it casted a strong vision and generated members' participation in the life of the Church which helped build CGMC to be what she is today. CG is the foundation of CGMC, and we expect all our members to attend the CG. In this article, I would like to explain the goals of CG ministry in the acronym SCAN but numerated in the opposite direction below.

1.NURTURE

The CG provides nurture, and she does it primarily through her weekly meetings following the program ASAP (Adoration, Study, Accountability and Prayer). During the CG meeting, the following must be accomplished. **Adoration** or worship draws us close to God and opens our heart to Him. **Study** helps us to apply what we heard in the sermon. This is the time to encourage attendees to share how they intend to apply as a result of hearing the message. **Accountability** is for the CG members to share what they intend to do to serve Christ this week from their personal life, family, work or study, church and society. They also report how they did the previous week. **Prayer** is for the members to pray for the needs of the nation, church, and members. The ASAP must be carefully and meaningfully executed so that members will go home having met the Lord, hearts opened to each other, commitments to Christ for the week made, and needs supported in prayer.

Nurture is not limited to the CG meetings only. The Church provides a Member Track for basic training to be practiced mainly in the CG and the Church. The Member Track includes:

- a. Foundation Class :** it explains what we believe and how we live the Christian life. It is a requirement for one to be a member of the Church.
- b. Bible Reading :** it teaches members how to have daily Quiet Time and to read their Bible. From time to time, the CG can hold their members accountable for their Bible Reading.
- c. Prayer :** it equips members to pray for themselves and to intercede for others, church and nation. What we learn will then be practiced in the Prayer time during CG meetings, during the weekly Prayer Bands, and the Half-day of Prayer held twice a year for all members of the Church.
- d. Spiritual Gifts :** it helps members to discover their spiritual gifts and to find a place where they can serve in the Church. The sponsor will assist such a person and link to the ministry heads to enlist you.
- e. Type A Evangelism :** it equips members to make connections with their 'oikos', share their testimony and present the gospel. This prepares members to participate in the Harvest Events held in the CG. Of course, the member can evangelize at any other time.
- f. Sponsor Coaching :** it empowers the sponsor to disciple a sponsee in his CG by helping him make renunciation of his past life, by doing a basic Bible Study with him, help him to locate a ministry in the Church after attending the Spiritual Gifts seminar, encourage him to attend the Member Track, and look after the new member.



REV. DR. ANDREW TAN

Pastor-in-charge
Canning Garden Methodist Church

2. ACCOUNTABILITY

We practice accountability during the meeting (ASAP). Without accountability, very little of discipleship takes place. When we have to report about what we do to serve Christ this week, we take our week more seriously. The net result of Accountability time should be encouraging and empowering.

Beyond the Accountability time, members should “watch over one another” and be responsible for each other. We should be aware when someone is having some problems or challenges in life, slacking in zeal or missing in Church attendance, doubting his faith, etc and intervene sensitively and appropriately.

3. CARE

The CG is not an activity that happens on Wednesday or Friday nights only. The CG is a community of people. The CG ministry continues beyond her weekly meetings. If a member is sick and homebound, if a member is hospitalized, if a member of the family passes away, the CG members need to respond to care for such members. This will mean calling, visiting, counselling, encouraging, supporting, and showing concern.

There will be times of special needs such as moving house and blessing the home, welcoming the new born, helping in the wedding arrangements of a member, celebrations of birthdays and successes in work and study. The CG also cares for her inactive members by constantly keeping in touch with them, calling and reminding them of their CG meetings, and inviting them for any other events of the CG.

4. SERVICE

The CG does not only serve her own members but also those outside the CG. The CG participates in social ministries of their choice (Daybreak, Hope Dialysis, Hope Lighthouse, etc.). In so doing, the social agencies of the Church are supported. The CG can participate in missions, and members are encouraged to make mission trips together. In participating as a CG together in missions, the fellowship of the members is often enhanced as the members serve together.

In CGMC, we are encouraging every CG to do two Harvest Events a year. This year 2019, we will do Father’s Day in June and Christmas Tree in December. The CG needs to send a few members to attend the Harvest Event Demo so as to know exactly what to do.

The Pastor, the Zone Leaders, and especially the Cell Leaders work tirelessly to achieve the goals of SCAN. As you can see, if we major and achieve these goals, the Church will be on a firm foundation of doing God’s work. We need to make sure that our basic ministries in the CG work for us. It will work if relationships between Pastor and Zone Leaders, Zone Leaders and Cell Leaders, and Cell Leaders and members are good. It will work if all the basic trainings are well attended and practiced. It will work if our members constantly avail themselves to serve, including serving as Cell Leaders.

MESSAGE from Rev. Yu Chiew Song

马太福音

22:37 耶稣对他说、你要尽心、尽性、尽意、爱主你的神。

22:38 这是诫命中的第一、且是最大的。

22:39 其次也相仿、就是要爱人如己。

22:40 这两条诫命、是律法和先知一切道理的总纲。

故事一

今天爸爸在家自己染头。

孩子就笑他：“爸，你都快60了还染头髮幹嘛啊，还想返老返童啊？”

爸回答說：“每次我回老家前都把頭髮染黑，那樣你奶奶看見就會以為我還年輕，她也不老了。”

故事二

爸爸：兒子你覺得爸爸壯嗎？

兒子：恩。

爸爸：你覺得少林功夫厲害嗎？

兒子：厲害。

爸爸：如果我剃成光頭，練少林功夫好嗎？

兒子拍手：太好了！

第二天，兒子看到光頭的爸爸，高興地說：爸爸加油！一定要練成高手啊！

那天，原來是爸爸化療的前一天……

人与人之间重要是以对方设想：

切记莫以小人之心度君子之腹，

至少莫以小人之心度常人之腹。

爱人如己是不容易的功课！

不能一味索取，不懂付出；

不要一味任性，不知让步。

爱是为他人着想，不是聚焦在自身。

无论亲情、爱情、友情、弟兄姐妹情，

皆同此理，皆同此心！

愿每个人，共同学习。

爱你所选，选你所爱！

爱神所选，爱神所爱！



REV. YU CHIEW SONG

Associate Pastor

Canning Garden Methodist Church

MESSAGE from Rev. Richard Leow

Begitu cepat kita sudah masuk pertengahan tahun, banyak perkara yang gembira telah belaku yang memberi kesukacitaan kepada kita, tetapi ada juga perkara yang membawa kesedihan telah belaku seperti pembunuhan beramai-ramai.

Mengingatkan saya kepada satu firman di Kitab Wahyu 13:10 "Orang yang harus ditawan pasti akan ditawan kelak. Orang yang harus dibunuh dengan pedang pasti akan dibunuh dengan pedang juga. Yang dituntut di sini ialah ketabahan dan iman orang salih". (AVB)

Renungan ini mengingatkan saya bahawa didalam Tuhan, Dia menginginkan dari kita "ketabahan dan iman orang salih" dalam segala sesuatu yang telah belaku dan yang akan belaku mengikut kehendak dan rancangan-Nya.

Begitu juga dalam Wahyu 14:12 sekali lagi ditekankan perkara tersebut "Yang dituntut di sini ialah ketabahan orang salih yang mengikut perintah Allah serta beriman kepada Yesus".

Adalah tidak sia-sia, melainkan seperti dalam Wahyu 14:13 tertulis Aku mendengar suara dari syurga berkata, "Tuliskanlah: Dari saat ini diberkatilah semua orang yang mati dalam Tuhan." "Ya," kata Roh, "supaya mereka dapat berehat daripada penat lelah, dan hasil usaha mereka menyertai mereka."

Tuhan tidak hanya menuntut sahaja daripada manusia tetapi Dia juga telah menunjukkan teladan kepada kita seperti yang tercatat dalam Kitab Filipi 2:8 mengenai Tuhan Yesus Kristus. Dalam keadaan sebagai manusia, Dia telah merendahkan diri-Nya dan taat hingga kepada kematian, bahkan kematian di salib!

Saya ingin mengakhiri penulisan pendek saya dengan mengongsikan satu lagi petikan firman Tuhan bagi kita semua untuk sebagai renungan, dalam Kitab Ibrani 5:7-9 Ketika Yesus hidup sebagai manusia, Dia telah berdoa dan merayu dengan ratap tangis kepada Allah yang berkuasa menyelamatkan-Nya daripada kematian, dan Allah telah mendengar-Nya kerana kesalihan-Nya. Sungguhpun Dia Anak, namun Dia belajar taat melalui segala penderitaan-Nya. Setelah Dia dijadikan sempurna, Dia menjadi sumber penyelamatan yang kekal bagi semua yang mematuhi-Nya.



REV. RICHARD LEOW

Associate Pastor
Canning Garden Methodist Church

The ten commandments

Dr Philip Ho

Exodus 20:1-21

I have a confession to make. I like to read the New Testament but find myself dragging my feet when it comes to the Old Testament. The NT God seems so loving, so forgiving but the OT God seems so strict, so severe in His punishments. But yet we all need to remember that God is the same, He is the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, (Revelation 22:12-13) and His character does not change. So it is our responsibility as NT Christians to read the bible in totality, and to understand the OT in light of the NT era that we live in.

Although certain ceremonial laws are no longer applicable to us, God's commandments and Moral laws still apply to us. True, we are no longer under the fear of the penalty of sin, because Jesus has paid the price for us, but that is not a ticket for us to sin even more. (Romans 6:1-14).

But at first glance we may think it is easy to keep the 10 commandments-how many of us are murderers or adulterers? Pause for a moment. Are we really innocent? Let's ponder on some of the ways we may have fallen short of God's standards, for in reality we are guilty. (Romans 3:23)

1. You shall have no other gods before me.

What is a god? Throughout history man worshipped spirits or forces in the hope of getting blessings, protection. In the modern world, those who have put God aside, put their trust in their wealth, careers, possessions, fame and reputation. These things have taken over God's place by being our sense of security, our sense of fulfillment, our source of blessings. We no longer thank and praise God for what we have but instead take pleasure in being a "self made man", thinking that we are "masters of our own destiny". Yes, many of us fall even at this first commandment of God

2. You shall not make for yourself an idol.

An idol is a picture or object that is worshipped as God. Do Christians have idols? Some of us keep a cross or a bible wherever we go. This is not wrong and is a good practice if we use the cross to remind us of our relationship with Jesus, and the bible to read God's word. But we should not fall into the trap of treating the cross or the bible, or any statue, as an object of worship. God is Spirit and true worshippers must worship Him in spirit and in truth.

3. You shall not misuse the name of the Lord, your God.

This should be easy, we may think. I do not curse or swear. But stop for a while. Do we say “praise the Lord” or “Hallelujah” every few sentences? It is a good thing to give praise and glory to God but saying PTL without meaning it and allowing it to be a phrase we use at the end of a sentence like how we say “lah” in Malaysia does not give God His rightful place in our lives.

4. Remember the Sabbath by keeping it holy.

We must remind ourselves that we need to set aside a day to rest from our labours and to use it grow closer to God. This day is a time we should reflect on the other 6 days so that our whole week is centred on God. It is definitely not enough to be a Sunday Christian and to put on our “secular self” the rest of the week.

5. Honour your father and mother.

The bible expects parents to teach their children God’s ways and children to obey their parents in the Lord. (Ephesians 6:1-4). We also honour our parents by our behavior and the way we conduct ourselves at our workplace, and in the community.

6. You shall not murder.

We must value the sanctity of life, and in this modern times, by rejecting practices such as abortion and euthanasia. This is difficult as modern society may view us as too conservative but Christians must appreciate that God alone is the giver and sustainer of life.

7. You shall not commit adultery.

Jesus says in Matt 5:28 that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery in his heart. In today’s era of multimedia, with movies, advertisements and internet, we must guard our eyes to ensure that we do not fall into temptation.

8. You shall not steal.

Okay, so we are not as big a thief as IMBD scandal perpetrators. But how many of us use company stationery, company telephone, company time to do our personal errands? How many of us quietly put an old scratched parking ticket if we are parking for a short while, thinking that we will most likely get away with it? One way or another sin creeps into our lives quietly, unnoticed.

9. You shall not bear false testimony

Are we guilty of telling “white lies”? Or propagating rumours which we have not confirmed ourselves? In this day of whatsapp, it is so easy to forward juicy stories. We must try to refrain from this practice as it is a form of gossiping which is listed with God haters. (Romans 1:29)

10. You shall not covet.

This is really difficult in our modern world. You open Facebook and you see your friend has a new house, a new car, a new dress, went for an exciting holiday, got a new job, etc..... the list goes on and on. In our Asian society, we are used to striving for recognition, for success, for being over achievers, and when our peers seem to have done better than we have, we can grow bitter, jealous, or even sink into depression. Paul gives us a solution in Philippians 4:12-13. Phil 4:13 is often quoted without looking at the preceding verse. Paul tells us that with God who gives him strength, he is able to be contented in any and every situation-whether living in plenty or in want. This means looking to God as our provider and no longer comparing what we have or do not have, and comparing ourselves with others which inevitably leads to dissatisfaction. If we look hard enough, we will always find someone who is richer, smarter, more gifted, more eloquent, more benevolent than we are. We should learn to rejoice at what God has given us and avoid the sin of covetousness.

Jesus said in Matt 5:17-20 that He did not come to abolish the law but to fulfill them. Our righteousness should even exceed the Pharisees.

Ephesians 2:8-10 explains the balance of grace and works so well. We are saved by grace, not by our works, but yet God has already prepared good works for us to do in our redeemed state and we must be faithful to our covenant with our God and obedient to all His commandments.

Judify in Japan

Judith Yeoh

Dear mission partners,

It's **finally** spring and the new school year has begun (as of writing this newsletter, almost a month ago)! This is when fmZERO picks up its pace again after a long Spring break.



"for behold, the winter is past; the rain is over and gone. The flowers appear on the earth, the time of singing has come, and the voice of the turtle dove is heard in our land."

Song of Solomon 2:11-12 (ESV)

New students flock to the many varieties of clubs and societies, eager to make new friends and start their new life in university. Even for us, we've been attending quite a number of ESS & KGK welcome parties, colloquially called *shinkan* (新歓) over the past two weeks. This time is crucial for us to reconnect with old students and to establish a friendship with the younger, new ones.

First fmZERO Event of the semester (20th April 2019) NEW YOU

Going along with the new term, we had decided to set the theme of a 'new you' for the first event of the year. Even though it's meant to be a welcome party, it was also a farewell to an important core team member, Natch. Natch had been in Sapporo for the past 9 years, and had been with fmZERO for the past 4 with Fanny. To say that he's reluctant to leave is an understatement, but God has called him to return to the UK for the next several years as his children grow up. He will be back in the summer leading a vision team, so it's not entirely a permanent good bye.



With the event being partly a farewell, 59 people (including helpers & Christians students), the largest number we've ever seen, showed up at the Hokkaido Center. It was amazing! While most of the students weren't first years, quite a number of them were first-timers to our event, and had come for the sake of saying good bye to Natch.

We played many ice-breaking games, had dinner in small groups whilst seated on the floor (because there were too many people) and Natch shared the Easter message. It was after the message that tears were shed. Some of us had secretly compiled messages and pictures to be made into an album for him. We even sang a local graduation song; Fanny and I were crying buckets of tears as the students sang loudly to this nostalgic song.

Pray that these students will continue coming to our events. May God continue to instil interest in their hearts.

Flower Viewing (Golden Week)



Flower-viewing or *hanami* took place during Golden Week. Golden Week is a string of national holidays that take place in early May. This year saw the longest Golden Week break in history, it seems! Ten days! With such a long break, we see a huge migration of people across the country as they travel for the holidays. Though, it seems many workers don't really know what to do with all this free time!

Sakura season is pretty late in northern Japan as the winters are longer.

Fanny and I attended a flower viewing-barbecue party at one of the local parks recently. It was a cross-campus ESS event, and a comfortable number of students turned up. Most were new faces to me, but nonetheless with good food and an even better atmosphere, we all warmed up to each other quickly.



Toei Church Updates Baptisms



On Easter Sunday, Ami got baptised!

She is a *shakai-jin*; a member of society. Basically a working adult. It was a great joy for everyone in the Toei church family to witness her baptism into God's family.

Followed by the baptism was a church lunch, lovingly prepared by the members of the church. Everything was delicious!

Team Updates

With Fanny back and Natch having just left Japan yesterday (23rd April), the team now consists of just Fanny and I. Pray for us good communication, patience, and good team-work as we prepare future events, activities, and attend ESS & KGK meetings.

Pray for Fanny; good health and energy. Being Toei's youth pastor, attending church meetings, organizing events *and* participating in student clubs is beginning to take a toll on her, especially since she's just returned from Hong Kong.

Most weeks we don't really get a day off. Or rather, we can't, what with the lack of manpower. Both of us managed to get 4 days of rest during the long Golden Week holiday, so we're grateful for that.

Personal Updates

I have to be honest, the long spring break really made me sluggish and dare I say it, lazy. It took a few days to re-adjust to the fast-paced lifestyle of fmZERO in spring time, but now that I'm back in action, I'm enjoying every second of it. I do feel quite tired these few days though. However, I am excited for the new spring term and being back to work is exciting!

Thanksgiving Items

- Thank God for the amazing turnout at the fmZERO event
- Ami's baptism on Easter Sunday.
- Beautiful weather
- SPRING IS HERE

Prayer Items

- Pray for my language learning; may my everyday encounters with the local people and friends help me to learn the language effectively.
- Pray for me sensitivity when interacting with the local people around me.
- Pray for me strength & energy, and safety & good health daily.
- Pray for more workers in Japan, especially for fmZERO.

Thank you for reading and praying with/for me! See you in the next newsletter!

新年大团拜 ~ 捞生/春联/新年歌儿大家唱/红彤彤/吃年饼

柯雅凤

捞生：姐妹献的爱心：秀群和艳玲各准备了 5 盘捞生，让大家在新年大团拜中捞生，大家是捞在手上、吃在口中、暖在心中。此捞生非彼餐馆捞生，用料全是新鲜健康蔬果呢！可以想象这两位姐妹在家里忙忙碌碌、剥剥切切，丝丝条条，“密密”摸摸，从早忙到晚；而我们捞呀捞呀，五分钟就吃个精光殆尽，一点儿都不剩，可知是多么美味，捞得多么“风生水起”！
 (一笑)



春联：许多寓意美好的春联，让夫妻、合家、姐妹、二、三或四人一组来朗诵，诵出上帝的慈爱。他们朗诵的有：“十架救恩满人间，基督福音传万代”、“圣灵充满家家喜，主爱丰盈户户欢”、“神恩丰满沛岁首，主爱盈溢贯年终”、“四级平安神赐福，一家欢乐主施恩”、“辞旧岁数算神恩，迎新春静思主爱”和“神慈爱普及穹苍，主恩惠充满宇宙”。全都春意盎然，神爱充盈。



新年歌儿大家唱：CH4 与 CH7 唱出《贺新年》和《在主爱中》；CH6 和 CH11 唱出《恭喜恭喜》；CH9 唱出《来来来大家过新年》；国锋、荣强、苡鵠，豫丰姐妹合唱《陪我走过春夏秋冬》、《耶稣在我里面》及《颂主鸿恩》，再加上李泓章弟兄特别献唱《采茶扑蝶》，最后的大合唱《新年使命》，为表演画下句号。

年饼、虾饼、柚子、花生、年柑……：过年少不了的这些，在嘻嘻哈哈，你吃我做的，我吃你买的，这个好吃，那个很酥脆的声中，很快地满罐的年饼、满桌的食物都不见了，进了肚子了。



牧师分享：新年团聚，家人团圆是人生美事。无论家有多远，人在何方，都要见个面吃顿团圆饭，这是华人的佳节传统。盼望弟兄姐妹珍惜家人的聚会，珍惜弟兄姐妹的同心合一，缔造更美好平安喜乐的新一年。

大约 130 多人团拜的新春，感动的不只是欢腾的吃喝玩乐，而是弟兄姐妹之情，齐心合作之乐，夫妻异中求同之和，一家人融于主爱中的欢欣与包容，这不是新年伊始最美好的事吗？



The Sit Down Exercise

Yeoh KK

Thank You, Lord Jesus, for leading me to the CGMC Sit Down Exercise where You have provided us a great team of kind-hearted, dedicated and caring instructors who lead us in this exercise class, and also blessing us with good health. Besides physical exercise, we are also instructed in Your Word, and bringing us closer to You. We know You are a loving God.

Thank You, Lord Jesus, for the continuous blessing upon CGMC and all the instructors for their contributions.

Marilyn Cheam



I started doing this Sit Down Exercise in 2017. I came because I had aches and pains in my shoulders, neck, back and legs. I have numbness and stiffness in my fingers. I could not walk long distances. I became tired easily.

After doing the Sit Down Exercise for a few months, my aches and pains gradually left. My limbs are stronger. Now I can walk long distances without feeling tired. I want to thank God for His blessings and the instructors for their time and effort and love for us.

Shelly Chong

I have participated in this Sit Down Exercise for more than two years and I have found it to be a very complete and suitable exercise, especially for the seniors. It starts off with warming down.

It starts off with warming up and ends with cooling down exercises/stretching. It exercises almost every muscle of the body from head to toe. It encompasses

It encompasses all the components of fitness - stretching, strengthening, endurance, mobility, flexibility.

It is very systematically developed to improve and maintain the fitness of seniors to improve their quality of life.

Since I took up the exercise, my physical well-being and general fitness have improved tremendously and my asthma attacks are happening less often.

Dominic Soong,
(Retired 9 Dan Taekwondo Instructor)

I am a 72-year-old lady, living in a big double storey house. I used to take 3 days to clean it once a week. Now, after 2 months of the Sit Down Exercise, I can clean it in one go, without any aches and pains. An additional bonus is that the Exercise Class is fun and so enjoyable.

I am very impressed by the care, dedication and love of the instructors toward us. They make sure that we do the exercises right. I see a very fine example of the Christian spirit of love in the Sit Down Exercise Class.

Cheah Siew Heng



Irene and I joined the CGMC Sit Down Exercise Class in August 2017. We are ever so grateful to the Lord for being introduced to this group of proactive senior citizens.

We exercise twice a week under the watchful eyes of Mr. Yeoh and his team of trainers. The Exercise Class and fellowship provide us physical and spiritual well-being.

Praise the Lord.

Peter and Irene



I am very fortunate to get the opportunity to join the Sit Down Exercise group in CGMC. I was physically weak and in need of exercise.

At the age of 75, I now feel fitter after each exercise session. I thank my Lord Jesus and my instructors for my good health.

Darshana

Since coming to this Sit Down Exercise regularly for 3 years, I have experienced tremendous improvement in my health, having stronger muscles, better flexibility, improved posture, increased stamina and overall physical strength.

I'm thankful to God that He has given me the physical fitness to execute all the moves in the Sit Down Exercise.

Chan Kok Wan

I used to have these left pelvis bone pains when I walked a bit longer or further. After attending this Sit Down Exercise Class for a few months, my pains have gone completely. Praise the Lord! Thank God for all the instructors.

Soon Cheam Bee



This Sit Down Exercise is truly God-sent. It has brought relief from pain and a happier outlook to those who participate in the Class. I am one of them.

Susan Soong





After a fall, I hurt my back bone. I was advised not to exercise for a few months. After sometime, I met the Sit Down Exercise Instructor who reminded me to continue with the Sit Down Exercise. I have improved since I resuming the exercise.

Nancy Hew nee Fong Ching Ping

Thanks be to God Almighty, for the Sit Down Exercise which has turned my life around both physically and spiritually. Through this Exercise Class, I was led to the Alpha and I am now a child of God.

Jenny Au-Yeong

I joined this Sit Down Exercise class more than a year ago. Since doing this Exercise Class, I can walk faster and have better balance. I am now more flexible and my arms are stronger. I have better grip and can open a new can of jam.

Catherine Sai

I joined the Sit Down Exercise and Aerobic Classes in CGMC over a year ago. I was quite sceptical about both the exercise classes. I have always thought that my daily walks were enough. Now I know better. Now I look forward to these two exercise classes. I won't miss a session unless I am out of town. By God's grace I get to perform all the moves as they are instructed. With perseverance I have become very much fitter physically,
Praise our Lord. Amen

Caroline Teoh



Testimonies ~ 2:7 series

Lim Khoon Leng (CG1)

Dear brothers n sisters in Christ,

Welcome to the 2:7 series, which is based on Colossians 2:7

"rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness"

When we have faith, we will have salvation which will lead us to our walk with God

When I signed up for this course last year, I was not prepared for the amount of work that I had to do. What have I gotten myself into? After some soul searching, I turned to a gospel song "One day at a time" and found solace to give this course a try and to take things easy by just concentrating on one lesson at a time - 33 lessons in all.

As I grew in the course, I found that it actually strengthened my faith and the highlights actually allowed me to speak to God and the memory verses became handy in my life.

In simple words, the scriptural verses put God's word in my memory, prayerful meditation puts God's word in my heart and obedience puts God's word into action.

It is very important to have faith as it is the basic foundation of our belief in Jesus Christ. The purpose of faith is to know the heart of God and trusting Him to guide us.

In conclusion, Proverbs 3 : 5 - 6 says:

"Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding, in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight."

Testimonies ~ My Joy of Being a Pastor

Ps Andrew Tan

(Pastor Andrew Shared this testimony during Pastor's Appreciation Sunday on 1/2 June 2019.)

First of all, I want to say a big thank you to all of you and especially to those of you who put together today's Pastor's Appreciation Sunday.

I have been a pastor for the past 36 years and CGMC has always held a special place in our hearts. You have received and accepted us, encouraged and supported us, you have been receptive of and responsive to our ministry all these years. So thank you CGMC!

People usually say that to be a pastor one has to make sacrifices. From the worldly point of view, that may be true. I remember going to my classmates gathering one day. As I parked my car, I saw that my classmates' cars were bigger and more luxurious than mine. And most of them are probably living in big houses or high-end apartments. And I remember thinking, "Hmm ... did I lose out somewhere by being a pastor? Especially when my classmates were not as clever as I was in school!" But thankfully, such unspiritual thoughts were only momentary, when I was feeling not so "holy"!!

Overall, it has been a joy for me and my family to be in the pastoral ministry. Why so? First, after 36 years in ministry, I still have this growing conviction of the importance to preach and teach God's Word! Our technical world may advance, our culture may have become more sophisticated. But people still need to hear the truth, the truth of the gospel. And as a minister, I have the opportunity to proclaim this truth that offers faith, hope, and love, truths that brings assurance, meaning, and strength. So I feel privileged to be involved in God's work that has eternal value.

Secondly, it is what the years of ministry has done for me. My faith in God has increased as I read, prepare and reflect on the Word of God. I see things more clearly and can accept things more readily from God's point of view. That means accepting thankless jobs, unnecessary interruptions, and unscheduled detours better. That means opening my heart to accept difficult people better, to be more patient and more embracing of people who are different. That means my valuation of myself is more God centred. How people see me rattles me less. I am therefore more at peace.



Antonio Wee Photography

Thirdly, it is fulfilling to see God at work in people's lives and their faith strengthened in response to our prayers, counsel and visit. There is no greater joy than to hear how someone's faith has grown, how another's service for God is impacting lives, and how lives are changed by God's grace. We are thankful also for deep friendships formed as we share in not only the joys but especially in the sorrows and struggles of church members.

Fourthly, it has also been exciting to be involved in starting certain ministries in various churches and seeing the ministries continue to grow even after we have moved on to other churches. It is great to see growth in membership, in ministries, and also in new buildings in the churches we have pastored! But we have also learnt not to measure success by numbers or buildings or even ministries because apart from the spiritual growth of church members, these things in themselves would be meaningless.

Finally, in all of our 36 years as a pastor's family, we have never been in want. God has more than provided for us all these years. God has also given us a close-knitted family. And we are especially grateful for our initial 12 ½ years in this church where David and Caryn grew up as kids. CGMC has helped shaped their understanding of what church is all about and the most natural thing for them is to be involved in the life of the church and its ministries wherever they are. And so today, as I look back as a pastor, I understand better the verse that says, "But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well."

Yes, I am very thankful that God has called me to His ministry.



我走进了福音书中

~ Sandy 紫珊

2019年3月22日，是我们弟兄姐妹14人的圣地之旅启程的一天。

当旅游巴士缓缓的驶进圣城的那一刻，每每看到路牌写着‘耶路撒冷’还有几公里到达的指标，我心中澎湃不已，我们将要进入耶稣度过他一生的地方了，不是在梦中吧？一进入耶路撒冷，我们就齐声欢唱‘平安！耶路撒冷！’‘Shalom! Jerusalem!’, 我们犹如回到了家的儿女们。。。

† † † † †

来到加拿（Cana），进入一堆大大小小的废墟内，但不完整的婚宴所在地还保持良好，忽然间，人声鼎沸，我是被邀请而来参加婚筵的客人之一，在欢乐的音乐声中，客人都把酒喝光了，只见耶稣吩咐仆人将大石缸都倒满水，仆人照着做，把舀出来由水变成的酒送到每个人的面前，我站在那儿目瞪口呆，这是主耶稣所行的第一件神迹。。。

（约翰福音2:1-11）



† † † † †

我站在平静的加利利海上一艘小船的船首，望着美不胜收，风平浪静的海面，想起了有一回海上刮起了狂风，船被波涛掩盖，而耶稣却睡着了，门徒一个两个都心惊胆颤的大叫救命，耶稣醒来就平静了风浪，还对门徒们说‘小信的人啊！为什么害怕呢？’

（马太福音8: 23-27）

也是在这海上，耶稣在水面上行走，小信的彼得因为害怕而沉了下去，耶稣把手伸向他，问他为什么疑惑？（马太福音14: 22-31）



我要安静知祢是神

心中感触而开始祷告，告诉神我不要成为一个小信的人，主耶稣能平静加利利海的风浪，祂也必能平静我人生中的大小风浪，只要尽心尽力的爱祂及依靠祂，这时刻，我小声的哼起一首歌‘。当大海翻腾，波涛汹涌，我与祢展翅暴风上空，父祢仍做王在洪水中，我要安静知祢是神。。。’

† † † † †



我站在干涸的毕士大(Bethesda) 池旁，其实现在是一个深坑了。

一年一度的天使搅动池水的时候到了，第一个下去的必得医治，有一个可怜的瘸子，38年了，每年都比别人慢一步下池，今天刚好耶稣到来，对他说‘起来，拿着你的褥子走吧！’，那瘸子就立刻站起来走了，痊愈了！
(约翰福音 5: 1-14)

在众多身体软弱的人当中，耶稣拣选了瘸子而医治了他。至于我的救恩，也是耶稣的恩典拣选了我成为祂的儿女，感谢赞美主！

† † † † †



来到了客西马尼，园内的几百甚至几千年，老树根纠结盘缠的橄榄树，哪一棵是耶稣坐在下面，忧愁难过的向天父祷告说：‘我的父啊！可能的话，求祢使这杯离开我，但不要照我的意思，只要照祢的旨意’。。。。

(马太福音26 : 36-46)



† † † † †



这并不是一个普通的牢房，而是一个狭小，伸手不见五指的洞穴，犯人是从上面的小洞吊下颇深的洞穴内的，我们没有任何罪状的主耶稣是被关在此洞穴内的。

我们顺着窄窄斜斜的石级往下走，此石级是专为参观者而设的，站在洞穴内往上望，只看到圆圆有点亮光的小洞，全身鞭伤的主耶稣被丢弃在此，为了阿爸天父的旨意而为我们受的苦，此刻此景，我们的眼眶内都充满了泪水。以后被逼迫的门徒及基督徒也是被关在此不人道的洞穴内，我们看到洞穴内的石壁上都被他们刻上一个个的十字架的痕迹。

关耶稣的洞穴

† † † † †

进入一个青翠幽静的花园内，这是花园墓地（Garden Tomb），我们低着头，弯着身子，走进埋葬耶稣的小小洞穴内，这当然是一个空坟啦！因为耶稣已经复活了！哈利路亚！耶稣还活着！Hallelujah! Jesus is alive!

† † † † †



有趣的历史记载



未抄写经文前，洁净身体的仪式浴地点

我们走在荒山野岭，找到死海卷轴的地带，想象着一千多年前，一群犹太学者找到这个隐蔽的库姆兰（Qumran），过着隐者但有规律的生活，每天早起早睡，为的是轮流将希伯来圣经或旧约的段落写在羊皮纸和莎草纸上，此卷轴是装在高大有盖的粘土罐内，所以保存得完好无损。

我们在天然的露天博物馆走了一趟。。。大开眼界的看到了这一群犹太隐者的生活起居等等。。。

很久很久以前，大概六，七十年前，有一个牧羊童，他的一只羊儿不见了，他踏遍高山野岭，百寻不着，最后，在一片野草丛生，被掩盖着的洞口，他用牧羊杖伸进洞穴去拨，又叫羊儿的名字，都没反应，于是他拾起一块小石头往洞内丢，‘哐啷’一声，好像有东西被打碎的声音。

第二天，他钻进洞内，而发现了埋藏在此差不多有两千年，珍贵无比的‘死海卷轴’，他贪婪的将卷轴一片片的撕下来卖掉，而成为亿万富翁，后来有一位博学广闻的人士跟他全部买了下来，现置于博物馆内。



用于烧制陶器的窑



哭墙（Wailing Wall）的隙缝内都被写着祷告需求的小纸条塞得满满的。
我伏在墙上将心中的负担向神倾诉。

此哭墙是分开男女两边的，虔诚的犹太人穿着严谨，头上戴着黑帽子，身穿黑长外衣，喜欢看他们两边额头旁的两绺长头发。他们手拿圣经，头颅随着祷告而向前有规律的直点，他们都是上帝所拣选的子民。

使我惊叹的是‘哭墙’的里面竟是一座清真寺‘岩石圆顶’（Dome of the Rock），
此地点是：

- 4000年前，上帝指示亚伯拉罕来到这座山上牺牲他的儿子以撒
- 公元前960年，所罗门王在此建造了第一座圣殿（里面是至圣所以及装着十诫的约柜）
- 公元前586年，尼布甲尼撒二世（Nebuchadnezzar II）摧毁了第一座圣殿，部分人口被迫流亡巴比伦
- 公元前516年，他们回来在同样的地点建造了第二座圣殿
- 公元前10年，希律大帝（Herod The Great）扩建并美化了圣殿，（哭墙也就是当时外墙的一部份）
- 罗马帝国在公元70年再一次的摧毁了它，使犹太人散居各地
- 伊斯兰教的跟随者于691年在此建造了‘岩石圆顶’清真寺
- 十字军东征期间，岩石圆顶成为一个教堂近一个世纪之久（1099 – 1187）
- 1187年，萨拉丁收回了遗址，岩石圆顶再次成为清真寺直到今天



听完这些惊人的转变，我无语问苍天！

† † † † †



犹太人的坟场地区，是耶路撒冷最贵的地皮，上帝拣选的子民都要埋葬于此，他们相信世界末日的时候，弥赛亚是在此地点下降，将他们带回天国。他们的坟墓都像一个个的石棺，密密麻麻的挤在一起。

† † † † †

我们的圣地之旅，不止让我们如走进了福音书之中，还让我们对圣经有更深的认识及了解！感谢赞美主赐给我们这一趟朝圣之旅！

Betong Mission Trip

Esther Tan Kim Leng



感谢主的带领和保守，可以让我们教会小组去到泰国勿洞，探访与体验当地的生活环境。也赞美神，让我们有一位尽心尽力，完全奉献自己，把神的教导带给这班当地居民与小朋友。就是Aunty Rebecca：她不但教导他们学习英语，华语，更把神的话语和神的爱完完全全教导与带领他们。

来到勿洞（Betong）的第一天，我们来到Betong Learning Center（勿洞学习中心）。再次感谢神，该学习中心共有三层楼高的店铺，装修和设备非常齐全。目前是由Aunty Rebecca 和 Ms Victoria 为教导工作，而经费来源都由本教会资助。所以在此恳求会友们要继续为她们祷告，会有更多学生来学习，也为她们的经费继续支持。



在这次的宣教任务旅程中，Aunty Rebecca 还带我们参观当地教会(Betong Chruch)；我们认识了当地牧师和当地会友们，我们互相交换食谱，好让当地居民多学习一种文化，以加强他们的谋生能力。在小组里的一位弟兄，是ST John 救伤队员。他准备了所有工具，以一场有趣的模拟活动来教导当地居民与小朋友自救的方法：例如，CPR，溺水，中暑，晕倒，等等...如何当场反应与应付。

至于在山区的小朋友，我们也为此准备了一套七彩缤纷的复活蛋，为他们教导《复活节》的由来。让小朋友们知道，主耶稣是如何为我们受罪死在十架上，同时也让他们知道主耶稣在死后三天复活，战胜死亡，为我们的生命永生做见证。感谢主，可以让我们在语言不同的小朋友身上，通过肢体语言让他们明白与作出反应。上帝的爱是：用心体会就能领会得到并得平安。





我们希望通过这次的分享：可以让会友们知道，在勿洞的小朋友们是希望得到我们更多的帮助与教导，我们在此鼓励全会友继续为他们祷告，也给予帮助，有钱出钱，有力出力，身体力行 为他们加油打气。

马太福音5:7 怜悯的人有福了，
因为他们必蒙怜悯。



Book reviews~ LISTEN TO THEIR HEART CRIES AND PRAY SPECIFICALLY ~ Lee Bee Teik

Paddy Teh

LISTEN TO THEIR HEART CRIES AND PRAY SPECIFICALLY

by Lee Bee Teik

(Malaysia: Printmate Sdn Bhd, 1996)

(ISBN: 983-9398-01-6)

It is a thin book of 162 pages. It is a “small” book that we can take on our travels to be a “time-filler” and “Spirit-mover” while waiting at bus stations or airports.

The book consists predominantly of short prayers to our Heavenly Father on a plethora of issues, neatly compartmentalised under four sections, namely

Section 1: Children

Section 2: God's People

Section 3: General

Section 4: Full-time Christian workers

These issues have been faced by the author in her medical student days in Melbourne and then as wife of a Minister of our Lord in Malaysia. The issues raised are representative of our broken world (whether in the East or West) – a world that needs our Lord Jesus Christ.

Some of these concerns are

- the emotional vacuum faced by teenagers
- homosexuality
- commitment in an imperfect world
- domestic violence
- mental health problems
- loneliness (faced by pastors and missionary kids)

At the end of every prayer, the author suggests Bible verses to nudge readers to reflect on these issues prayerfully and from God's perspective.

I like the author's use of the word “listen” in the title because very often we are more interested in “speaking” than in “listening”. Listening is an unselfish act where we curb our enthusiasm, impatience to tell “our” stories and learn to be caring, considerate and patient to listen to “someone else's stories”. Only then do we know how to intercede for them.

As we listen to their heart cries from all walks of life,

- Are our sensitivities awakened?
- Is our compassion awakened?
- Do our hearts go out to them?
- Is our prayer life activated, expanded and God-agenda-ed?
- Are our limbs physically pushed to act on a specific issue?

It may appear to be a simple book but the content is “tough”. It challenges the readers (Christian) and church to relate Christianity to the world at large. It niggles us to think of ways to make Christianity relevant and “real” in a less-Christ-centred world.

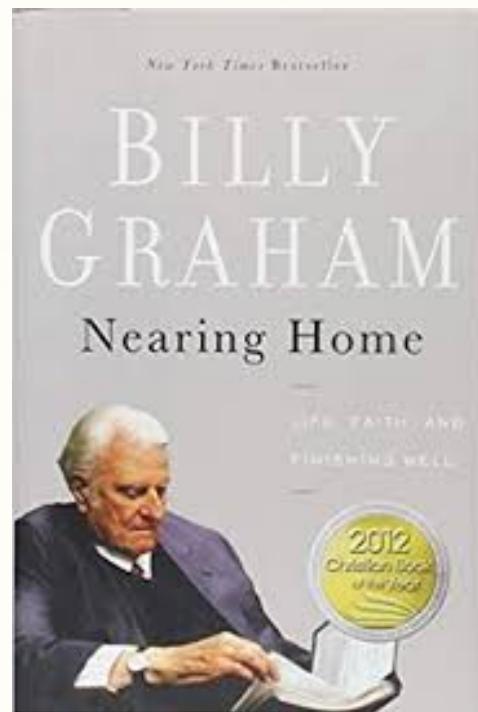
We are, after reading the book, irked to be responsible, responsive Christians to a hurting world.

Book reviews~ NEARING HOME

Life, Faith and Finishing Well ~ Billy Graham

Paddy Teh

NEARING HOME.
Life, Faith and Finishing Well
by Billy Graham
(USA: Thomas Nelson, 2011)
(ISBN: 978-0-8499-4832-9)



I believe that reading Nearing Home is “more” meaningful and relevant to a grey-haired, retired person like me because it suggests ways to grow old well. For the younger readers, this book is an eye-opener as to the way they can “understand” and “relate” with the older people in our family, church and community.

This book is written by a highly respected, older person who shares intimately his thoughts on ageing and more importantly, on ageing gracefully.

The theme of this book, “How to Grow Old” birthed in 2006 when the renowned evangelist-cum-author was asked in an interview by Newsweek to make a statement on death. His well-considered reply was -

“I had been taught all my life how to die, but no one had ever taught me how to grow old”
 (page 93)

The author uses the journey motif in a simple and straightforward writing style. The book exudes the warmth and gentleness of an elderly, spiritual sage sharing his wealth of experiences and then, suggesting practical down-to-earth, well-tested ways of growing old. The author strengthens his theme with personal anecdotes and references to “old” Bible characters who never retire from serving God. His ability to link these to his central message of ageing well in uncomplicated language is commendable. What stand out for me are his insightful understanding of the Bible and his lucid explanatory style.

Unlike the fast-paced, youth-exalting age that we are in, the author reinforces the “worth” of the older generation with positive adjectives such as “genuine”, “valuable” and “beautiful”. In doing so, he sways and reshapes our perception of older people from an image of helplessness, slowness, senility, uselessness to one of capability, optimism, value and worth.

Though old and possibly constrained in a life of debility, we can still

- learn to be content (for example – be thankful we can talk and smile)
- strengthen, encourage and uplift people in ministry
- be examples in our speech and behaviour to the generations that follow (someone said that “wise counsel to the younger generation is the duty of the aged”)
- pray for others despite our declining health and strength
- dwell daily in God's Presence
- work at passing a legacy of character and faith (one of Billy Graham's famous quotes)

For me, reading this book is a timely, urgent (yes!) and worthy reminder before signs of slowing down become obvious – before a flood of self-pity, fears sweeps over me – before my vision fails – before arthritic joints immobilise me – before my hearing is lost - to thank God for waking up every morning and blessing me with another day to taste His goodness and glory.

I pray that as I tread my closing years, I will not tire of seeking God's heart more and I will not give up “in my spirit” to be used by Him.

Yes, the title Nearing Home suggests that our journey on earth is coming to an end. We are reaching our heavenly destination so let us, in our geriatric years, spur each other to live each day fully for our Lord.

Paddy Teh

My Holy Week Journal



Mark Chen

Monday April 15, 2019

A new beginning. Definitely a first for me. In His sanctuary, in the midst of His people. The first Morning Reflection on the Holy Week. And O what a glorious morning it turned out to be. Even as we're guided to meditate on God's word. To examine what stand between us and God. How are my passion and motive. About me. I hear Louder this morning, come, centre your thoughts about ME. GOD centric. This whole week, Holy Week, I am focusing my thoughts on those final steps Jesus walked on this earth. And the meaning of it all.



Tuesday April 16, 2019

Second morning in the Holy Week. Journey towards growth. Scripture for meditation: Joel 2:12~13 and Luke 15:17,~24,32. How deep our Father's love for us. Unfathomable. He said, even now, return to me with all your heart... Even as I declared I would spend the remaining days of my life serving God. It is not I who want but the truth is, it is He who calls. Nothing, absolutely nothing is by me, from me but only by HIM, my God, my master. And as we return in response to His call, even from afar, still a long way off, He prepares the best for us. Fine robe, equipping . Ring, recognition. Sandals, able body. Feast, lack of none.



Softly and tenderly Jesus is calling,. Calling for you and me. O, for the wonderful love He has promised. Come home, come home...

Wednesday April 17, 2019

My journal on Holy Week continues....

My Lord, my Guide

During Holy Week, I ask You to lead me

I will listen closely deep within myself

And ask You for strength to change and grow

With that prayer, this morning in His sanctuary, together with His people, we began the third day of Holy Week Meditations. And how marvellous these meditations have been. God patiently, ever so patiently, remains in our midst. He stirred up the excitement of me meeting Him. Heightened my expectation of receiving His words, His instructions each of these mornings.

Continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, He said. The salvation that has been given by His grace is not allowed to be taken for granted. It is to be held on with reverence. Like a marital institution,. It is divine. It is holy. It is to be consecrated. Do everything without complaining or arguing. That divine entity is not to be filled with complaints and arguments but grace and peace and harmony.

The precious pearl that that boy picked up from the beach, that brought with it danger and despair. Am I not like him, holding on to my precious self justifications? I asked my good Lord to reassure me, to give me peace. He said, Mark, let your precious pearl go. Throw it back into the ocean where it came from. Give it up. And My peace, which transcends all understanding, will guard your heart and your mind in My Son.

Yes Lord I want to shine like stars in the universe, blameless and pure in order that I may boast of the day of Christ that I did not run or labour for nothing. Amen!

Thursday April 18, 2019

The fourth day of Holy Week Meditation: Journey Towards Growth.

What wondrous love is this? O my soul, o my soul. What wondrous love is this? As we pondered on God's love, meditated on His word in 1 John 4:10, Philippians 3:7-9, the Holy Spirit also pointed me to look up on Matthew 26:39, 42. The immensity of God's love, God sent Jesus, His Son, as an atoning sacrifice for our sins, for humanity, hit home, hard. This truth, this reality, is not just a theological knowledge but a physical fact, that excruciating pain suffering Jesus had to go through, in human flesh, to be victorious over death, to finish the mission His Father, our Father sent Him to accomplish.

And even before the Cross, in those few days in the first Holy Week, every step that He took, He knew of the nearing of the great pain He was to be inflicted upon, emotional as in that "they will mock him, insult him, spit on him" and physical as in "they will flog him and kill him".

It was not easy for Christ to die for us.

Such love which beckons us from the cross demands a response from us.

Love so amazing so divine

Demands my soul, my life, my all.

Friday April 19, 2019

Fifth day of Holy Week Meditation in CGMC. Good Friday. Topic of today's Journey Towards Growth was God's vigilant Love.

This morning the Lord, my Abba Father, reassured me: Even to your old age and grey hairs, I am he, I am he who will sustain you. I have made you and I will carry you. I will sustain you and I will rescue you. (Isaiah 46:4)

Reflection on "Footprints in the Sand". Flashes of different stages of my journey in life went by in my mind in rapid blinks. A toddler playing by the Kinta Riverbank. Menglembu primary school. Secondly school. A grand time of frolicking in the icy cold water of mining pools. Penang. Curry rice in hostel. Homesick. Singapore. Leafy, sprawling campuses. Sheffield. Shoulder height snow country trekking. Huge, red rolling sunset over the Dale. Rustling autumn leaves..... On and on, flashcards like. And abruptly, the scenes turned to that of a huge tree.

A child plays under the tree. On the tree. Under the tree. In the tree. All around the tree. And the tree, a grand old tree with its solid trunk, sturdy branches, leafy canopy and full of succulent fruits was happy to let the child climb all over him. They spent many a day enjoying each other's company.

As the child grew a little older, he spent less time with this grand old tree. He asked the child, one day when he dropped by, sulky, why. He replied : "I had to study very hard you know, so that I could have a good education, got a good job, and help bring money to my parents. And now, I think my parents don't have enough money to let me go to school any more." Grand old tree said to the child: "Don't worry son. I'll shake down the fruits on me. You pick them up and sell them in the market. That way, you have the money to go school."

And so, season upon season, year after year, the child, now teen, now little young man, would come, pick the fruits, hurriedly he would leave to sell them in the market place. The tree said: "Won't you stay a little while and play with me?" The little fella replied : "I have no time, old man. Study. Homework. And now have to sell fruits...." After some years, there was no more fruits left on the tree.

...

Then one day the young man stopped appearing at the grand old tree. And just as suddenly, one day the young man, now all grown, sat under the tree, pondering. "Son, why so grumpy. Won't you play with me awhile?" "How can you ask me that, old man. I am a grown man now. I cannot play with you anymore. Furthermore, I am getting married soon. And I just don't know where to find enough money to build my home!" "Don't worry, son. You can chop down my branches and use them to build your home." And the man did just that and left happily. The tree, now bared, watched him disappear once again.

Several years have gone by when a middle aged man came to the bald old tree. He said to the tree: "My business is in trouble. My home is in shambles. I have come here today to hang myself on your branch. But your branches are all gone. You are no good to me." "Chop down my big trunk. Sell it to the sawmill. It'll bring you the money to turn around your business." He did. He prospered. And he disappeared from the grand old tree yet again.

Many years later, he did come back. He sat on the stump, that's all that remained of the once grand old tree. He said : "I am so tired. I just want to stop by and rest." "You know, son, I am here. Always here." The once grand old tree said.

It dawned on me, that I am now at my parents' age. The time when they babysat their grandchildren. They have passed on now. With their Lord, Christ Jesus. One day I'll join them.

My God, my Father, He has always been with me. It has been me who deserted Him, doubted Him and grieved Him. But how wonderful it is to be reassured this morning, that even now, aged and grey haired, He will still carry on carrying me.

Things in the past
Things yet unseen
Wishes and dreams that are yet to come true
All of my hopes
And all of my plans
My heart and my hands are lifted to You
Lord, I offer my life to You
Everything I've been through
Use it for Your glory
Lord I offer my days to You
Lifting my praise to You
As a pleasing sacrifice

Saturday April 20, 2019

Sixth day of the Holy Week. The church had set this day aside as an All day prayer. We were encouraged to come in at anytime and spend at least an hour in silence seeking the Lord in reflection and prayer.

It felt like the calm before a storm, today. The fury of a storm that would begin gaining force with the resurrection of Christ tomorrow. And o what a glorious storm it would become! The landscapes of religion, social, culture, economy, politics and indeed, humanity would change, forever.

Last year we had prayed, beseeched God to heal our land. This morning I was reminded of this prayer : Psalm 30:2 ~ O Lord my God, I called to you for help and you healed me. Hallelujah. Also, a silent prayer I learned from the psalmist in Psalm 31:18.
Yet not as I will, Lord, but as you will.

Sunday April 21, 2019

Easter Sunday. Sunrise Service.

The tomb is empty. He has risen!

O What a glorious morning. Jesus is alive! Death has lost its victory. And the grave has been denied. Jesus lives forever. He's alive! He's alive!

Pastor Andrew expounded on John 20:1~18. Two Love Stories.

Mary Magdalene, the woman possessed with seven demons, compelled to follow Jesus throughout His ministry after Jesus saved her. She loved her Lord. Her faith in Christ caused her to stay back at the empty tomb when everyone else left. And when the risen Christ appeared to her and called her by her name, she recognised the Master's voice and believed. Her love for Jesus, faith in her Master and hope in seeing Jesus again made her the first one to have a face to face encounter with the risen Christ.

John, the one Jesus loved, the one Jesus nicknamed, together with His brother James, Boanerges, sons of thunder, perhaps because of some character traits such as fiery temper and overzealousness (Like 9:54~55). When John saw that cloth was folded up, separated from the linen that wrapped Jesus' body, he believed. When Jesus appeared to the disciples by the sea of Tiberias, John was the one who recognised the risen Christ. It is the Lord!

The tomb is empty, Christ has risen. As we journey in faith, may our life be full, our love be abundant, and our hope be eternal. Live this day and always for Christ Jesus because the Risen Christ lives in us Hallelujah! Christ is risen! Amen.

Note: Much of the materials in this article have been taken from the daily devotion bulletins prepared by Pastor Andrew Tan

ALPHA course ~ is it worth conducting it?

Chong Seong Foe



I decided to write this article in response to the prompting of the Holy Spirit.

I have been engaged in the Alpha ministry since 2012. Over the years, I have been asked by some concerned members repeatedly whether Alpha is worth running. I believe the question has been raised so often simply because much manpower and resources are needed, and the results might not be seen with our bare eyes significantly.

Alpha has a different approach in presenting the gospel. It is conducted over 12 Sundays via 15 episodes, including the Weekend Away. Participants are able to explore some of the big questions in life with others in a friendly and non-threatening manner. The talks were carefully formulated by Alpha International to gradually lead participants to learn the Christian faith and to have their big questions answered.



Alpha is a platform for Christians to invite non-Christian friends and relatives to discover the Christian faith in a fun atmosphere. In Alpha, you can just invite others whom you value to come and leave the rest to the Alpha team members to coordinate.

Alpha promotes teamwork. The team members arrive an hour early on each Alpha Sunday and get down to work immediately. Each member knows his/her role well. The prayer group will gather to pray, the welcome and registration team will set up the welcome counter, the logistics team will have the meeting place arranged including the AV system fixed and the F&B team will prepare the food station where food is prepared for the guests. All team members function as a unit for the smooth running of the Alpha sessions. This fulfills the teaching of the Bible in 1 Cor 12:12, "The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; & though all its parts are many, they form one body." Again, in Eph 4:16 it says, "From Him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself with love, as each part does its work." The unity of the Spirit is practised in Alpha.

In the course of Alpha, potential leaders with different gifts and talents are discovered. This "new blood" will then be given a bigger role to play in Alpha subsequently. Hence, leaders are trained to serve our living God.

Alpha also provides us a venue to listen to the views of the pre-believers, what they are facing in life and why they are not accepting the gospel. In James 1:19 it says, "Know this, my beloved brothers, let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger." Oftentimes we are too quick to speak and too slow to listen. Alpha offers us the opportunity to listen patiently to the cry of those in need. This will enable us to be more understanding to the non-believer community and position ourselves better in reaching out to others in the coming days.

The most encouraging part of Alpha is when we get to witness pre-believers receiving Jesus. When the Holy Spirit works in the hearts of His people, they just repent of their sins and surrender their lives. What a sight to behold when you see people turning to God one at a time!

Finally, in 1 Cor 3:6-9 it says, "I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God made it to grow. So either he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow. The man who plants and the man who waters have one purpose and each will be rewarded according to his own labour. For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, God's building".

ALPHA testimony ~ a touch from God

Cheah Siew Heng (cg42)



I have been a Buddhist for all of my life. After my mother's passing, I had an urge to go to church. I went, attended the services and took part in the Alpha course.

During the weekend away, I experienced a deep, overwhelming longing and joy in my heart. I could not handle it in my heart. The pastor prayed over me and it subsided to a manageable level.

This feeling is always with me. I have welcomed Jesus into my heart and life to take charge of it. Now I feel calm and secure in the knowledge that I am guided in whatever I do.



Baptism & Membership April 2019



English Congregation

❖ Confirmation ❖ Preparatory Membership



Wong Xin Hua, Renee



Cayden Ching Kye Herng

❖ Profession of Faith



Poh Soon Wey, Alfred



Tan Bee Wah, Karen



Loo Liong Vei



Ching Hean Mun

❖ Transfer into Church Membership



Tan Jin Ming



Neoh Leng Hup, Luke

❖ Restoration

Pauline Dushyanthi A/P
Paul Nesaraja

Chinese Congregation

❖ Confirmation



Ong Poh Leh, May

❖ Profession of Faith



Lim Chai Shin, Shanice

❖ Restoration



Chin Yen

❖ Transfer into Church Membership



Chow Kam Swee



Tan Soo Wat



Yong Chee Kong



Won Wai Yee

Bahasa Congregation

Confirmation



Eveelyn A/P
Rahiem



Joyceline Ng
Hai Xuan



Christinah
John



Ooi Wei Xuan



Richard Chen
Wei Ye



Daniel Lew
Zi Hao

Transfer into Church Membership



Chen Tuck Chay









May 2019

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

To **DISCIPLE** every member into Christian maturity and to be effective in the service of God.

To **EVANGELIZE** the city of Ipoh and to set up congregations in strategic areas.

To **TOUCH** a needy community with God's transforming love and justice.

To **SEED** Christian workers into the harvest fields and to be involved in missions.