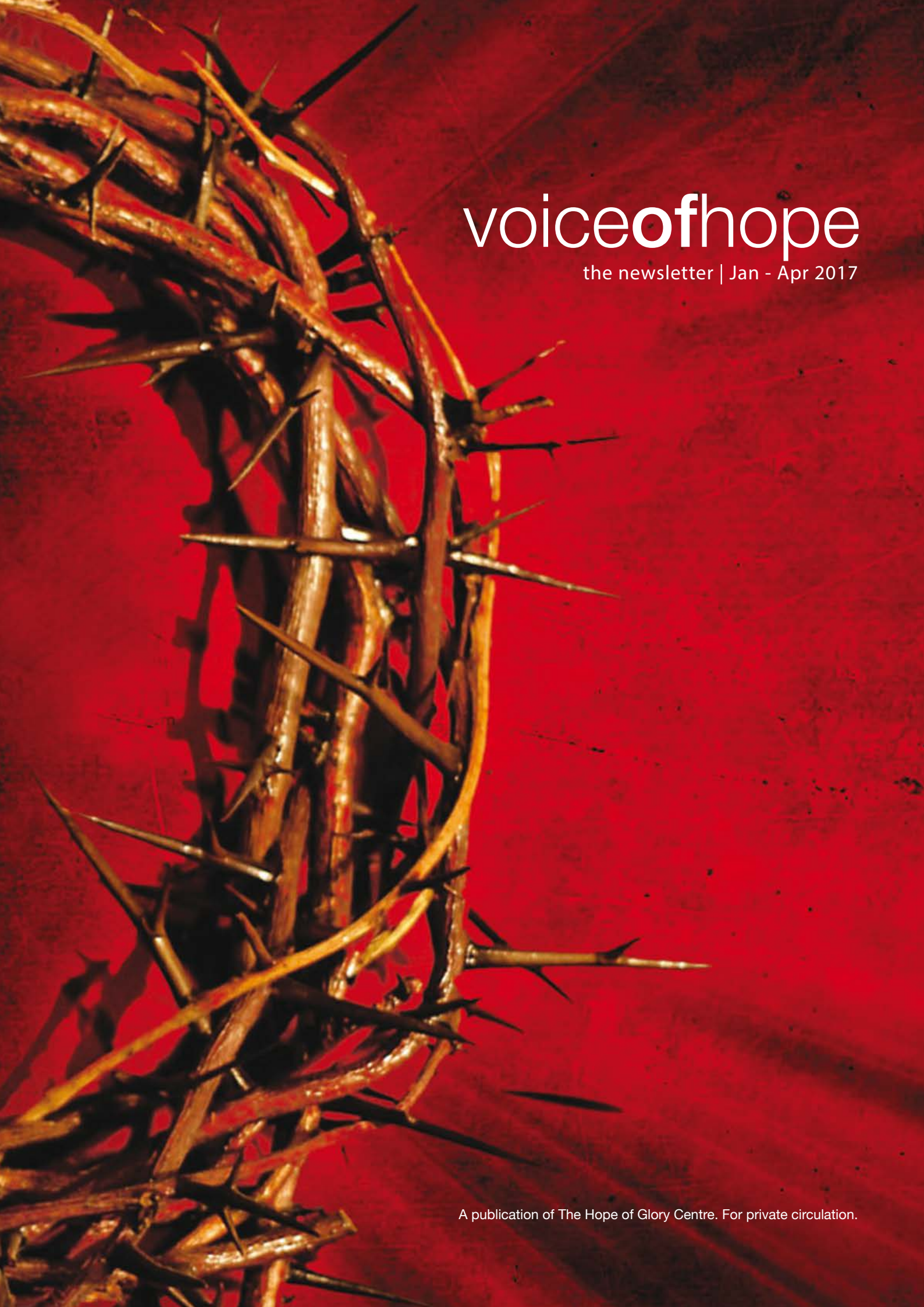
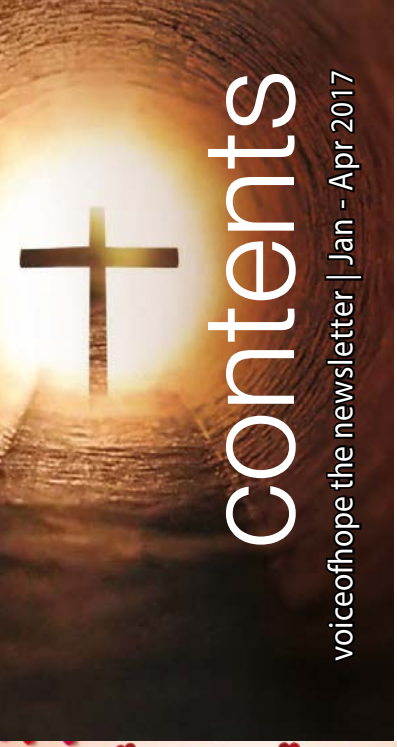


voiceofhope

the newsletter | Jan - Apr 2017

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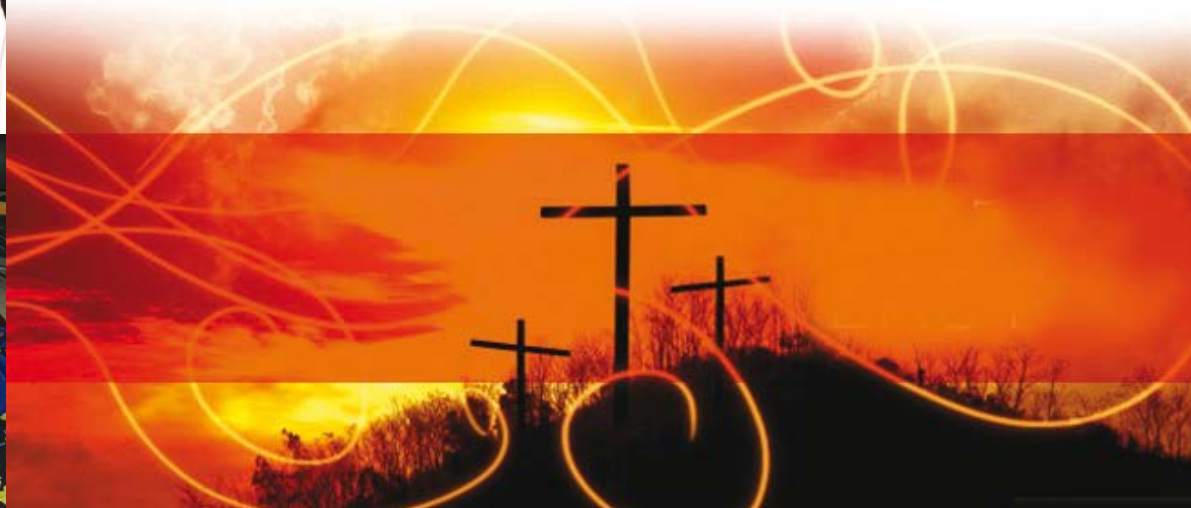






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Dear Reader,

Our church, The Hope of Glory Centre, is growing up fast. Can't quite imagine we are already 23 years old and going on to 24! What an Anniversary celebration we had in the MCA Auditorium on Sat, 25 Mar with the theme 'Love Comes Home'.

In HGC's 23 years, we have experienced God's awesome miracles, faithfulness and favour. No doubt, we have had our fair share of ups and downs, joys and sorrows too. Nonetheless, through it all, God has been our constant source of hope and inspiration. We thank God for all our pastors, leaders and members who have been serving steadfastly, and unitedly to build His church up with love.

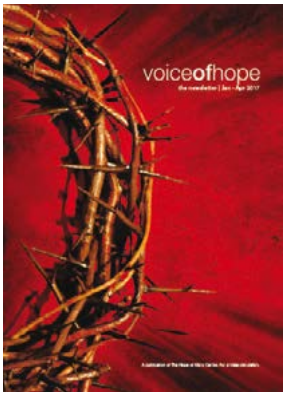


Now after 23 years, we need to be reminded, first of all, to make loving God and people our aim in everything that we do because love builds up. Secondly, in our contemporary age, to be reminded not to forget the basics of church as in the Book of Acts.



Ps Khor shares with us on what love is and how we can be enabled to love in his article, Love Builds. Also you may find it interesting to read about how an OA community is being built with love by Chan Tham Seng.

Read the thought-provoking write-up by Justin Yong on Returning Back to the Basics of church. There are many other remarkable stories and testimonies in this issue. Do take time to read through them and be built up.



The Extent of God's Love



As it is the season to remember Christ's death and resurrection, may you know, partake of and celebrate all that Christ has won for you through His sacrifice on the cross. Find out more from the article, The Lamb Who Died for you, on pages 12-13.

Wth Much Love,
VOH Team





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Love Builds

By Ps Khor Hoe Chai

Whenever we think about the whereabouts of Ps Raymond Koh, we are saddened. Our hearts go out to his family. Why has this happened? What had Ps Raymond done for him to be abducted? One thing I know for sure, Ps Raymond was building lives with love. He was helping the poor of all races in very practical ways through community work. His heart was beating with the love of God to do the best for them. Why was he abducted and who could have done it? God's Word said, "All who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution." 2 Tim 3:12. The devil who wants to steal, kill and destroy wants to stop us from building up people and he will use all kinds of wicked schemes to achieve his end. Throughout history the church faced all kinds of persecution but glory be to God, the church marched on and we are here today and we must march on too even in the midst of persecution.

The Inability to Love

Have you wondered why there are so much evil in our world? Instead of love we see war, violence, greed, corruption, strife, injustice, abuse, brokenness and it goes on and on. Why? It is because man is unable to love. He has been cut off from the source of love, God! How did that happen? It happened when Adam and Eve sinned against God and the human race under Adam inherited the sin nature which is a nature of independence from God. One word succinctly describes the increasing evil in our world today – godlessness. Being godless is being cut off from God who is love.

What is Love?

Love is not self-seeking; love does no harm to others but rather seek to do them good; love will seek to help people in need; love forgives and gives grace; etc. There is no end to the description and definition of love. I found one description helpful because it is short, sharp and practical. It is, "Seeking and doing the best for another". I see in this description how God loves us.

I John 4:9-10 says, In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

God is always seeking and doing the best for us. He so loved, He gave us His Son, His Best to us. He came to seek us. He befriended us. He served us. He forgave us. He healed us. He built us up. He guided us. He provided for us. He suffered and died for us. And after He rose again, He gave us life to the full now and eternal life forever. God is love and the only source of love.

God Enables Us to Love

I John 4:19-21 says that we are able to love God and people because God first loved us. Ps Raymond has the ability to love because he personally received the love of God. We will not be able to love if we have not first received God's love. How do we receive God's love?

"God is always seeking and doing the best for us. He so loved, He gave us His Son, His Best to us. He came to seek us. He befriended us."

We must first be reconnected to God by repenting of our sin of independence of Him, asking Jesus to forgive our sins and to be the Lord of our lives. When we do that, His Spirit comes and lives in us. We become born again with a new nature and into a new family, God's family, the Church. We are then loved by God's family and we are also to love this new family. When we live in such loving relationships we will grow in love and become mature and strong in the love of God. This is how God enables us to love.

We are Able to Love

Now because we are connected to God and to God's family we can draw from God, the source of love and be able to love. We must understand that one of the ways God channels His love to us is through His family. Some Christians feel that they can only receive love from God

directly and do not need fellow Christians. Such thinking has caused many Christians to live independently of other believers. This is a deception of the devil to isolate believers so that they will be weak and be his easy preys. This also weakens the church and renders her ineffective. With what Christ has done for us, enabling us to love, let us abide in His love by growing in our relationship with Him and in our relationship with our brothers and sisters. In this way we can all be strong in His love to live a life of love.

Let us love

This is the exciting way we are to live. Let us love one another. Let us love our families. Let us love people around us wherever we are. We can go about doing the same job, living in the same home, going to the same LG, serving in the same ministry, meeting the same people BUT because we live out love, seeking and doing the best for people around us we will build people up. We will put a smile on their expressionless faces. We will bring sunshine to their gloom. We will bring melodies to their mundane lives. We will bring God to them because God is love!

Yes! Let all that we do be done with love!

Let us be about our Father's business BUILDING WITH LOVE!

As we continue to pray for Ps Raymond and his family, let us be assured that our Father God is seeking and doing His best for them because He loves them more than anyone of us.





Building an Asli Community with Love

By Chan Tham Seng

Mission field is a place to witness God's love. And if you have plenty of love to spare, Kampong Gerachi is probably the best place to spend it.

On 11 February at the Gerachi adult church service, I spoke about God's love and His desire to save all family members (Acts 16:31). I stressed, however, that salvation for family members is not automatic but requires parents to do their part.

After the sharing, Norgi and Sila approached me quietly and asked if we could baptise their daughter Norazlita (Ita). Ita, 16, has been physically and mentally retarded after an attack of high fever when she was two. Norgi and Sila have showered unceasing love and care over Ita all these years. Their compassion as parents also includes an earnest desire to see this daughter saved and baptised.

The Norgi family is a testimony of God's abundant love as cited in Psalms 103:13 -- "As a father has compassion for his children, so the Lord has compassion for those who fear Him."

Sila is the first family member to know God back in 2008. She always wanted her six children to know Jesus and had also been faithfully praying for her husband's salvation. When the couple lost their teenage son, Haizal, in January last year, Norgi was awakened to the reality of God's love and took Jesus as his Lord and Saviour.

Since then Norgi follows Sila to worship God at the Gerachi church together with their two children, Ika and Haizarie, who are also believers. Together, this meek and gentle couple prays for God's compassion upon their remaining three unsaved children including Ita.

If the Norgis are a testimony of God's compassion on humble folks, the story of Sham bin Awang is equally convincing. At last year's Christmas celebration in Kampong Gerachi, Sham, 39, testified on how God restored him from a lung infection in October 2015.

The infection became life-threatening due to his previous addiction to liquor since a teenager. Sham's public testimony must have impacted the Gerachi folks who, like other indigenous peoples in the country, are commonly ensnared by alcoholism.

But the compassionate God took Sham off the bottle just like that, without any earth-shattering happening. For this, Sham has plenty to reminisce: "Of course, I've my wife, mother-in-law and church friends to thank for praying for me all these years."

"Some years after marriage, my wife became a believer and I started attending the Gombak church with her. I drank in the


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morning and at the afternoon church service, I always sat on the last pew and dozed off while Ps Timothy Cheah or Ps Rajen was preaching." said Sham.

With God's help, Sham quit alcoholism in 2012 and smoking in 2016. He knows that is simply God's compassionate deed: He came from a family of five alcoholics, comprising father, mother and three brothers. Sham's father passed away last year, his mother has somehow stopped drinking today but not his two brothers.

Sham originated from an indigenous settlement in Batu 12 Gombak. There he met and married Aina a/p Satun (commonly known as Chegu Aina) 17 years ago. At that time, Chegu Aina did not know Jesus and indeed disliked the presence of Christians in her parents' home.

Chegu Aina recalled, "When mom became a believer, I kept grumbling at her for letting believers in and out of our house." Ibu Majah bte Bahcik, mother of Chegu Aina, is a Jakun married to a Mah Meri husband who was a hospital assistant in Gombak. At 62 today, remains God-fearing and is faithfully serving God in her local church.

True to what God says about showering compassion upon God-fearing parents, Chegu Aina accepted Jesus in 2005. Today, she can easily recount how God has blessed her and her family: "Doctors said heavy drinking has affected Sham's liver, kidney, lung and other organs but God is preserving and restoring him," said Chegu Aina, adding, "Our family has experienced financial blessings from God… today we have a motor cycle and a motor car."

There are more: Sham and Chegu Aina are blessed with three well-mannered daughters. The eldest, 16 year old Shamina, excels in study and is already involved in serving God in the Gerachi church. She said, "I'm grateful to God…Mom and I worried over dad a lot previously."

Perhaps, God's greatest blessing on Chegu Aina is using her to shower compassion upon Gerachi folks. Fourteen years ago after some 50 Temuan families were resettled in Kampong Gerachi, God took a Malay teacher and an indigenous girl from outside to run the village Tadika (kindergarten).

Two years later, the Malay teacher left and her indigenous assistant, who has then become a believer, took over as the village teacher. The new teacher, known as Chegu Aina since, has earned the respect of the villagers and also a diploma in early childhood education which she completed through part-time study. God in His wisdom has planted Chegu Aina in Kampong Gerachi to impact the lives of pre-schoolers.

Kids are always precious to God (Ps 127:3 describes them as "a heritage from the Lord"). Jesus never shuns kids and always stretches out his hand to bless them with praises for their childlikeness. Luke 18:17 says "Whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will never enter it".

Among the childlike traits include humility and trust. That speaks for the great importance of training children before they come under the negative influence of the world and the spiritual forces working against God.

Training for indigenous children is all the more imperative because they represent the underprivileged lot in the country. It's well known that indigenous kids are generally way behind an average Malaysian child in learning capability.

Surely our co-workers need plenty of compassion to handle the Gerachi kids, many of them running around bare-footed with smutty faces and hair lice. Occasionally in the village, we come across malnourished mothers suckling equally malnourished babies with bloated bellies.

Children, unless they experience love and are taught about God, are easily lost to the world after finishing their primary school. Indeed, quite many Gerachi kids don't complete primary school. Sham Awang points out earlier that while teenagers of his generation were hooked on alcohol, teens of today are falling prey to both alcohol and drugs.

As for the girls, the next move after primary school could mean getting a husband a few years down the road. Our one effort is to get Gerachi children interested in studies and move on to secondary school. We are prepared to recommend them for the boarding school programme run by SEMOA in Raub.

The Kampong Gerachi ministry, now in its fifth year, is challenging. We invite HGC members who are responding to the current year's theme of "Building with Love" to consider this worthy ministry, especially its children's work.

Photo captions

1 *The group that witnesses Ita's baptism*
2 *Chegu Aina, a blessing to Kg Gerachi*
3 *Ita at pre-baptism lesson 11 Mar*
4 *Kids are easily lost to the world*
5 *Ibu Majah, godly mother from Gombak*
6 *Sham hospitalised in Oct 2015*
7 *Sham giving testimony in Dec 2016*
8 *Chin Nee and Kat baptising Ita*
9 *Ibu Majah, godly mother from Gombak*
10 *Ika and Haizarie presenting an item*
11 *Sham, Chegu Aina and their 3 daugthers*
12 *Ita with family members after baptism*



Returning Back To The Basics Of Church

By Justin Yong

Since New Testament times, the church has been through various seasons of reform both in its doctrine and outward expressions. What was once considered 'normal' church has turned to become 'traditional' as the generations passed. Current church buildings became dated structures, pews turned to seats, as congregational attire changed from formal to casual wear. Alongside these changes, we see in current times an emerging church identity – one which I would term as 'contemporary church.' I am not using the popular term 'mega-church,' as some family churches are themselves very much taken in by this recent movement and adopting some practices into their not so mega congregations.

The 'contemporary church' are the genre of churches with emphasis on concert like high-powered worship sessions, creative service programmes incorporated into announcements and performances, motivational and humorous preaching with sermon topics regularly geared towards relational aspects. Members maintain an established welcome corner at the end of service for guests with professional hospitality. Additionally, churches tend to target younger audiences with a deep emphasis on being relevant to modern-day culture and on making the gospel relatable.

As much as I had been attracted by the vigour and dynamism of such services with fellow peers my age, however, several aspects on the 'contemporary church' have posed as a concern to me. In this regards, I have identified three important areas, which I believe is crucial to the sustaining of a healthy Christian fellowship.

Firstly, on aspects of communication, the 'contemporary church' is inclined to uphold a culture of performance amongst its members. As such, people tend to relate to each other's projected appearances of themselves, rather than an actual expression of their real lives. The participation in cell groups do not necessarily fare any better. Authentic relationship might not be cultivated when performances are sometimes replicated from service to small groups. Sincerity is fundamental for any authentic relationships to grow. The passage below demonstrates that sincerity of heart had defined the early church in their relations with each other on matters of Christian fellowship.

42 They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.43 Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. 44 All the believers were together and had everything in common. 45 They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need.46 Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, 47 praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.
Acts 2:42-47

Pertaining to performance, there is an understanding that

members are expected to dress-up for such services, with emphasis on good fashion, casual wear and the regular use of accessories. Dressing up in itself is a non-issue, however, misplaced priorities when attending a corporate worship is. If the dressing up – which essentially is to make one presentable in church – causes the individual to be excessively self-conscious, then it serves only to distract and is not helpful, either to themselves or others during the service.

" If the gospel has to be made palatable to the current generation, then we are missing it. The Bible says very clearly that the gospel will offend."

Secondly, is the matter of hype? 'Contemporary churches' equip their services with bands who drum great music, trendy Sunday announcements, engaging Sunday sermons and corporate level welcome corners. As such, the Sunday programmes are heavily geared towards creating an emotionally lasting experience for the audience, who are kept constantly engaged throughout the service. However, this creates difficulties as going after the high experience puts people on a back foot, and inadvertently causes people to simply wait for the programme to inspire.

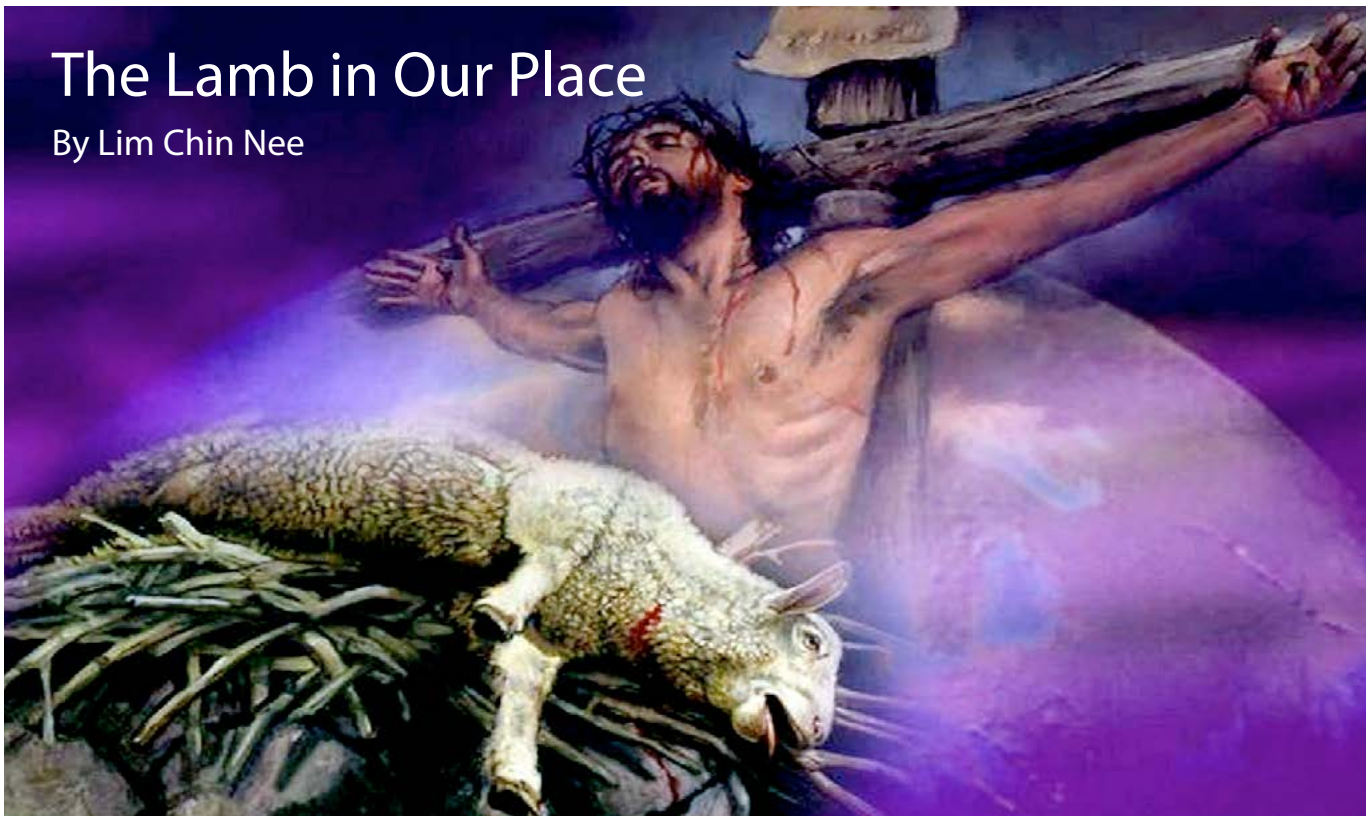
Thirdly, is the need for relevance. 'Contemporary church' with the congregation vibrancy of their youth is pre-dominantly aimed at evangelising the younger generation – an age group where many are liberal in values, emotionally tuned, and facing the challenges of a post-modern world. As such, an emphasis on being relevant and engaging is very important in the evangelism strategy of the 'contemporary church.' On a personal level, I have sat through meetings where deliberate efforts were made by the speaker in presenting a gospel that is all appealing, acceptable and politically correct to the younger crowd. As much as relevance is important, but if the gospel has to be made palatable to the current generation, then we are missing it. The Bible says very clearly that the gospel will offend. It is offensive to those who are perishing, but for those who come to the saving knowledge of Christ, it is only the work of God. The call of Christ is and has been a radical call. It is a call to repentance from our sinful desires, of sacrifice which is precious and effectively, a call to die to oneself. Christ bids His followers to die, and if one desires to follow Him, they must carry up their crosses. This is the pre-requisite to be a disciple of Christ (Luke 14:27).

I wonder how a church, firmly built on the Rock would look like? One where the physical structures, manner of service, and type of music – never takes precedence over the importance of rooting it in Christ Himself. Hence, we ask ourselves, "Does my fellowship experience, whether it be 'contemporary church,' - with its modern and creative approach in conducting church; or a 'normal church,' - as many of us still understand church; assists me in living out Acts 2:42-47 further for the Glory of God? This is a call to return to the basics: The basics of church.



The Lamb in Our Place

By Lim Chin Nee



Pontius Pilate, the Roman Governor in Judea, stood before the mob that was incessant to have Jesus of Nazareth crucified. "Crucify Him! Crucify Him," they had shouted.

Early that morning, the 14th day of Nissan - Pilate had a rude awakening. It was no ordinary day. It was the Preparation Day of the Passover.

It was a day to remember how the blood of lambs applied onto the lintel and two doorposts of Israelite homes had kept them safe that terrifying night, 1500 years ago. Frightening screams and woeful cries were heard from Egyptian homes as the destroyer or angel of death swept through the entire land of Egypt killing every first born male because of Pharaoh's stubborn refusal to let God's people go free. They had been under Pharaoh's cruel bondage for 400 years. As judgment was unleashed, God had mercifully provided a way of protection from judgment. The children of God, hurdled together anxiously in their homes, were kept safe by the blood of innocent lambs. The destroyer was not allowed to enter and strike the homes that had the blood because the LORD God would not permit it.

The Passover lamb was God's clear illustration which pointed to Jesus Christ. John the Baptist had, on seeing Jesus coming, said under divine unction, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"

That morning, however, totally blinded to who Jesus truly was, the Jewish religious leaders had Him arrested and interrogated in the wee hours of the morning and led Him as a lamb to the slaughter. Standing outside the Praetorium or the Roman Judgment Hall, they demanded that He be put on trial and to death for stirring up opposition against Caesar. But truth be told, they were actually envious of Jesus' growing popularity and angry with His rightful claims as the Son of God.

Jesus, like the Passover lamb that had to go through stringent selection and four days of close examination to ensure that it was perfect and spotless, was put on trial to be inspected by Pilate and Herod Antipas. He was examined, tried and questioned and found to be innocent. No guilt in Him, nothing worthy of the death sentence. Three times Pilate declared to the crowd, "I found no guilt in this Man!"

" The blood and death of Heaven's Lamb delivers mankind from the power of Satan and slavery to sin."

Jesus knew no sin. He is perfect and innocent; and He alone met all the requirements to be God's Passover Lamb.

Nonetheless, now, to appease the angry mob that had been incited by the religious leaders, Pilate had Jesus severely flogged and at 9.00 in the morning, they crucified Him. By noon, a foreboding darkness covered the land as Jesus, the innocent Lamb of God, hung on the cross taking the full blast of the judgment of God on behalf of sinners. The innocent for the guilty; and the righteous for the unrighteous!

Everyone, including the priests who were busy preparing to kill the Passover lambs (which begins at 3.00pm and ends at 6.00pm)[1], must have been totally alarmed by the phenomena. How unusual and terrifying the darkness which continued for three long hours until 3.00 in the afternoon when Jesus in His dying breath let out a cry, "It is finished." Bowing His head, He yielded His spirit.

At that hour, the priests in the Temple had begun slaying thousands of Passover lambs, without the slightest inkling that heaven's Passover Lamb had too been slayed.

The blood of the Passover lambs delivered Israel from slavery and the power of Pharaoh. The blood and death of Heaven's Lamb delivers mankind from the power of Satan and slavery to sin.

How the earth quaked that evening and the temple rocked till the veil in the temple which separated sinful man from the presence of Holy God was torn in two, from top to bottom. The work of redemption was fulfilled! Completed! Jesus' death brought deliverance, freedom and … life.

Now, all who by faith believe that Jesus died in their place and apply His blood upon the doors of their hearts are freed from slavery to sin, freed from the oppression of Satan and freed from God's eternal judgment.

Personally Apply

Every Israelite family had to personally apply the blood of the Passover lamb upon his own lintel and doorposts, and stay within the house throughout the night to be protected by God. Similarly, everyone must personally open his or her own heart to Jesus and apply His shed blood to receive God's grace. No one can accept Christ for another! It is a personal decision. When God sees lives marked by the blood of Jesus, God's judgment will pass over and the blessings of Jesus' sacrifice will come upon them. It is imperative to remain in an abiding relationship with Him.

Eaten Entirely

The Passover lamb had to be roasted whole with none of its bones broken and eaten entirely with bitter herbs and unleavened bread. There must be no leftovers. God's people must feed on Christ and the whole counsel of His Word in their daily journey of faith with Him. No picking or choosing what one likes to hear or obey.

Bitter Herbs

Each time the bitter herbs were eaten, the Israelites were reminded of their deliverance from 400 years of bitter suffering and to be grateful for God's mighty deliverance. God's people too need to remember our bitter bondage to sin and the bitterness of Jesus' suffering on our behalf and be grateful to Him. Jesus, on the night He was betrayed, established the Holy Communion. He told His disciples to take the bread and drink the cup, which represented His death and sacrifice, in remembrance of Him.

No Leaven

In preparation for the Passover, it was the custom to carefully go through one's home and remove every trace of leaven. The bread, the Israelites ate, had to be unleavened. This had to be done very carefully for anyone who ate anything with leaven would be cut off from Israel. It was that serious. For seven days no leaven is to be found in their houses.

Leaven speaks of sin in the Bible. A little leaven can raise the whole dough. A little sin can affect or ruin our personal life or church life. Since, Jesus, our Passover Lamb was sacrificed to destroy sin's power over our lives, we must repent of sins, be committed to forsake sin and be set apart for God. Ask God to search us thoroughly and reveal hidden sins in us. Seven days in a week live consecrated lives that please Him. Do not serve sin. Serve the One who died in our place.

A New Beginning

The Passover marks a new year, a new beginning for the Israelites. So, for all who are liberated by the blood of Jesus, it marks the beginning of a new day and a new life. Paul encourages all who are in Jesus Christ to walk in newness of life. If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away, behold all things have become new (2 Cor 5:17).

No one knew on the day Jesus hung on the wooden cross that He was God's perfect Passover Lamb who had come to take away the sin of the world. The religious leaders did not know; neither did Pilate nor the priests nor His disciples.

Do You Know Him

In this season of remembering Jesus death and resurrection, do you know the Passover Lamb of God whose blood has the power to break the rule of sin and Satan over your life and give you a fresh new start? Get to know Him personally, welcome Him and apply His blood upon the door of your heart. From that very moment, it will be an exciting new life and journey of faith with Him.

Footnote:

[1]In The Wars of the Jews, first century historian Josephus records that the Passover lambs were slaughtered on the 14th, "from the ninth hour till the eleventh" (Wars 6.9.3).

Reference:

Exodus 12, John 18-19, Matthew 27, Leviticus 23
Warren Wiersbe – Bible Expository Commentary pg 198-200
Rick Joyner – The Two Trees



Jesus Filled My Empty Heart

By Chia Voon Ching

I have come a long way to be where I am today – a child of God. Having come from a Taoist background made it difficult for me to accept Jesus Christ in my earlier years. When my mom began going to church when she was in her seventies, my family and I were stunned and a little resistant towards it. Eventually, when we saw how happy she was, we gave in as we wanted her to be happy at her age.



Slowly, my mum's sincere faith in Jesus influenced me. She would share her testimonies with me. I remember once when my mom had a knee problem, she decided not to go for a knee replacement surgery for she had the faith to believe that Jesus would heal her. At that time, someone recommended her to take some medicine which brought her much relief. However, when she prayed to the Lord Jesus whether she should continue to take it, she heard the Lord specifically telling, "You need to stop now." My mom could hear from the Lord! That impressed me.

My mom was also a woman of prayer. When my dad was told by the doctor in IJN that he needed surgery for his heart condition, my mum prayed for him and asked God to give him the wisdom to ask the right questions. Somehow amazingly, when my dad asked the doctor whether he could just take medication and delay the surgery, the doctor allowed it. Miraculously, a year later, he didn't even need to take the medicine and his heart's condition was totally normal.

Slowly but surely, my mum's faith in the Lord impacted me.

At that point in life, I constantly felt something missing in my own life. I felt lost and did not know what my direction in life was - for me, for my family and especially for my second daughter, Yi Hern, who is a special needs child. I cried often then, tears flowing very readily.

Without me knowing it, the Lord Jesus was bringing me closer to Him. An aunt of mine who is a Christian came to help me. This aunt of mine understands my condition and feels for me because she had a son who was bedridden. She introduced the Daily Bread (a daily devotional material) to me. Each time when I read the Daily Bread, the stories and the verses in it brought me comfort and peace

One morning, on my usual journey to work, I had stopped at a petrol station to pump some petrol when I noticed a small sign showing Calvary Church. I believe God was drawing me to pray as I decided to check it out. No one was there as it was early. However, when I was about to leave, a sister greeted me. I told her I wanted to pray in the church. She brought me to the prayer tower where there were small prayer rooms and told me that I could pray in the room. From that morning on, I prayed there frequently. I was introduced to the pastor there too and he prayed for me.

During one of my prayer time in the church, the pastor of the church asked me whether I would like to accept Jesus Christ as my Lord and Saviour. Without thinking, I said, "Yes." That was in 2008. From then on, the Lord led me and encouraged me to leave the working world and to concentrate on guiding my daughter Yi Hern.

After my mother passed away, I felt very empty because I missed her so much. I called Ps Lim Lee Ping who had always ministered to my mom, requesting for a time with her. She came over to pray for me and asked me to join Chin Nee's Life Group (LG).

Soon after, I met up with Chin Nee and joined the LG. I found the LG to be like a family, full of understanding and caring sisters. It was through the LG that I knew I was a sinner who needed the love and forgiveness of God. Through the sisters' life testimonies and God's Word taught in the LG, I was really encouraged and lifted up.

God kept on opening more doors for me and Yi Hern in different areas and opening my eyes to be more aware of Him too. Through all that God is teaching me and allowing me to grow one step at a time. He is making me a tougher person and a stronger mother to Yi Hern. He taught me how to teach her step by step and assured me that she will shine for Him. And as I taught my daughter, she absorbed the Word of God speedily; and many times she was the one who encouraged me to walk closer with God.

God has healed my lost and empty heart and dried up my tears.

In 2016, with Yi Hern's encouragement, and since God has been so wonderfully loving to me all this while, I took another step forward to be closer to the Lord – and that was to be baptized. After the baptism, I felt cleansed and renewed. It was a happy and joyful time for Yi Hern and me to be baptized together.

The Name of Jesus was sown into My Heart

By Chan Yi Hern

How I came to know Jesus and believe in Him.

This is a very good question. When I was still young, my late Por Por (Grandma) would sing Christian songs (songs about Jesus) to me every night. Even though she sang in Mandarin and all I heard at that time, throughout the song, was the name of Jesus, it really helped for the name of Jesus was sown into my heart and soul. Every now and then, the name of Jesus rang in my mind.

Then came the year 2011, my beloved Por Por left us for heaven. It was a great thunder shock for all of us in the family, a very sad and emotional moment.

However, God had an amazing way to heal our miserable hearts. He opened up my gift of writing at that time to 'talk' to Mom. We were very communicative from then on. Mom just got excited upon her discovery of my writing talent. She introduced every kind of reading material to me and found that the Word of God was, and still is, my passion.

I have strong faith in Jesus because ever since knowing Him, my health has improved. I am much wiser than most of my friends. I have a desire to grow by reading the Scriptures in order to enlarge my knowledge and wisdom.

My Almighty Abba Father, Your awesome love has helped me and encouraged me to climb mountains to reach You. Thank You Lord. Love and worship You, Lord.

I decided to be baptised in Nov last year because I want to grow spiritually and be a true believer. When I was submerged into the water and raised up from the water, I felt like a new girl, saved and raised by the Lord.

Coming Back To God

By Joshua King

I used to be nervous and found it hard to communicate with others.

At the age of five, I accepted Christ because I wanted to draw closer to Him. At first, I didn't know or understand who Christ really is but as I grew older I understood more and began to have a relationship with Him. As I drew closer to Him, I started attending church and was taught how to worship the Lord and to live as a Christian.

When I was 10 years old, I backslid and stopped going to church for some time. It was then I faced some obstacles in school. I was bullied by my friends and people did not trust me. I was always angry at myself and thinking that it was my fault. At that time, I really forgot about God.



In 2016, I started going back to church. Miraculously, my problems started to disappear. I felt confident, at peace and happier. I rekindled my relationship with the Lord once again. The verse Joshua 1:9 kept flashing before me… "Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go."

Today I am a baptized Christian. Since going through water baptism on 28 Nov 2016, I am more confident and ready to take on the world.

Getting Serious with God

By Kenneth Yong

I was born into a Christian family and I am grateful to be a Christian since young. I had believed that after I confessed my sins and said the sinner's prayer I was already a Christian and I could go to heaven one day. I didn't read the Bible, nor really worshipped God. The act of coming to church was a duty to me. Honestly, although I had said the sinner's prayer, I did not have the assurance of salvation. This was how the devil deceived me and the world.

Last year, a friend of mine invited me to an event – 'Trip to Hell'. The speaker was Philip Mantofa from Indonesia. It was on that day that I started to make a real commitment to follow Jesus Christ. As Ps Mantofa opened the altar for the congregation to respond to Jesus, he said these words, "Religions do not save you. Only a relationship with God through Jesus Christ saves." These words really hit my heart. I ran quickly to the front and wept as he said, "If you want to receive Christ, you better run because it is not Christ who needs you. It is you who need Christ!" On that day, my sin and my shame were removed by the blood of Jesus and I have been set free from the bondage to sin. The love of God flowed right into my heart and touched me deeply. I really saw the marvellous grace of God and His love for me.



After the conference, I started to get serious about the Living God that I worshipped. He is omniscient, omnipotent, and omnipresent. I give all my troubles to Him, for He is the rock of my salvation. He is my fortress and I will not be shaken.

I thank God that my friend invited me to that event. I know it was not a coincidence but the plan of God for me.

After I received Christ, my life has changed. Now I am assured of my salvation and I would like to pursue Jesus all the days of my life.

Thirsty for God

By Sarah King

I would describe myself as an introvert. I only had a certain number of friends, and was speaking to people who talked to me first, thus keeping to myself most of the time.

I was born into a Christian family so knowing Jesus was essential in my life. Throughout my life I thought that

going to church, giving offerings, and singing along to the music was all it was to be a Christian. However, I started to understand that Christianity is not just all about that but also having a relationship with God and worshipping Him.



Before accepting Christ, I felt lost and had a feeling of emptiness in me. I remembered saying the sinner's prayer on 29 Mar 2009 and immediately feeling thirsty after that. I realized it was a thirst of wanting to worship and follow Christ more.

There were times during my teenage years when I felt sad constantly and like no one was there for me. Eventually, I started praying to God more and realized things got better in life after that. I have a loving family with friends who care about me and it is all thanks to Him. Hallelujah!

I made a decision in 2016 to be baptized in obedience to God and to be closer to God spiritually. As soon as I was baptized I felt a weight lifted off my shoulders and felt like a new person. I know we need Him in our lives because He cares and loves us unconditionally as He desires us to do the same for Him. Knowing Jesus has really changed my life for the better. I will continue to love and worship Him till my last breath.

HE Changed Me

By Samantha Tan Sen

I didn't grow up under the guidance of my own family but rather under the care and love of the Chin family. Through the Chin sisters, Wei Ling, Wai Wai, Wei Shin, Wai Thai and Wai Pick who are my aunties, I got to know Jesus Christ and came to the Children's Church.

In 2009 when I was 11 years old, I was given the chance to attend a children's conference in PJ EFC. During that three days conference, I encountered God's presence as the lessons taught touched on my personal life and struggles. I learnt what sin was and clearly knew that I was a sinner. In light of God's unconditional love for me and the assurance that my sin would be forgiven, I received Jesus as my Lord and Saviour. Sometime later, I asked the Holy Spirit to fill my heart and I received the gift of speaking in tongues.

However, instead of being yielded to the Holy Spirit, I was still very much controlled by my 'old' self. I continued to tell lies, to be rebellious and disrespectful to my elderly family members. Over time, those problems became more and more serious. I could not get rid of my bad attitudes or habits. I tried very hard to be a better person but I realized that I could not do it. I felt frustrated and depressed as issues developed in my relationships with my family members and friends.



In my desperation, I turned to God. I started to pray harder and more consistently. It is so true that the most effective prayer is praying persistently! I started to see changes in my life as I prayed. God knew that I needed healing in my life. Broken relationships needed to be restored and wisdom was needed when I speak. The Holy Spirit began to guide me and help me be more careful with my choice of words so as not to hurt people. I became more willing to listen and

to accept people's opinion or advice.

I experienced a breakthrough in my life! I saw changes in my life. Relationships were restored and even what I had not asked for, God provided for me. The Holy Spirit has since been my helper, guide and personal teacher.

Last year, during the Youth Sunday, I asked the Lord to speak to me if He wanted me to be baptized. Calvin Lim was preaching that Sunday. He said that although he had questioned his own ability to lead the youth, he still did because he loved the young people and he wanted to serve them. So, if I said I loved God and wanted to have His nature, I needed to draw closer to Him, obey Him and be baptised.

On the day of my baptism on 27 Nov 2016, I praise God that my aunties came to support me. I was touched and felt the love of God and that of my family members. Towards the end of service, during the photo session, an elderly brother in Christ came to me and released a word of encouragement to me. He said, "You must be closer and closer to God… because you have a call from God." Yes, I must get closer to God because His love is very important. I can't imagine life without God.

In conclusion, I have learnt in my Christian life that I cannot change things with my own ability. Only God is capable of doing that. I have also grown more aware that I have to put God first place in everything I do, as Matt 6:33 tells me, "Seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be added unto you."

A New Life with God

By Shirly Ngu

Since young, I have been attending church every week. It was just a weekly routine for me to be in church on a Sunday. I did not know who God is nor who Jesus was. Eventually, I stopped attending church.

At that time, I was really an introvert. I was afraid and nervous about the people around me and everything that happened to me. There was a huge fear in me all the time. As such this was the reason why I didn't have many friends then. Of course, I had friends, but I would say that I was lonely.
It was not until I was 15 that a friend invited me to HGC after I had stopped attending church for a long time. Sometime later, I joined a camp. It was at the camp where I had my first encounter with God. I got to know how great God's love is for me and decided to draw myself closer to God. As I got closer to Him, that fear in me reduced without me being aware of it. I was more opened up, had more courage because I knew that even if I fell, God would be there catching me. Apart from that, joining the 2015 HUGE camp made a huge impact on me in my journey with God. The people at the camp who had burning hearts for God motivated me a lot.

I decided to get serious in my walk with God and thus committed my life to Him. I asked for His forgiveness for all my sins. It felt like I was starting a new life, but this time, with God. I started reading the Bible. At times, I felt like it was talking to me, giving me courage to do the things that I am supposed to do.

Today, I'm glad I could use what God has blessed me with to serve in the Keng Youth core team, which is also a chance for me to be a leader which God wants me to be.



Our Church's 23rd Anniversary

Love Comes Home

By Justin Yong

25 March 2017. As the sun shone down and the clock ticked away to the stroke of 2.30pm, one thing was certain: Saturday shopping was at its best with cars buzzing around, shoppers filling the malls of KLCC, keeping safe from the unpopular Malaysian sun. 'Business as usual' is how one would describe such a day.

As that went on, a few blocks away from the KL City Centre, at the MCA auditorium, HGC was well on her way to celebrating her 23rd Anniversary. While the venue itself was a regular for previous church anniversaries, members will certainly remember this year's celebration for its many 'firsts'. For one, we will remember this year's anniversary for being held on a Saturday! Members will also particularly remember the sumptuous and well spread Hi-Tea prior to the service which enabled members to simply mingle around, break the ice and get a few conversations going. For myself, I will remember this day for seeing my grandmother in church again. Following a bad fall, which made movement difficult for her, she had not been able to climb up the stairs to church. (Although thankfully for the senior folk's ministry by Ps Lee Ping, she and many others now have a service to go to on Saturdays). I think another first for many of us would also be this year's theme of celebration: Love Comes Home.

The service began with Teck Chuan and Calvin Lim calling out those who were of similar age as the church and presenting them each with a surprise gift. Ps Khor and Ps Lee Ping then came on stage with an exuberant shout of thanks to all HGCians for "Coming Home" before leading in a time of thanksgiving. Amy Lim took over for a lively time of Praise and Worship session. It is worth noting that newer faces and younger blood were seen serving on the "big stage." This is commendable, a culture which must be maintained going forward, as we emphasise the need to disciple others to serve.



Banners were lifted in worship



The love of God overflowed as Amy Lim led in a time of powerful worship.

HGC 23rd Anniversary

As Ps Khor came back on stage, he brought the attention to the small group of Orang Asli believers (also an effort of discipleship!) from Kg Gerachi who stood in worship with us. What a heartfelt and meaningful moment when the congregation sang together in Bahasa Malaysia, "Ku mahu Cinta Yesus selamanya!"

Following that was a most hilarious game show skit entitled, "Whose church is it any way?" Kudos to Calvin Lim and the brilliant cast!

During the skit, members were taken through a series of questions on the history of the church, the current facts and figures for HGC as well as questions on "why we do what we do?" The four contestants ended the skit by sharing what HGC meant to them thus far.



Members and guests helping themselves to the Hi-Tea



So wonderful to have former HGCians coming home to celebrate with us



The 23 year olds – Christian, Fergus, Zuriel, Candy & Claudia



Bernard Chong & Jenny Mak read Ps 133





Ruth Lew, Nigel Teh, Danny Here & Boon Yan in their elements as contestants in the game show



Leaders came on stage for the cake cutting. Happy Birthday HGC!



Teck Chuan & Yun Hor, the husband & wife team, challenging the congregation to sow their love gift to God



HGCians worshipping in one accord



So wonderful to have former HGCians coming home to celebrate with us



Ps Lee Ping exhorting the church to take up our harps and play to the tune of the Master Conductor



It was a joy to have Pak Norgi and family to join us for the service



Calvin, the debonair games master



HGC 23rd Anniversary

Ps Lee Ping then took stage to share her heart on the theme, "Love comes home" from psalm 137. The message was really a challenge to look beyond our "glory days" as a church since times and seasons have moved on and "things are no longer what it used to be." Maybe some of us have wondered if things are ever going to be how it used to be, and in disappointment, we have hung our harps on the willow. It was an admonishment to take up our harps and play again — not to the tune of our surroundings, for we might be disappointed — but to the tune of the Master Conductor. When we do so, love comes home, and it comes back into our hearts.



Our warm and faithful ushers



Photo taking against the background of decorative hearts



Justin's grandma in the centre.



So wonderful to have former HGCians coming home to celebrate with us



Thank you HGCians for preparing the fabulous Hi-Tea



Leaders came on stage for the cake cutting. Happy Birthday HGC!



Filipino Ministry Updates

By Ps Joseph Teruel

How long has the Ministry started, when do you meet and what is the regular attendance?

On 29 Aug 2016, the Filipino Ministry was started with 7 attendees on the third floor of The Hope of Glory Centre. Since then, we have a Worship Service every Sunday from 1.00pm-3.00pm. Through prayer and Life Group, God added more Filipinos to this ministry. By God's grace, as of the present, we average 20-25 attendees every Sunday.

Share with us about the Filipino Christmas Celebration.

On 24 December 2016, we had our first Filipino Christmas Celebration which was held at HGC – D' Bridge. We started with Praise and Worship and the singing of some Christmas carols. After that some members shared their testimonies of how they encountered God. Ps Joseph shared about God's Love from John 3:16 in his Christmas message. Indeed God is great! 56 Filipinos attended and 33 souls got saved. Ps Khor also prayed and released blessings to them and to all Filipinos. After God's Word was preached, we had a great fellowship over Eating Fellowship, followed by some games, which everybody cooperatively joined. To God be all Glory!

Please share what you do at a regular Filipino Ministry time.

At our regular Sunday Services we worship God through Praise and Worship, pray and share of our life testimonies on how the Lord changed our lives. The following is what we do during the service.

- Opening Prayer / Praise and Worship
- Message / Offering
- Testimony / Thanksgiving Song and Prayer
- Eating Fellowship

Do you have life groups? Please share something about what you do in the life groups?

We have three Life Groups in different areas:

1. Damai Ampang – led by Merlina
2. Bandar Baru (Spectrum) – led by Marilyn
3. Bandar Baru (CIMB) – led by Ps Joseph

During Life Groups, we have:
Opening Prayer / Praise and Worship
Sharing Time / Short Message
Question and Answer / Prayer Request
Thanksgiving Song and Prayer / Fellowship and Food

Share your vision for the Filipino Ministry with us and how do you want us to pray for your Ministry

Our vision is to bring Filipinos to the saving knowledge of God by doing whatever it takes. To win them at any cost. To equip and disciple them to be a discipler in the market-place.



Fellowship meal together

Why Life Groups?

Life Groups are an integral part of HGC. They are the basic life building blocks of the church. Basically, a Life Group (LG) consists of 5 to15 members who meet or connect on a weekly or regular basis with the aim of seeing the Great Commandment & Great Commission fulfilled.

Below are encouraging testimonies and experiences of members' in their Life Groups.



Damai LG

Opportunities for Gifts To be Used

By Loke Wai Keng - Damai LG

When I came back from Penang in 2007, after 9 years with YWAM, I looked for a church to attend. In 2009 I felt the conviction of the Lord to settle in HGC. Through my personal experience, the fastest and maybe the easiest way to get settled into any new church is to join a Life group. So, I didn't wait to be approached or invited to join a LG, I just joined the BBALG.

I am so thankful that Chin Nee, the leader of BBALG, made me felt very welcomed and accepted in the group. It was fun being with the sisters as I got to know them through different activities. It was also very enriching as I was given many opportunities to exercise my gift in teaching the Word and to see others growing in their spiritual life. It was in the LG context that I was enlisted into the teaching ministry of the church.

Soon this group grew and multiplied. Hence, the birth of Damai LG under the leadership of Jenny Woo! It was sad for the group of us to say goodbye. But praise the Lord because of the bonding that was already there, we soon got over the transition period of adjustment to the new LG. In a smaller group each of the ladies have more opportunities to explore their gifting through worship leading or teaching

the Word or doing other things like ice breakers, warmth. And for your information, most of the ladies in this group are in the senior citizen category and it is so encouraging to see each one so willing to participate in whatever they were called to do and grow together.

I am for LG and can say I won't miss any LG meeting unless I have very urgent appointment. I am also thankful to the sisters of the LG willing to release me when I am invited to teach in other LGs.

Love in Action

By Margaret Tien - Damai LG

Love and care are important parts of a life group and I see this in the lives of my LG members, not just in words but in action. There are many instances but here's one. Magdeline Chin, one of our LG members, is working but she took the effort to go early to a government hospital to stand in queue for a number on behalf of Wai Keng, another of my LG sister, and wait for her to arrive with her 100 year old mother. I am so moved when I hear of what LG members are willing to do for each other



Taman Kosas LG

Gaining Love & Boldness

By Jennie Koh - Taman Kosas Life Group

To be honest, I used to have a hard heart. I didn't have compassion or care for others. Through the LG I saw the love and care of my leader and members for me and for one another. That touched me so much that the hardness of my heart melted and my love and care for others surfaced.

Besides that I was also scared whenever I was asked to pray for my LG members. However, now through the LG, I have gained the boldness to pray, not only for my members but also for strangers as our LG goes out for hospital visitations. Through the hospital visits, I was trained to be observant and sensitive to people I meet and things around me. Even though I can't do much for the patients, but I could lend them a listening ear and pray for them.



Bukit Indah LG

The Many Blessings of Life Groups

By Katherine Koo – Bukit Indah LG

I joined BILG in July 1999. It was by God's divine appointment that my husband and I were placed in this LG. I related well with the other members and we shared a lot of common interests. Most members in this group are married couples with young children then. Over the years not only have we grown closer to one another but our children too have grown closer. I have benefitted in so many ways and experienced countless blessings:

Spiritual Growth

In the year 2007 we studied the book titled 'The Purpose Driven Life' by Rick Warren. This book I would say is life changing. Within a period of one year every member of our LG was serving in the church ministries. Subsequently, six of us enrolled in the EE Semester 4. In December 2007 I went on my first overseas mission trip to the Philippines with three other ladies from my LG. We also encouraged one another and grew spiritually by attending church events or sign up for Bible studies together. BILG members progressed very well in terms of studying the Word of God and well equipped in EE skills. From what we have learned, it's time to bless the people in the mission fields.

Help & Support

As you know I am from Kuala Terengganu. Besides my LG members and some church members, I didn't have many friends except for a few non-Christian colleagues. My husband was working overseas from 2007 right up to 2012. So how was it possible for me to go for overseas mission trips while my husband was away? Who took care of my son who was only 7 years old in 2007? It was none other than my LG leader, brother Vincent and his loving wife who supported and took care of my son, not only one mission trip but three trips to the Philippines, China and Indonesia. Three years ago I adopted a dog. When I went for holidays, Vincent, being a dog lover himself, welcomed my dog into his home without a second thought. So it was not only child boarding but dog boarding too.

When my mom passed away in the year 2011, Soon Hoe offered to drive my son and me back to KT. Janet Voon came along and fetched a few of our LG and church members. We left around 6pm. At that time the East coast highway was still under construction and driving at night slowed down the journey. We arrived at 1am. The support and care from my LG members during those difficult times was really heart-warming and unforgettable.

Great Fellowship & Bonding

I enjoyed every moment in LG meetings. We learned a lot from one another as every member has his or her own experiences, knowledge and challenges. When we bring all of those experiences, knowledge and challenges into a meeting, there is a strength and treasure from which to draw. We cherished everyone's prayers. Our group also has travelled together on several occasions. Each trip brought us even closer together. BILG has become like

a special second family to me that I will not want to live without.

People in small groups can be empowered by Christ to do more than they ever thought they could. So to those who have yet to belong to a Life Group, do not be shy or hesitate if someone approaches and invites you to join an LG. Pray and commit it to the Lord and you will definitely be blessed with a richer spiritual life and closer walk with God.



Sentul LG

The Redwood Trees

By Danny Here - Sentul LG

The LG is a place where we can find lots of things to thank God for. It is a place where blessings abound.

In the earlier days, I didn't know that. I remember during lunch one day, one of the pastors told me that it was necessary for members to join a LG. I just laughed at him and said in my heart, "You can wait forever." I just shut the door to that idea. Now you know our God never gives up. The prompting continued and finally, I was introduced to Sentul LG members and they invited me to join them and gave me the address and meeting time. Reluctantly, I agreed to attend. I told myself, maybe just once to see how it is.

In my first time, I got lost in Sentul but Chin a member of the LG went out of the way to fetch me and brought me to the meeting place. It was like the story of the lost sheep… and I was one happy and grateful sheep. That was the beginning of my LG journey and it continued thereafter.

LG is a place where the power of togetherness or partnership is greatly manifested. Let me share with you the story of the Redwood trees. When I was with my wife in California recently, we had the chance to see for ourselves how a Redwood tree looks like. It can grow as high as 300 feet and they are the true giants of the forest. Trees that are big and tall should have deep roots so that they can weather the wind. You would imagine that the Redwood trees ought to have very deep roots but on the contrary; they have roots which are only 3 feet deep. Now, if the roots are only three feet deep, they would easily topple. But that is not the case. The roots of the Redwood are actually entwined to each other. The roots cling to each other so tightly that they are able to withstand the storm or hurricane that comes.

A LG is like the Redwood trees. Members are together and hold onto each other. If one falls, the others will hold him up, not allowing him to fall. If strong wind comes, they will stand firm together. They will depend on one another. They grow big and strong.

Now, that is exactly what God wants. God wants you to be in a LG if you are not in one yet. I pray that you will find a LG to be in and be richly blessed.



Love Your Worst Enemies

By Melissa Foong

What does it actually mean to love your worst enemies?

It's easy to say love your enemies but it's hard to do. It even feels impossible. What about that bully in school? What about that person who said some pretty mean things about you? Still think it's easy?

How much do you love the members of ISIS? What about the latest person who opened fire at a school or church or a movie theater?

That question may seem absurd; maybe it is, because these are more than just the inconsiderate people who pop up occasionally in your life. We're not just talking about the guy in school who keeps stealing your lunch or that friend who back stabbed you.

As I read about the latest shooting, or the case about Pastor Raymond Koh's abduction, my natural response was to dehumanize the people who did these things. I think of them as monsters, demons or something else that allows me to pretend that they are less than human.

But that is not the way.

Each one was born with a mother and a father. They eat and drink. They have personal stories and experiences both full of pain and joy. They are humans, just like us. And if I take the narrative of the Bible to be true, they are fellow beings created by God. They are just like us, loved by God.

I want to be very clear. I am not supporting or accepting the acts of terrorism, mass shootings or abduction. I am not arguing against legal consequences for those actions. But if I hate the people who undertook those actions, it is not monsters or demons that I hate, but fellow humans.
Some of these are suffering from mental illness, from personal anguish or from religious manipulation. In the midst of grief and anger for those who suffer, can I not spare some compassion for those who have missed out on the life filled with grace and hope that Jesus has called all of us to live?

We like to live in a binary, black and white world where everyone is basically "good" or "bad". But life isn't so cut and dried. Someone can be guilty of terrible things and still deserve compassion. Matthew 5: 44-45 tells us God cares for the evil.

" Even though people are evil and hate God, He still cares for them. He sends them sunshine and rain, provides food, shelter and lots of other good things."

"Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven. For He makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good and sends rain on the just and on the unjust."

Do you see what the verse is saying? Even though people are evil and hate God, He still cares for them. He sends them sunshine and rain, provides food, shelter and lots of other good things. Do they or we deserve it? Of course not! But that's what God is like, and that's what He wants us to be like too.

I am not seeking to humanize terrorists and murderers because they deserve it or because I am ignoring their actions. I am seeking to humanize them because it is a way we can hope to stem the tide of terrorism and shootings at schools, malls, workplaces or houses of worship. Because I know these actions are the works of humans bound by demons who are already defeated by Christ. I can have hope. Hope that messages of love, acceptance and peace can reach them. Hope that God can

redeem even the worst of sinners.

How do you love your enemies?

It's simple. Pray for them. I am not talking about the "please give them what they have coming to them" prayers. And I also do not mean that you need to spend an hour each night asking God to pour blessings upon them. You can start by a simple prayer with "God, I hate that person but I don't want to."

The second step is to forgive your enemies.
When Jesus looks at His executioners from the cross and offers forgiveness, can there be any doubt of His love for them? Loving your enemies does not mean you have to add them to your Christmas list or make them your best friend. It doesn't mean you excuse their actions. It means you forgive them with the knowledge that God is both merciful and just.

Jesus faced grave injustice. Through prayer and forgiveness in our hearts, let us go forth to conquer injustice in our time by the courage not to demand retribution, but rather to repay iniquity with blessing and hate with love.

Resource:
Relevant Magazine - What it actually means to love your enemies

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Who Should We Follow?

By Abigail Cheong

Remember those Disney princess movies we used to watch? Something which most of them have in common is the tagline 'follow your heart'. And when the protagonist follows his/her heart, everything turns out to be splendid and they all lived happily ever after. Does this kind of thing happen in reality too? Well, it kind of does because it all depends on who or what is in your heart. Is God in your heart or is the world in your heart? It says in the Bible, 'For where your treasure is there your heart will be also', and this verse is repeated twice in the Bible. So who exactly should we follow?

Ultimately, God is the one you should follow as He should be the King of your heart. However, many of us tend to fill our hearts with other things like money, beauty, popularity and so on. These things will distract us from God. Sometimes we even choose our parents and friends rather than God. This happens because we often ignore God and decide that our parents and friends are more important than Him.

Let's follow Jesus' example. When Jesus was a teenager growing up in Nazareth, who did He follow? Well, He followed God of course! Jesus was the eldest boy in His family and He probably would have mastered His earthly father's trade which was carpentry. So besides having to bear the responsibility of being the eldest and having to learn to make furniture, He also had to study the Torah which is the first five books of the Bible. Looking at Jesus' life, I don't think we can use the excuse 'Oh, I'm too busy' to not spend time with God anymore. Another thing is that Jesus' followed God by maintaining a strong prayer life which enabled Him to fulfil His ministry and resist all temptations.

Lastly, in Matthew 6:33, Jesus said, 'But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you.' So, let us follow God that we may also have our 'happily ever after' up in heaven.

It's a Miracle!

By Ruth Lee



Ruth and her beloved mother

"It's a miracle!," that's what my sisters kept saying when God miraculously healed my mother of a stroke on 5 Mar 2017. In the morning of 5 Mar (which happens to be a Sunday), I got an emergency notice that my mum was admitted to a hospital in Penang. High fever, high blood pressure and cold sweat were the symptoms. She was also discharging fluid as though her body was purging itself in preparation for death.

She was unconscious and the whites of her eyes were showing. My sister rushed her to the hospital in Penang at 3am in the morning, sensing the worst was going to happen.

I knew I had to rush back to see her, for should my mum leave this earth, I wanted to be by her bedside. Little did I know the whole church stood with me to pray for my mum and for God to be magnified in the situation. I was so touched to receive many messages asking me updates on my mum. Not only was I touched, but also my sisters when I told them that the whole church had prayed for her that Sunday. My sister asked me why a whole church of strangers would pray for someone they do not even know. This is the love of God and the love of the spiritual family of God.

I have been praying for my mum's salvation for a long time and once during a church evangelistic outreach many years ago at Pandan Lake Club, she prayed the sinner's prayer during the altar call (Oh Beng Kee was the preacher if I recall correctly). Many times I showed my mum images of heaven posted on the YouTube and she would watch with great joy on her face. When asked if she wanted to go to heaven, she said, "Yes." Also whenever I was back in Penang to see her, she would always ask me to take her to the Hokkien service at Wesley Methodist!

God heard all your prayers for my mum. Today, 6 Mar (Monday) I got her to confess again, "Jesus come into my heart." When she confessed it, there was so much joy on her face. In addition, miraculously, her right eye muscle which she could not move, went back to normal.

I also took the opportunity to baptize her in the name of Jesus. We said a simple prayer for her sealing her salvation in Jesus' name.

After the baptism, she continued to recover. The fever left her and the blood pressure went back to normal. The infection in her blood also cleared.

My sisters kept saying that it's a miracle, it's a miracle. Yes, I believe God did a miracle on Sunday March 5 when the whole church prayed for my mum. I am beyond words. Just thanking God the Father for such a wonderful family of God who prayed for my mum so fervently!

THANK YOU Pastor and every one in HGC for your prayers! You can certainly move mountains with your love and sincerity in prayers!

How my Father was Saved

By Ruth Lee



Ruth's mother and father

I think I need to share how my father was saved in light of what happened to my mum. My father was very much against me becoming a Christian from day one because he thought that I would give all my money to the church. As it turned out, all his fears were unfounded when he realized that my new faith taught me to honour my father and mother. As it turned out, I ended up being one of the most faithful givers in my household, and even increasing my giving through the years. The Scripture had taught me that if I do not take care of my family, then I am much worse than an unbeliever.

Through much fasting and prayers, my father softened his heart towards the Gospel when he saw the change in me especially in the area of honouring him through my monthly giving. Eventually, he even followed me to attend an evangelistic rally held by a church in Penang.

He accepted Christ during the altar call and received praying for his arthritis. I also recalled vividly (as though it was yesterday) once, he had a severe heart attack while in my car. I laid hands on him and prayed in tongues and all of a sudden the attack was over and he recovered totally!

My father believed in the Lord but out of fear of my mother (who at that time was a very staunch Buddhist and Taoist) did not go to church with me. My dad used to come to KL to visit me when my daughter was a little girl. In his last visit more than 30 years ago, death came for him. That night, Tim and I, had gotten home from life group. My father started having difficulty in breathing. He began to choke and I remember laying hands on him saying, "Pa, call on the name of Jesus. Call on the name of Jesus. Call on the name of Jesus." He began to call on the name of Jesus 3 times. Then I saw to my amazement, his spirit leaving his body! It was the first time I saw a person passing away before my very eyes.

" Through much fasting and prayers, my father softened his heart towards the Gospel when he saw the change in me especially in the area of honouring him through my monthly giving."

At first, I was not sure if he was saved but Tim reminded me of Scripture stating that whoever calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. Like the thief who called on the name of the Lord when he was dying, I believe that my dad received salvation as he had made a confession of faith during the evangelistic rally in Penang. However, I had other doubts as my father was not baptised.

I thank God for my brother who shared with me a vision the night my father died. He saw my father dressed in white standing next to his body with an angel beside him. My father put out his hand to my brother as though he was signalling that all was well and that he had made it!

Although my mum continued to resist the Gospel after my father passed away, she saw the love that we had for her and the values that the church taught us especially in the area of honouring our parents through giving and taking care of them financially in their old age.

My encouragement to all young people is this – do continue to pray for your parents. Don't give up! Do the right thing by being a Christian witness and testimony which may mean giving to our parents any manner of financial support. At times, the acts of love (such as giving finances) speak louder than words!

In Everything Give Thanks

By Dorothy Koh



I have suffered intense thyroid cancer for the past 3 years. The ensuing treatments of radiotherapy, which helped to burn the cancer cells in my thyroid, brought damage to my throat. Yes, I was given a clean bill of health and I have testified of God's miraculous healing upon me. There are no traces of thyroid cancer in me but my faith continued to be challenged. The walls of my throat had become scarred and thickened.

I discovered to my horror and dismay that swallowing had become very painful. A bowl of porridge which normally took me 10 minutes to finish, now took me an hour. Hard food was completely out of my diet. I simply could not swallow due to the pain in my throat.

I was dumb-struck when the doctor recommended tube feeding; that is a tube would be inserted into my stomach; and special nutritious milk will be fed into me through that tube. It would reduce my sustenance to just milk alone! I would not be able to enjoy all the tasty and good food that I used to eat!

I guess you can call it "force-fasting" if there is such a word! However, I want to give thanks to God even in my condition where I am forced to receive my sustenance in such a manner. I could have sunk into a depression or given up on life but somehow this condition drew me closer to God. I began to spend hours praying and worshipping God on a daily basis.

Not only did I feel God's love for me, I experienced the unwavering support and love of my family members and my life group members who pray for me consistently. The pastors of Sunbeams Home also kept on encouraging me to serve the Lord. All these helped to shift my focus away from depression or despair. I continued to serve the Lord in Sunbeams even while carrying the tube about in my body. I did not murmur or complain about my condition neither did I blame God. The favour of God kept on flowing in my life and impacted the lives of people around me.

" I could have sunk into a depression or given up on life but somehow this condition drew me closer to God. I began to spend hours praying and worshipping God on a daily basis."

Who would have thought that a lady with a tube fastened to her stomach could travel to so many places for holidays. I went to Taiwan and India (to see the beautiful and majestic Taj Mahal which was an experience that was simply unforgettable) and I will be going to Korea and Japan this year, places I have never dreamt of going. Even on the airplanes, the pilot and the stewardesses gave me the best treatment on board!

Once I fell sick in Penang and all my hospital bills were covered by my travel insurance!

God is so faithful to me even as I remain steadfast in my faith. I have learnt some precious lessons while undergoing this condition:

1. In everything give thanks
2. Do not complain or murmur. Do not get angry with God. God is in control. If He allows our suffering then there is always a greater purpose for it.
3. Stop focusing on the problems but focus on activities that will bring joy to others. Continue to serve the Lord as long as you are able to do so.

Today I can swallow some soft food although it does take me some time to finish but I am not complaining. For me to be alive in my condition is a great miracle in itself. Yes, I even continue to witness in my condition! I have shared Jesus with the doctors who treated me and with other patients in the hospital.

I treasure the prayers of the church especially the prayers of my life group members. Their support and love for me is unwavering and unconditional. I am blessed; I am blessed even in my condition!

2 Cor 4:7-9

"But we have this treasure in earthen vessels that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us. We are hard pressed on every side, yet not crushed, we are perplexed but not in despair, persecuted but not forsaken, struck down but not destroyed, always carrying about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body"

Note from the writer:
While helping to write this testimony for Dorothy, this verse came to my mind for her. Indeed Dorothy lives because of the life of Jesus in her!





Special Encounter

By Lee Seol Mei

May May, Margaret and Seol Mei

My husband and I were having our holiday in Sdyney, Australia in October 2016. On 27 Oct 2016, my husband's two cousins sisters, Margaret, May May and I had a special encounter with God.

May May's children are studying in Sdyney and May May happened to be there with them at the time of our visit. Thus, my husband and I made arrange to meet up with May May for Chinese Dim Sum that day.

Margaret, without our knowledge, had made a detour from Perth to Sdyney to care for her daughter's father-in-law who was struggling with terminal cancer at Sdyney Hospital. On that day, her in-law had expressed the desire to eat a particular Dim Sum at the restaurant at Hurtsville where we had agreed to meet May May.

As such, when Margaret and her son in-law walked into the restaurant, we were all happily surprised. It seemed such a 'coincidence' that we were all able to meet up together at such a time like this.

Margaret was complaining that her right eye had been uncomfortable since that morning. She tried washing her eye many times but it was of no help at all. In fact, she could not see anything through that eye. She requested me to pray for healing so I laid my hand on her right eye and prayed for her. After praying, I went to the washroom. Once I was out, Margaret came to me excitedly informing me that her son-in-law saw hair in her right eye. She requested me to take out the hair from her eye, which I could not.

Praise God May May who is a professional eye specialist was there. She helped Margaret to take out the exceptionally long strand of hair with a tissue. She commented that she had never seen such long hair before in anyone's eye in all her years as an eye specialist. And she had no idea how it went into Margaret's eye.



The strand of hair taken out of Margaret's eye

It was a joyous occasion where God put us together, not in Ampang but in Sdyney to experience Him. I prayed for healing, and God prepared May May to help Margaret. I am amaze at the work of the Lord. Our God is so big, so detailed and He is everywhere.

And we know that for those who love God, all things work together for good, for those who are called according to His purpose. Romans 8:28

ELEVATE #HUGECamp2016

by Janelle Lim

Holiday season always calls for fun events and what's more fun than camps? Last year, KENG Youth decided to participate in the HUGE Camp organized by YAM (Youth Alive Malaysia). The theme for the camp was "Elevate" and the special speaker for the sessions was Ps Joshua Obeng, who is a youth pastor of the Calvary Charismatic Centre in Ghana.

The camp was filled with youths who had their hearts open and eager for an encounter with God. We really enjoyed the games, ice breakers and also worship sessions that really ushered God's presence into the place. As "Elevate" was the theme of this year's camp, Ps Joshua spoke on how we should "elevate" and see things from God's perspective, and as he calls it, the "purple zone", instead of seeing things from our own perspective. By elevating, we should be prepared to sacrifice a lot of things and to spend more time with God to listen to what He is calling us to do.

During one of the last sessions, they called for youths who were serving in our respective churches and asked us to gather and pray. I felt the anointing of God coming upon so many of the youths there that day and it reminded me that all of us play an important part in passing on the baton to the next generation. God wants us to have faith before feeling, and not to despise small beginnings - for everything works out in His time and Rome was not built in a day. Ps Joshua also prophesied that the season of "drought" was over in our generation and urged us to continue praying for the "rain" to come.

The camp ended with a very impactful and powerful note, which was to cling on to God and to never leave Him. I believe many of our youths were impacted by the sessions and most importantly, had a very good time dwelling in God's presence.



Breakfast before sessions!



Group photo on the last day

Why did God put the Tree of Knowledge of good and evil in the Garden of Eden? Wouldn't it be better if it was not there?

Answered by Loke wai Keng



Genesis 2:7-9(NKJV)

7 And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.

8 The Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden, and there He put the man whom He had formed. 9 And out of the ground the Lord God made every tree grow that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. The tree of life was also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

Genesis 2:15-17

15 Then the Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to tend and keep it. 16 And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, "Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; 17 but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die."

Putting these verses in context

Genesis in Hebrew means "Beginning". Preferences had been given to Moses as the author of the first 5 books of the Bible though till today many Bible scholars are not totally in agreement to this. However, the author wrote this while the children of Israel was in the wilderness and it was written mainly to remind them of who this God is that called Himself the "I AM". After all they needed to be educated again of Who this great God is since they had been in Egypt for over 400 years. Many would have no idea who this God is. Their understanding of God would have been influenced by the way Egyptians worshipped idols that took many forms.
The author also wanted the children of Israel to know the consequences of obeying and not obeying. So, the tree of the knowledge of good and evil was an account in Genesis which the author used to help them understand the consequences of disobeying God in order that they would stay away from sin.

In brief, God in the beginning transformed the formless void

and darkness that covered the face of the earth by calling the world to order in Genesis chapter one. Everything that He called into existence was very good, and the climax of His creation was the Man (Adam which means Humanity in Hebrew) and later the woman (Eve which means Life in Hebrew) as a help meet for the Man.

Man was created in the image of God. It was God's intention that Man was to

- Reflect His Character
- Rule over all He had made
- Be a good steward in harnessing all the potentials God had given him to make this place beautiful and orderly.

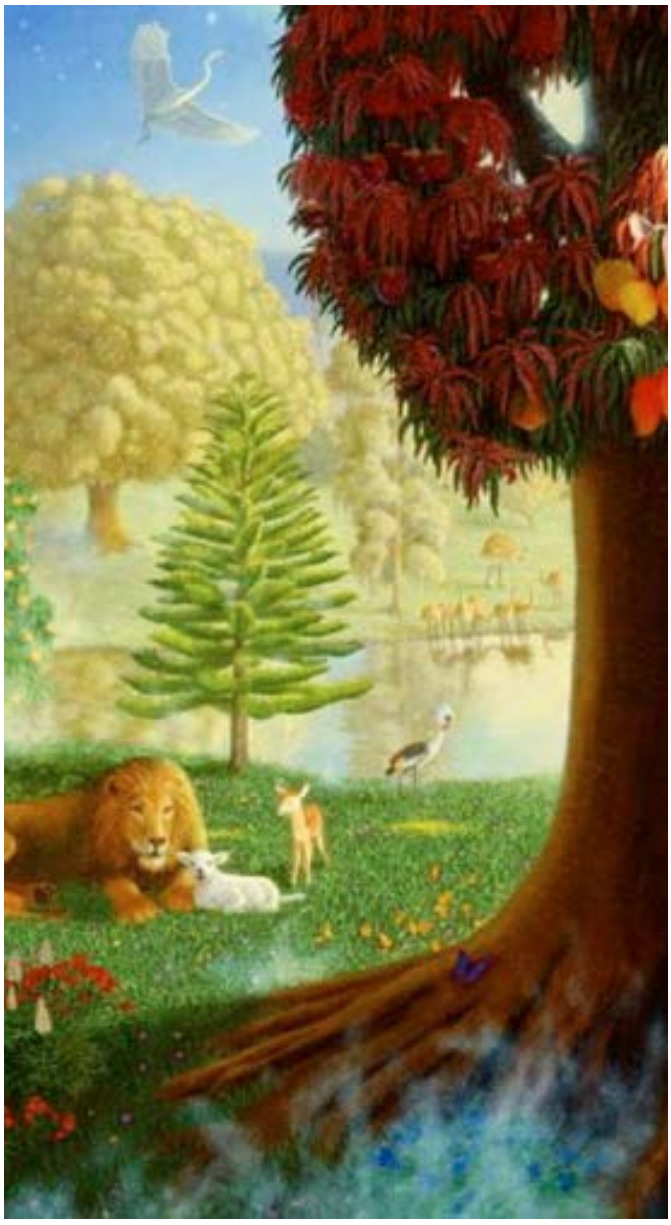
God placed man in the Garden of Eden to fulfil these purposes. This is where the tree of knowledge of good and evil was first mentioned in Gen 2. The tree was a representation of a CHOICE between good and evil. Up to this point man does not know evil as he was created "good". God defines what is good and evil and with this tree God gave man the dignity of the freedom of choice. The question is: Will they choose how God defines good and evil or choose their own definition of good and evil for themselves?

In Gen 3, we read of the account of how the woman was tempted to eat of the fruit of the knowledge of good and evil. The enemy used the same tragic action of deceiving the woman, "You will not die, for God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." Eve chose to disobey God. This act was purely an act of disobedience to God's Word. And this was an account of the first sin committed in the Garden of Eden.

God is almighty and all knowing, He is absolutely good, God did not want Adam and Eve to sin. At the same time God knew the presence of Satan and that he would tempt human to sin. Why, then, did God allow Satan to tempt Adam and Eve? Although God allowed Satan to tempt Adam and Eve, they had the freedom to choose not to sin. Sadly, they chose, out of their own free will, to disobey God and eat the forbidden fruit. The results – evil, sin, suffering, sickness, and death – have plagued the world ever since. Adam and Eve's decision resulted in every person being born with a sin nature, a tendency to sin.

Adam and Eve's decision was what ultimately required Jesus Christ to die on the cross and shed His blood on our behalf. Through faith in Christ, we can be free from sin's consequences, and ultimately free from sin itself.

To summarize, God created man after His own image and hence is given a choice to decide whether to obey God or not. If man is to be free to make a choice, then there must be something to choose between. Without the existence of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, then no choice would have existed for Adam.



Writing Skill Training

By Chan Yi Hern



Chan Yi Hern (front centre) enjoying the training

I was pretty excited to attend the Writing Skill Training by Chan Tham Seng. Honestly, I have never attended any school for English writing. This was my very first workshop!

When my mum and I arrived at D'Bridge, many had arrived and were seated comfortably.

Bro Chan Tham Seng started after a brief introduction and prayer by Aunty Chin Nee. We were asked to refer to the latest issue of VOH, the Sept-Dec issue for the purpose of consistency of house style. Besides that we were to read and observe any errors.

Next, we proceeded to copyediting which requires one to be well equipped with wide knowledge, experiences and a powerful command of the English language to ensure articles are clean, tight, readable and accurate.

Then we went on to writing. We should first have a subject, then plan our story properly. Choose a good angle to write on with a heading, an attractive introduction, a context with local colours, style and a conclusion.

With this guidance, I am sure the up-coming editorial team will be able to produce a remarkable family newsletter with passion and love.

Note:
Chan Tham Seng's last journalist post was chief editor of The Edge



Chan Tham Seng conducting the training



Adobong Manok Recipe

By Jane Mirabuna

Ingredients

½ kilo chicken breast
3 cloves garlic
¼ cup soy sauce
1 cup water
2 pcs bayleaf
½ tsp peppercorns
2 tbsp vinegar
1 tbsp brown sugar

Method

1. Mix soy sauce and garlic in an airtight container and add in the chicken. Marinate overnight or at least 2 hours.
2. Separate chicken from its marinade and fry each side until brown.
3. Add in excess marinade, water, bayleaf and peppercorns and simmer for 20 mins until chicken is tender.
4. Add in vinegar and sugar. Then simmer for 3 mins.
5. Simmer until sauce has reduced and thickened.
6. Serve hot and enjoy!

Makes 4 servings.

HAPPENINGS IN HGC

CHURCH EVENTS | Jan – Apr 2017



Launching the Bible Project
1 Jan



End-Time Conference with Ps Steve Cioccolanti
4-5 Feb



HGC 23rd Anniversary
25 Mar



HGC AGM
31 Mar



Good Friday & Easter
14,16 Apr



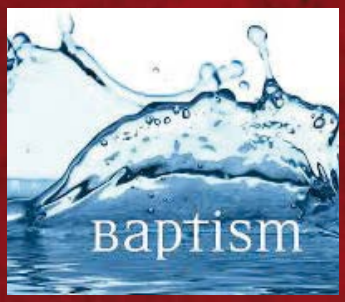
NEW BORN
Lucas Jared Tan
18 Dec 2016



WEDDING
Nicolas Lim & See Shae Lyn
18 Mar



MISSION
Sibu - Iban Youth Camp
10-12 Mar



BAPTISM
Norazlita Bt Norgi (OA)
11 Mar



CHILD DEDICATION
Lucas Jared Tan
Paul Chan Hymn Bok
19 Mar

COMING EVENTS | May to Aug 2017

Children's Church Camp	**27-29 May**
Church Camp	**1-3 June**
40 Days National Prayer and Fasting	**7Aug-15 Sept**
Loving Our Country Conference with Ps Dato Dr Daniel Ho	**26-27 Aug**

INVITATION

Do you know that Jesus loves you very much? He loves you so much He was willing to die on the cross and shed His blood for your sins. His blood can wash and cleanse away our every sin. He was willing to suffer so that everyone who believes in Him will not die and go to hell but will have eternal life. Not only did He die for our sins, but He also took our sufferings and carried our sorrows. He also bore our sicknesses. He was wounded so that we can receive our healing. He also came to give us abundant life (life in fullness and abundance). He is a good God who cares for us and is able to meet our every need. Would you like to believe in Jesus? Would you like your sins forgiven and have an abundant and eternal life? Would you like to have peace with God? All you need to do is open your heart to Him and say the prayer below. He will immediately come into your life and be your Saviour and Lord.

"Lord Jesus, thank you for dying on the cross for me. I believe in You and confess that You are Lord. I open the door of my heart to You. Please come into my heart and be my Lord and Saviour. I ask that You forgive me of my sins and cleanse me with Your Precious blood. Please take control of my life and help me to love You and be the person You want me to be. In Jesus Name, Amen."

If you have said this prayer, praise the Lord. Your sins are forgiven and you are now a child of God.

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