

voiceofhope

the newsletter | Jan - June 2020

TAKE **ROOT**
DOWNWARDS
BEAR FRUIT
UPWARDS

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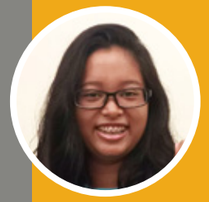
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Dear Reader,



Take Root Downward Bear Fruit Upward

2020 started as any other year. Little did we expect that it would turn out to be an unprecedented year of storms which has brought untold sufferings. To name a few, the deadly wildfires in Australia, the menacing swarms of locusts which began their invasion in East Africa, the 6.8 earthquake that rocked Turkey and the eruption of Mt Taal in the Philippines, and needless to say, the plague of Covid 19 which brought nations to their knees.

We are living in the period which Jesus termed, "the beginning of sorrows." All that is happening, and will happen, are signs that the end is approaching and His return close. But it is not the end yet! Jesus told His disciples that the end will only come when the gospel of the kingdom is preached in all the world as a witness. God is the only hope for the world, and He has always wanted all to come to the knowledge of the truth and be saved; never willing for any to perish.

So, let us get busy witnessing and testifying for our Lord in the power of the Holy Spirit, with our words sometimes and with our lives all the time, while waiting for His promised return. Stay rooted and hooked up to Him and endure to the end. It is tough and trying times, but it is also harvest time!!

Thank God in this MCO we managed to collect some very good articles and encouraging testimonies. Enjoy this issue on our website or in a hard copy.

Here, we would like to express our deepest thanks and appreciation to Chuppy Lim who has been our art director for many years. Regrettably, he has to step down, due to certain reasons. The LORD bless and reward him for his labour of love. We also like to welcome Eva Soo Lee Foon on board as our new art director.

Rooted & fruitful in Christ,
VOH Team

The Hope of Glory Centre

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Take Root Downward & Bear Fruit Upward

By Khor Hoe Chai, Pastor

AMIDST the most challenging year that the world and our nation is facing in 2020, is the call of God for us to take root downward and bear fruit upward.

The Covid 19 pandemic took us and the world by storm. Nations were in lockdown, global economies shaken, financial markets tumbled, aviation industry grounded, the lives of hundreds of thousands tragically lost, millions infected and many facing an uncertain future. I believe, according to the words of the Lord that this is but the beginning of sorrows, a foretaste of severer plagues and troubles that will rock this world. God is shaking heaven and earth such that only the things that cannot be shaken may remain (Heb 12:27); much like the winnowing process where the grain is separated from the chaff.

"One of the things that God is doing in this pandemic is to sharpen our vision of Him and of His will."

God has allowed the pandemic and shakings to show us and the nations of the world that in all our glory and achievements, we are but frail, transient and vulnerable. A single virus could take us down easily and wipe away years of achievements. And in our vulnerability, He desires that we acknowledge our need for Him and for His forgiveness and turn to Him in repentance. The LORD has said in Haggai 2:7, "I will shake all nations and they shall come to the Desire of Nations…"

Paul wrote in 2 Tim 3:1 that the last days will be perilous times, times of great stress. Jesus also spoke in Luke 21: 25, 26 about the distress of nations and men's hearts failing them from fear and the expectations of those things which are coming on the earth. He has warned us in His Word that in the last days there will be wars, famines, and pestilences. The shaking will be so serious that believers who are not rooted in Him may not stand and could be deceived, troubled or grow cold in their love for Him. Thus, God in His wisdom is telling us to take root downwards so that we will not be easily shaken, but instead continue to bear fruit to glorify Him. He desires us to be the wise man who builds his house on the rock which withstood the storm. Only overcomers will continue to power through the pandemic or any crisis to be His witnesses and carry out His will faithfully.

One of the things that God is doing in this pandemic is to sharpen our vision of Him and of His will. A term that is used is ESSENTIAL! When we think of what is essential, we also think of what is non-essential. Essentials are what we cannot live without and non-essential are what we can do away with.

As I ponder and pray over this, what comes to my mind as essential is the Great Commandment and the Great Commission. I believe that when we focus on these two essentials, we will be seeking first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness and all the things we need in life will be added to us (Matt 6:33)

THE GREAT COMMANDMENT

Matthew 22:36-40
36 "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?"
37 Jesus said to him, "'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.'
38 This is the first and great commandment. 39 And the second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'
40 On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets."

Often, we can be so preoccupied with our pursuits in life, work targets, obligations, and expectations, that we hardly have time for what is essential. God has pushed the pause button, for us to take a breather and to enable us to have time to ask ourselves, "What am I doing? Why am I running around for?" Our busyness has often caused us to neglect loving God, loving our family members, our neighbours; and even to neglect our own health. To keep up with the rat race, some may even have unknowingly compromised their integrity and principles.

Our God is the source of love; and spending time with Him in His Word and prayer keeps us connected to the source. Prolonged periods of neglect cause us to run dry like a tree withered in a drought. God is shutting us in with Him to give us time to reconnect with Him personally and corporately, because He loves us. He is giving us time to set the essentials right, the first thing first.

Thank God for the many testimonies of those who have experienced a deepening of their roots and their inner life because of the daily morning prayer altar online via Facebook – a daily hour of being in the presence of God in worship, the Word and prayer from 7am to 8am. This helps us to begin the day with God, to align our lives with Him. Doing this together has deepened our own individual connecting time with God and it is God's heart to see families connecting to God together and experiencing His peace and presence in their homes.

Many people see the Pandemic as God pressing the "Pause" button. As in any "Pause" it allows us time to get ready before things get going again. When we are ready, the "Reset" button will be pressed. Are you ready for the "Reset"? If our roots have gone deeper into God, into His love and His Word; if we have established clear God-centred priorities, goals, and disciplines, then we will be ready to flow into fruitful living and fulfill the Great Commission, even in the midst of further challenges.

THE GREAT COMMISSION

Matthew 28:18-20
18 And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. 19 Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen.

The church has been guilty of neglecting the Great Commission. As someone has said, "God called us to be fishers of men, but we have become keepers of aquarium." God wants us to look out beyond the walls of the church. The Movement Control Order (MCO) has made us realize that the church is not a building that we go to. Church buildings can be closed but the church lives on. The church is God's people loving God and loving one another and serving Him and His purposes wherever we are. The church is every believer in Christ called to be His witnesses who carries His presence and power to do so! Jesus said to us, His disciples, "Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven (Matt 5:16).

God has allowed the MCO for us to focus on our first mission field – our homes. He is providing an unprecedented opportunity for us to bear witness for Him to our family members who have yet to know Him. This is the time for our family members to have a close-up experience of Christ in us. And let us live out our love for God in the way we honour God and relate to our loved ones at home. Let us live out forgiveness, sacrificial love, respect, patience and kindness. Let us seek to serve our family members with love and gladness and let them partake of the fruit of the Spirit that we bear. It will be challenging and requires us to daily die to self and yield to the Spirit but the Lord will enable us and we shall be victorious.

Reports of increasing unemployment due to Covid 19 are alarming and we know that many Malaysians will be suffering the impact. Those who will be worst hit will be the foreigners. The church is called to "feed those who are hungry, quench those who are thirsty, clothe those who are naked…" (Matt 25:31-46). Let us pray that the Lord will help us not to close our eyes to needs around us. May His love in us compel us into action (1 John 3:18). Let us be ready in these last days of great shaking where many in their desperation will call upon the Lord and be saved. May we be ready to be His hands and feet working with Him to reap in the greatest harvest before His return.

In conclusion, let us never forget the things God has worked into us during this Pandemic. Let us continuously take root downward into Him and bear fruit upward to glorify Him. The book of Revelation tells us clearly what is going to take place in these last days. It also reveals the end to us. Christ shall come and "the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ and He shall reign forever and ever!" (Rev 11:15)

He who testifies to these things says, "Surely I am coming quickly."
Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus!
The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen (Rev 22:20-21).

Six Reasons for Us to Pray Corporately

By Ruth Lee



During MCO, our Prayer Meetings continue via zoom

"A fixed day in a week set aside to pray with others makes us more consistent in our prayer life."

2020 has been an eventful year. The year started with the Covid-19 pandemic that rapidly spread throughout the world. Its epic center was Wuhan, a city of 11 million in China. It later spread to many nations around the world with USA now topping the charts.

It seems that this new virus knows no borders, no racial or national boundaries. Malaysia has done well in enforcing the MCO then later the CMCO. Infection rates are under control. Recovery statistics are also very encouraging with about 80% recovery rate.

Then came the political 'earthquake' in our nation where a legitimately elected government fell apart because of 'backdoor' politics. At the point of writing this article, the Agung had already interviewed all the politicians and decided as to the candidate for prime minister. The new Prime Minister has been installed and a new Cabinet appointed. Our Health DG has also won praises around the world for his cool, calm and level-headedness in handling the Covid-19 pandemic in our nation.

What is God speaking to us today during this chaotic but exciting time?

The Sunday services and corporate prayer meetings for the first few months of this year had been wonderful. During the MCO and the CMCO, we moved quickly into online morning devotions and FB live for our corporate prayer. Today we are already using Zoom for our corporate prayer and we are improving in our digital methodology all the time. Indeed, we are living in super exciting times.

Unity among churches globally and nationally has never been so powerful. God is still speaking to us today. There are global prayer movements holding online prayers (including 24/7 prayers) during the past few months. We had access to very anointed and powerful prophets speaking to us from all corners of the globe.

Here I would like to share some visions released in our church even before the MCO and CMCO was implemented in Malaysia. Truly God was speaking to us of things to come.

The visions below were released during one of the Sunday services:

"I saw two visions. First, I saw a volcano erupting. The hot lava and volcanic ash is destroying the land. God said that He is the only One who can calm it down. Remember how Jesus rebuked the wind and said to the sea during a great storm, "Peace be still!" The wind ceased and there was a great calm. (Mark 4:39)

Next, I saw a great flood coming to destroy the land like it was during Noah's time (Gen 6:8). But God will give us an 'escape' just like how He told Noah to build the ark. Noah obeyed the word of God, therefore he and his family were saved. God showed me that Noah was proclaiming His Word and His promises as he hammered in each and every nail into the ark. The nails fastened the ark together to build a strong and steady ark. Every word of God was building up Noah's faith to complete his task.

Today, God is calling us to continue to build our ark by using His Word to save our family, our church and our nation. Hold on to His Word and His promises to us. His Word gives us hope, healing and life. He is our refuge and our strength (Ps 46)."

The word of the God that came to us during the Wednesday Corporate Prayer had also been powerful and faith building. In fact, the corporate prayers for Jan and Feb have been the most exciting and crucial by far.

Here is a most recent word received when we were praying for our nation:
"When King of Aram sent his great army to catch Elisha, the servant of Elisha was worried as they were surrounded. In 2 Kings 6:8-16, Elisha spoke to his servant words of faith, 'Do not be afraid. The army that fights for us is larger than those against us.' Elisha prayed and the Lord opened the eyes of the young man and he saw that the mountains were full of horses with chariots of fire all around. When they came near Elisha, God made the Aramean army blind."

We are not fighting a physical battle. May God open our eyes to see that there are more with us than there are more against us!"

Do refer to the church website *www.hgc.org.my* to read more of the word of God received during the corporate prayer.

There is power in us praying together corporately. Here are six reasons for us to gather together to pray corporately:

1.Corporate prayer encourages

Life is hard. As followers of Christ, we sometimes find ourselves at a loss for words or action. We really do not know what to do in times of calamity or trouble. When we gather with others to pray, we can encourage one another and build one another up. (1 Thess 5:11)

2.Corporate prayer disciples

As we pray together with many others of varying ages and stages of growth, we learn from one another. As young believers listen to and learn from the prayers of the mature and the faithful, their faith will grow.

3.Corporate prayer forms in us the habit of prayer

A fixed day in a week set aside to pray with others makes us more consistent in our prayer life. When I consciously set aside time to go to church for morning prayer or corporate prayer (and joining the online morning watches) – I simply pray more. Like any discipline, doing it with others motivates me. It is the booster that I need for my prayer times alone with God. There is a reward for us in praying with others "Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil." Eccl 4:9

4.Corporate prayer is needed for confession

When we pray with others and confess our sin, we expose it to the light and Christ shines on us (1 John 1:7-9). James exhort us to confess our sins to one another and pray for one another that we may be healed. (James 5:16)

5.Corporate prayer builds unity

It is almost impossible to hold a grudge against someone when you join him or her in prayer. This is because when we pray together, we hear one another's heart and this softens our hearts towards the other person. As we come together for corporate prayer, we are maintaining the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace (Eph 4:3)

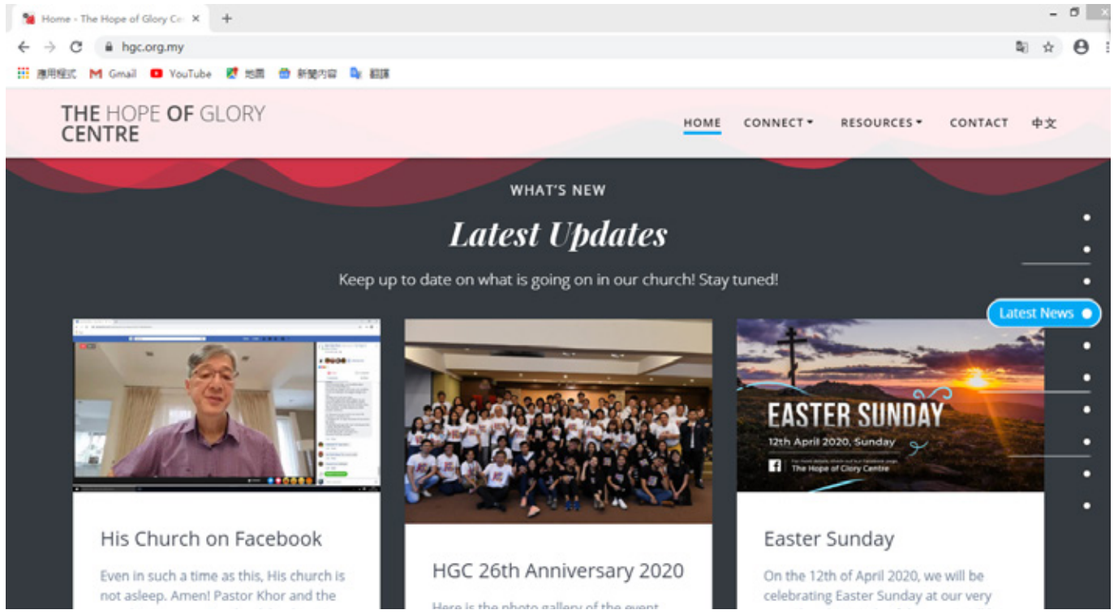
6.Corporate prayer invests in evangelism

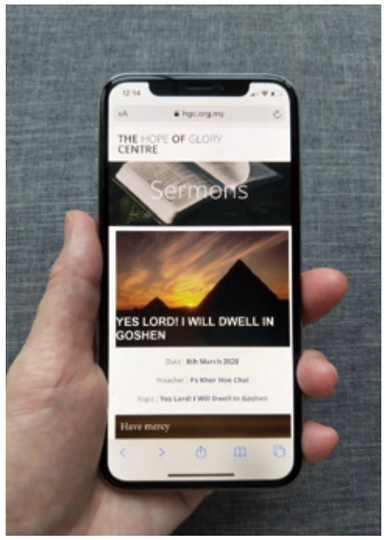
God gave us the example of the early church in Acts 2 when they met together to pray daily and devote themselves to the apostles' teaching. As they did that, the Lord worked to draw others to Himself. We see in Acts that the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved (Acts 2:47).

See you all at the corporate prayer meetings via Zoom. Watch out for details on the church FB! Greater things are yet to come!

hgc.org.my

By Abigail Cheong





OUR website is finally up and running! A very special thanks to HGC's own; Dex Sze , Jimmy Yong, Jason Tan, Christian Foong and Festus Chen, for making such a page for us to call our own. We are very grateful for all the hard work you've put in!

To access the website, all you have to do is key in 'hgc.org.my' into your browser and you're in! Do check it out, there are lots to see and gain from our website! Perhaps one Sunday, you particularly cherish the message that is being preached, and you want to hear it again; fret not, for all the sermons will be uploaded to the website, and can be accessed any time!

"Do check it out, there are lots to see and gain from our website!"

Even our Voice of Hope newsletters are uploaded to our website, and they are all fully coloured! Other than our past records, you can also check out what is going on currently for other ministries, such as the KKB mission work and the prayer ministry. Ps Khor's blog can also be found on the website, where you can read his tweets or listen to the ONE WITH YOU album. As you can see, our website is full of useful and amazing content all at our very fingertips. Let's put it to good use!

Church Life Under MCO

By Chan Tham Seng

APRIL 3 was otherwise an average day in the life under Movement Control Order (MCO). However, on that day the world tally of confirmed cases of Covid-19 infection crossed the one million mark with 53,000 deaths (Note1). That was bad.

But then we also had good news that very day. First we heard that Patrick Chong flew in from the United States and cleared the airport customs "around 12.00 noon", just in time to escape a 14 day mandatory quarantine with a government centre beginning April 3 ("God's ways are higher than human way," said his father, Ps Chong Wah Yaw, in response to the perfect timing). Patrick has completed his study but would probably miss his convocation. However, he did a self-quarantine for 14 days.

"Jason contacted the virus at his working place but God protected his family members and our church members from infection."

Another piece of good news is that Jason Tan was discharged the same day from Sungai Buloh Hospital where he was treated as a Covid-19 patient. Jason contracted the virus at his working place but God protected his family members and our church members from infection.

Covid-19, or Coronavirus Disease 2019 is a global pandemic that is infecting some 200 nations except for some far flung island states in the ocean. You have to be well over a hundred years old today if you can recall a more ferocious plaque dubbed the Spanish Flu that is said to have killed millions and infected a quarter of the world population from December 1918 to Jan 1920.

Covid-19 started as Wuhan Virus, a name associated with a huge Chinese city by the Yangtze River that, to me, invokes more nostalgia than fear. I was in Wuhan twice, the second time in November 2002 while travelling with a ministry team to serve among some vibrant house churches there. Wuhan came under lockdown for 76 days and when the order was lifted on 8 April, this "Chinese Virus" has become very much a US and European nightmare (Note 2). And Malaysians were meanwhile doing their best as they braced nervously for the "mid-April peak" that might exact a heavy toll on the nation's public health and economy (Note 3).

Plenty have been written about Covid-19 in both mainstream and social media since the outbreak of the virus in early January or perhaps earlier. A lot were bad







Photo Caption

Ampang town has no major outbreak of local transmission of Covid-19 cases. However, serious preventive measures are evident locally in pic 1, 2 and 3

news that added fear and despair. There were no lack of opinionated pieces and fake reports that fanned prejudice and ethnocentric hatred.

The purpose of the rest of this article is to bring you home news that you might have missed since all church gatherings were suspended beginning 18 March under nationwide MCO. The following information is mainly related to mission activities that have been disrupted.

Betong Ministry

On 17 March we informed Betong Romklao Church of our postponement of a ministry trip planned for April 11-14. Betong, a misty hill town at the Thai-Malaysia border, had then no reported cases of virus infection. During this period, the Thai and Lahu believers there continued to go into the forested area to tap rubber for livelihood. At the same time, Romklao Church also delivered food aid to the Lahu believers through Brother Alex.

With Thailand now under extensive lockdown, our current-year Betong plan involving several Malaysian churches is put on hold.

Sibu Ministry

The Sibu ministry may have a better chance to operate as planned involving Ps Chong Wah Yaw working closely with Ps Shin. Wah Yaw had recently returned from Sibu where he laboured more than three weeks (9 Feb-11 March), involving: Sharing with students (9 primary and 2 secondary schools); preaching on Sundays (mission centre and church); ministering words and prayer (10 long houses); leading Bible Studies and counselling (Iban pastors and staff members).

The current lockdown offers Wah Yaw a well-deserved break while he is preparing for another trip to Sibu, this time as a husband and wife team. "We have booked our flight and plan to stay there from 14 June to 2 September," said Wah Yaw, adding, "Of course, that's assuming life is back to normal then… as Ps Shin wants me to do discipleship and training for pastors and preachers."

Bagan Siapiapi Ministry

We missed a Bagan Siapiapi trip last year because of tensions before and after the Indonesian presidential elections. And just as we were planning for a trip this year, the virus broke out. Many people felt that Indonesia had initially reported unbelievably low figures of virus spread in this world's fourth most populous nation.

Wrote Ps Lasnini on 2 April: "We are still safe from the virus in Bagan Siapiapi. There are many cases in Medan, Jakarta and the rest of Java. Already several of God's servants have lost their lives, please pray for God's strength upon their family members during this period of grief." On that day, Indonesia reported 1790 confirmed cases with 170 deaths. With a population of 270 million people, Indonesia has on the average, four doctors and 12 beds for every 10,000 people. A full-blown outbreak of a pandemic can be catastrophic.

KKB Ministry

The Orang Asli work halted two days before MCO was formally imposed. We were alerted on 16 March of a Jakoa HQ directive forbidding outsiders from entering OA villages to conduct activities in view of the coronavirus spread.

On 26 March we called off plan for a Believers Camp for Gerachi members scheduled for 25-26 April in KKB New Village.

On 1 April we learned of some OA members facing difficulties under MCO as many were out of jobs and found no buyers for the jungle produce they gathered. We alerted the church to consider extending help.

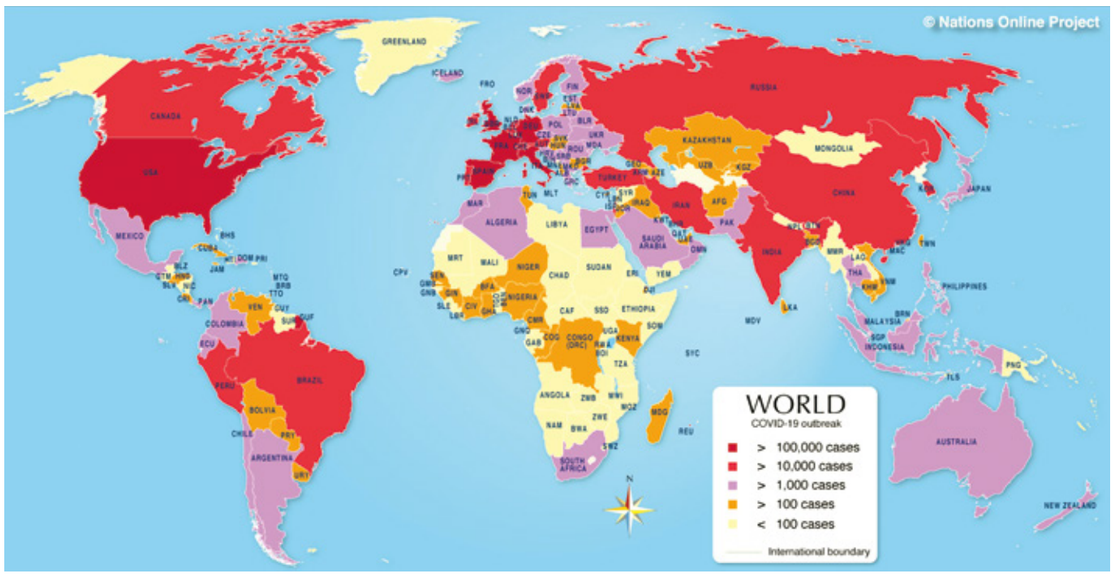
On the evening of 5 April the church approved RM2000 in aid of purchasing rations. The next morning at 10am, we moved into action: through the good offices of an acquaintance in KKB town, we got a provision shop to pack 20 bags of specified food items, and two Gerachi believers with cars to collect them for distribution. All steps, including making payment, were done via hand phones and electronic means. By 6pm, the food bags were safely delivered to the 20 grateful families, thanks to effective teamwork of our co-workers, OA members, church and friends.

Note 1: On 27 April, world tally on Covid-19 totaled 2.97 million cases of confirmed infection against 206,000 cases of deaths.

Note 2: On 27 April, Covid-19 tallies on US, Europe and other countries cited in this story:

Countries	Infection	Deaths
USA	965910	965910
Europe	1223581	121476
Italy	197675	26644
Spain	207634	23190
France	124575	22856
U Kingdom	152840	20732
Belgium	46134	7094
China	84199	4639
Thailand	2972	51
Indonesia	8882	743

Note 3: Praise God, Malaysia did not suffer a disastrous "mid-April peak" with cases of 5780 infections against 98 deaths on 27 April 2020. On the same day, Singapore reported much higher cases totalling 13624 against lower deaths of 12.



My Hazara Students

By Cham Tham Seng

AT the beginning of this year I offered to tutor some Hazara teachers and am enjoying it ever since. For quite some time I was asking around where I could find the Hazaras among the Afghan refugees in our country. Little did I know many of them are in Ampang.

The Hazaras are easily recognisable for their Mongolian or "Asiatic" facial features. And they have a sad history. I was first drawn to the Hazaras while researching on the Mongol history in connection with our Lugu Lake work in China. At a lakeside village we had led one La Pinchu and subsequently a dozen of his family members to Jesus. After La passed away in December 2006, two framed pictures were placed between his on a wall of his Zuosou house. One was his late father La Baochen, the last feudal lord (tusi) of Zuosou. The other was Genghis Khan, founder of the great Mongol Empire in the 13th century. La Pinchu, the lanky "prince" with narrow eyes and high cheekbone told us that he was a descendent of Mongol warriors who paraded this part of China.

The Hazara story goes like this: Genghis Khan and his descendants stormed Central Asia to build history's largest empire. In 1256 the Mongol hordes led by Genghis' grandson Hulagu Khan crossed what is today's Herat of Afghanistan and left behind a new ethnic group known as Hazaras. Hazaras, born of inter-marriages between the Mongol soldiers and the local Turkic people, are a minority in Afghanistan today.

"So as we have the opportunity to cross path with the refugees in Malaysia, let us touch their lives with love and kind deeds"

Hazara's Mongolian roots make them an "outsider", a convenient enemy to the Pashtuns, Afghanistan's dominant ethnic people who mainly make up the Taliban.

The Taliban are a second generation of Mujaheddin, the Islamic jihadists who resisted the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan (1979-89). Some years after the Russians were ousted, the Taliban started its repressive rule (1996-2001) during which many Hazaras were massacred. Meanwhile, the Taliban supported the Al Qaeda which, under Osama bin Laden, masterminded the twin towers attack on 11 September 2001. This led to the removal of the Taliban and Al Qaeda forces and the replacement by new governments backed by the United States of America. However, peace



Hazara boy

never returned as the Taliban soon regrouped and started a civil war that lasts till today.

By now, tens of thousands of Hazaras have fled Afghanistan. Many of them landed in Malaysia on their way to a third country, usually in the West. None of my Hazara students were born during the Taliban regime. However, probably all of them have sustained varying degrees of psychological wounds due to losses of family members during the ensuing insurgency.

Hassan* is among my luckier students in that he still has parents and two siblings in Afghan capital Kabul. Two years ago, his father bought him an air ticket to enable him to come to Malaysia with a countryman. "I have since lost contact with all family members," said Hassan who keeps a picture of his father in his hand phone, "I think of them every day."

As Afghans, the Hazaras are suffering in current history. As descendant of the Mongols, they suffered no less in ancient past due to missing a golden opportunity to know God the creator.

I am referring to an incident documented in Travels of Marco Polo involving the Chinese emperor Kublai Khan and the Italian traveller during his time in China (1271-1295). Kublai was a grandson of Genghis Khan who was known for his tolerance towards religions. Though himself a Shamanist, Genghis allowed Islam, Buddhism, Nestorian Christianity and Manichaeism to operate in the Mongol Empire.



Hazara girl

In Volume II, Chapter 6 of his travelogue, Marco Polo described Kublai Khan as one who had high regards for Christianity but was somehow disturbed by the profound magical power of the Buddhists. Kublai was quoted as having told Marco Polo:
"So return to your Pope (in Rome) and on my behalf, request for sending 100 (clerics) to challenge the Buddhist priests… subdue them to prove that their power has come from evil forces and magic... If I could witness this, I can then outlaw all (Buddhist) activities and I will accept baptism of the Christian faith…and my people will do likewise."

For some reasons, Kublai's request was not fulfilled and subsequently many Mongols in China turned to Lamaism as their religion. China at the time of Kublai was one of the four major khanates that made up the Mongol empire.

The other three khanates, ruled by Hulagu Khan (in today's Iran and Iraq), Chaghatai Khan (India) and Batu Khan (Russia), all embraced Islam by the 1330s.

All my Hazara students are Muslim of the Shia (also spelled Shiite) sect. This makes our English class more interesting.

For text, we use A Fort of Nine Towers (Qais Akbar Omar, Picador, United Kingdom 2013). This powerful memoir is written by a gifted Pashtun who describes himself as one with "Hazara eyes (due to his) great-great grandmother… from some Central Asian tribes with Mongolian roots." The memoir provides talking points on modern Afghan history and comparative religions.

We go through the book chapter by chapter, avoiding pages that detail "the cruel face of life" under the Taliban rule. The memoir opens our eyes to the stark realities of Sharia Islamic law under which men were whipped for shaving their beard and women for exposing their face. Students were sometimes taken to witness "acts of justice" sessions at the Kabul Stadium where thieves have their hands chopped off, prostitutes stoned to death and homosexuals crushed to death under brick wall.

The Taliban, who are Sunni fundamentalists, had introduced decrees like forbidding kite flying and pigeon rearing. This is something puzzling to my young Hazara students who, as Shia Muslims, look to the Iranian mullahs for spiritual guidance.

Sunnis regard themselves as custodians of Islamic orthodoxy and look upon the Shias as "infidel". My Hazara students may not be familiar with the differences between the Shias and the Sunnis in terms of religious practice, traditions and customs. However, they know they are not the same as or even "disliked by" the local Malays who are mainly Sunni Muslims.

"In Kabul, some Shia families keep dogs in their backyard but would not hug them. My grandmother used to feed pigeons and street dogs in the back lanes," observed Zabra*. For a decade now Malaysia has opened her door to Afghan refugees who register with the United Nations for final resettlement elsewhere. While waiting in Malaysia, the younger members of refugees attend special schools and this is where their minds are opened to a perspective in life very different from that in their countries of origin.

So as we have the opportunity to cross path with the refugees in Malaysia, let us touch their lives with love and kind deeds as we are told:

"… You need more than faith; you must work hard to be good and even that is not enough. For then you learn to know God better and discover what He wants you to do. Next, learn to put aside your own desires so that you will become patient and godly, gladly letting God have His way with you. This will make possible the next step, which is for you to enjoy other people and like them, and finally you will grow to love them deeply. The more you go on in this way, the more you will grow strong spiritually and become fruitful and useful to our Lord Jesus Christ." (The Living New Testament, 2 Pet 1: 5-8)

God bless the Hazaras!

* All names marked with an asterisk have been changed to protect identities.

To the Ripe Fields of Sibu

By Jeanette Chan
With Ps Chong Wah Yaw

Jeanette:
So, Ps Wah Yaw, what sparked this huge decision to be a missionary all the way to Sarawak, East Malaysia?

Ps Wah Yaw:
The Lord has been speaking to me to go to Sarawak to help Ps Shin in Sibu as there are many needs over there, and the harvest is plentiful.

Ps Shin has been working very hard among the Ibans in Sarawak establishing churches in many long houses but with only seven pastors and eight gospel workers. There is an acute shortage of labourers. Many of the believers have very shallow faith and could easily be enticed with material gains to give up their faith. Hence, the stirring in my heart to go and help Ps Shin to strengthen the believers there.

Jeanette:
Thank God you have ears that will hear…… Well, it is clear that there is a tremendous lack of labourers, especially in the area of discipling the new believers.

How many long houses are there?

Ps Wah Yaw:
As at Mar 2020, there are about 100 long houses (each longhouse consists of 30 to 60 families), and many more that are ripe for harvest. By God's grace upon Ps Shin, 25 government schools have also renewed Ps Shin's request to conduct Chapel services weekly in the schools for their students. This is an amazing open door.

Jeanette:
What are the challenges you be will be facing and how can the brethren in HGC pray?

Ps Wah Yaw:
I can think of 5 areas:

1. Pray for good health.
2. Pray for the ability to work well together with Ps Shin and his workers.
3. Pray for grace to adapt to the Iban culture and to learn their language.
4. Pray for wisdom, strength and favour to minister to the long houses and the schools.
5. Pray for protection for the mission work and for my family.

Jeanette:
Thank you, Ps Wah Yaw. As HGC family together we shall certainly support you in prayer and through prayers work with you and Ps Shin.



Youth Camp for Sek Men Luar Bandar at Good Harvest Centre in Sibu



God opened the door to teach in schools



Discipling pastors and preachers in Sibu



Teaching about the life of Jesus at SK Riden



Teaching the children in a long house



Teaching the Bible in SM Luar Bandar



We Celebrate No Matter What We Face!

By Abigail Cheong

ON 15 March 2020, my family and I woke up early, got ready, wore our white HGC t-shirt that was given to us last week, and ... went downstairs. It was the church anniversary, but due to the Corona virus that was spreading around, there was the option to stay at home and watch the livestream from church. It was a really new experience, but nothing can beat standing together and worshipping the Lord together in the same sanctuary with all our fellow HGCians.

The t-shirt that all of us wore was the first t-shirt that HGC had made and it symbolized going back to our beginning, to our roots. The worship team did a great job ushering in God's presence and lifting up the atmosphere; and seeing them jumping and singing praise on stage made us excited as well. During sermon time, we were all so glad to be able to hear our dear Sis Chin Nee share the Word of God. She shared about who God is, what He did for us, who we are in Christ and what we must do; she also used the 7 feasts of the Lord to show that we can wholly trust in the Word of God. One thing she said that stayed in my mind was, because of Christ in us, we can be confident that we are holy, blameless and above reproach.

As HGC turns 26 years old, let us continue in the faith for the many more years to come!











Photo Caption

1 *HGC - Happy God's Church*
2 *Worshipping the Lord wholeheartedly*
3 *Vibrant praise & worship led by the young people*
4 *A time for holy communion*
5 *Sis Chin Nee & Ps Lee Ping sharing the word*
6 *Ps Wah Yaw & Sis Seol Mei are called to the mission field in Sibu*
7 *The AV team getting ready to live stream the service*



Youth Cooking Challenge

By Alicia Joy


1


2


3

ON 7 March, the Youth decided to do something out of the box and hold a cooking challenge! We were separated into two teams, each led by a parent who had come to join in the fun. The first team was cooking Rendang with fragrant rice, while the second team was making meatballs and mashed potato.

I was in the second team, which was led by Aunty Elaine Foong. We all thought that making meatballs and mashed potato was easy, but we were surprised at the amount of work needed. Nevertheless, we all worked together to give our best.

My favourite part of the day was when we had to mash the potatoes. They were all cold, so we needed a lot of strength. At one point, we had about seven people, all mashing the potatoes at once! Watching the other team was also fun as well - the smell of lemongrass in the air was irresistible…

When we all finished, we sat down together to enjoy our delicious meal. Everyone enjoyed eating and cooking together as a family in Christ.


4


5

Photo Caption

1 *1,2,3… smash the potatoes*
2 *Prep time*
3 *Cooking is fun*
4 *Alice pounding the serai*
5 *Mummy & son working hand in hand*
6 *Aunty Elaine showing how it is done*
7 *Yohannes seriously cooking*
8 *The delicious end products*


6


7

"Everyone enjoyed eating and cooking together as a family in Christ."


8

Homophobia and Us

By Alicia Joy



Some Christians in the Philippines attended an LGBT Pride parade holding these signs as a way of apologising for treating them unfairly.

IT was the first day of school, and I was busy chatting to a few new classmates of mine when I happened to mention that I am a Christian. Immediately, their faces changed from friendly to hostile. "You're a Christian? Are you homophobic?"

At first, I was too shocked to answer. Was this really what the world thought of Christians?

Homophobic means "having or showing a dislike of or prejudice against homosexual people", that is LGBTQ+ people. Christians all over the world are accused of being homophobic, but it is not a baseless accusation. There have been many cases where Christians publicly shame, disown, and even physically harm their close friends and family, when they reveal their sexual orientation, on the basis that it is a sin.

"We should love LGBTQ+ people, but at the same time, we should not compromise our faith. Love does not mean acceptance, tolerance or approval of sin."

But wait - I would not go to such drastic measures, so that means I am not homophobic, right?

Treating LGBTQ+ people differently, by our words and actions, and maybe even just by the way we look at them, can count as being homophobic. Talking about them behind their back, not including them in certain activities, can count as being homophobic. Avoiding them, making fun of them, and degrading them can count as being homophobic.

God tells us clearly in His Word to "love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another". God's love for us is unconditional, meaning He will not stop loving you or treat you differently if you sin against Him. God actually showed His love to us while we were still sinners. We should love each other unconditionally as children of God, no matter who they are and what they believe in.

However, loving someone does not necessarily mean compromising. We should love LGBTQ+ people, but at the same time, we should not compromise our faith. Love does not mean acceptance, tolerance or approval of sin. Love is speaking the truth, and the truth will set us free.

"I am a Christian," I told them, "But that doesn't mean I am homophobic. I love all people unconditionally, just like God loves me."

"But Christians think homosexuality is a sin, no?" one of them asked me.

"It is a sin, and you can't make me think otherwise, but I'll still treat homosexual people the same way I treat others. Jesus sat and ate with sinners, so why shouldn't I?"

They nodded and seemed to look at me differently. I thank God that he helped me answer that question that day, and I wish for all my brothers and sisters reading this to love them as God loves us.



Encircling the youth to bless & pray for them

Youth Engagement – Praying for the Nation

By Ruth Lee

ON Saturday, 29 Feb 2020, our life group, Canaan LG, had the honour of engaging with the youth for a time of sharing and prayer for the nation.

After a fun time of games and anointed time of worship by the youth, we got down to sharing with them on the latest happenings in the nation i.e. the current political impasse.

During the time of sharing, one of the sisters informed us that the new PM had been sworn in. However, the announcement did not deter us from continuing with the sharing of the Word and prayer; this time for the new government even though it may have allegedly entered via the 'backdoor'.

Basing the message on 1 Tim 2:1-3, we shared on the five reasons why we need to pray for our nation:

1. It is good and acceptable in the sight of God
2. To enable us to live in peace and godliness
3. To facilitate the sharing of the gospel
4. To cleanse the land
5. To withhold judgment on our land

How should we pray for the government?

1. With thanksgiving for all men, kings and all who are in authority. No matter who they are or how they are appointed, God wants us to thank Him for them
2. With holy hands – we need to make sure that our hands or actions towards others in the church are cleansed. Before we judge our leaders, let us judge ourselves first.
3. With hearts free from wrath and anger towards our leaders. We need to forgive them so that our prayers can be without wrath or anger.

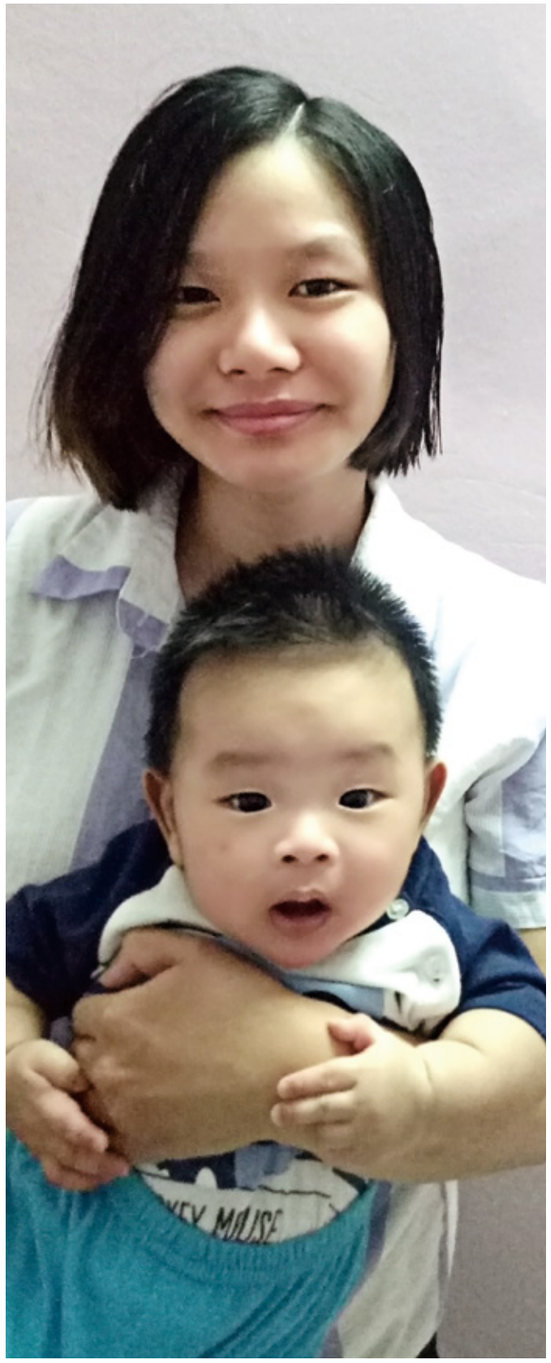
We broke into small groups to pray.

The meeting ended with our life group encircling the youth and youth leaders to pray and bless them.

It was a good and enriching time for all!

Most Wonderful Christmas Gift

By Chia Wan Tin



Wan Tin with baby Noel

I got married in January 2019. Praise the Lord that I was blessed to conceive early in April of the same year. I quit my job in June due to serious nausea right after my pregnancy was confirmed. Later, I decided to go back to Sekinchan to stay with my mother so that she could take care of me. During the pregnancy, the condition of my body grew worse and worse. I even had to be admitted once to a gynaecology clinic at Kuala Selangor when I experienced continuous vaginal bleeding. The doctor informed me that I was suffering from placenta previa, or low-lying placenta, which occurs when the placenta covers part or the entire cervix during the last months of pregnancy. This condition could cause a miscarriage and severe bleeding before or during labour.

In November 2019, about two months from the expected date of delivery (20 January 2020), I was referred to an experienced gynaecologist at Tanjung Karang Hospital for a further check. The doctor told us the good news that the placenta had moved upwards and its distance from the cervix now stood at 5.1cm (compared to 2.7cm two weeks ago) which just exceeded the minimum required safe distance of 5.0cm. How wonderful that my Lord had answered my prayer and the joined prayers of many of our church brothers and sisters!

When I had a sigh of relief and thought that I could rest at Sekinchan until the expected date of delivery, an unexpected cough changed everything. I started to cough

"I felt so helpless and depressed because I had suffered so long since I conceived. At that moment I did not know what could happen to me. I prayed to God…"

in mid-December 2019 and the cough began to intensify. I went for a check at a nearby government clinic. After examining my condition, the doctor wanted me to be admitted to the Tanjung Karang Hospital, for a premature delivery could possibly take place. Upon arriving at that hospital, I was then sent to the Sungai Buloh Hospital by an ambulance for better treatment.

I was admitted to the Sungai Buloh Hospital on 23 December 2019. I felt so helpless and depressed because I had suffered so long since I conceived. At that moment I did not know what could happen to me. I prayed to God that if I were to have a premature delivery it would be speedy and smooth. The pastors and leaders of the church were praying for me as well. Eventually I gave birth to a baby boy, a month earlier from the expected date of delivery, on Christmas day, 25 December 2019. What a wonderful gift to me! My husband and I, after a suggestion by Ps Lee Ping, decided to name the baby boy Noel Yap.

The baby was merely 2.5kg at birth. A doctor at a confinement centre suspected him of having heart problems, judging from the condition of his body. Urged by the doctor, we brought baby Noel to see Dr Lim at Gleneagles Hospital in January 2020 (thanks to Ps Lee Ping, Sis Yun Fei and Sis Yoke Mei for the assistance rendered). Baby Noel was diagnosed as having not one but two holes in his little heart, one in the wall between the atria (upper chambers of the heart) and one in the wall between the ventricles (lower chambers of the heart). By faith, all of us, including Dr Lim believe that the two holes in Noel's heart will heal on its own naturally as Noel grows.

I, myself, suffered emotional instability and body discomfort both during pregnancy and after delivery. Praise the Lord that my husband and I managed to practise the emotional healing we learnt from the courses conducted by the church last year. I have learnt not to suppress any negative emotions but to release them to God and not to be controlled by all these negative emotions. I was not able to walk for a long period of time after giving birth due to bone fracture in my pelvis. Anyway, I feel all the sufferings I had gone through are worth it every time I look at the face of my little baby.

Thank You, Lord, for all the blessings. Hallelujah!

P/S: During the second echo (ultrasound) scan at Gleneagles Hospital in March 2020, the doctor informed us that the hole in the ventricular wall had closed while the hole in the wall between the atria remained. We will continue to believe in God for His amazing grace to heal baby Noel.



10-year journey of Faith & Prayers

By Dorothy Ng



Dorothy's husband, Lawrence

I have been praying for about 10 years already for my husband's salvation. I have wept, I have cried, I have travailed for hours and days but I never gave up believing that our God specializes in the impossible.

I want to thank all those who stood with me in prayers for him especially my life group members. Whenever I called or text, they will be there to bring him before the Lord. Whatever his ailment, they will faithfully pray for him during life group or in their quiet time.

I will never forget that fateful day in November 2019 when God answered in an awesome and totally unexpected way. It was beyond my expectation.

My husband had been unable to pass motion for more than a week. It was not just an external but also an internal blockage of the bowels. I had to admit him to the hospital to ease his discomfort. It turned out that his condition was serious and the doctor recommended an operation.

However, the doctors warned that the operation would be risky because of his weak heart which was due to his high blood pressure. They were afraid that he might not survive the operation. I turned to God in prayers and asked my life group members to pray fervently for him. The church also interceded for him during one of the corporate prayers. It was a risky operation but we decided to go through with it. During the three-hour operation, I waited outside the operating theatre praying in tongues for him. I cried out to God asking for God to forgive my husband and to grant him salvation grace. I prayed for his blind eyes to be opened, his heart to be softened to hear the gospel.

"…he had an encounter with the forces of darkness which frightened him."

Praise the Lord for a successful operation. Something supernatural happened to my husband while in hospital – he had an encounter with the forces of darkness which frightened him. Thank God a few people who visited him prayed for him and shared the gospel with him.

Out of the blue, he called Timothy, my life group leader, to go to our house to remove the idols and all the objects of idolatry that he had kept for many years. In fact, he wanted to discharge himself so that he could remove the objects together with Tim. However, the doctors objected to it due to his weak condition after the surgery. I went back to our house with Timothy and Ps Khor. We removed the altars and all the objects in our house. We asked the Lord to cleanse our house and our family.

What a glorious and joyous time! My husband accepted the Lord and received Christ into his heart. He came to church during the Christmas celebration in 2019 and reaffirmed his salvation during the altar call.

It has been a 10-year journey of fasting and praying, non-stop believing, interceding, crying and travailing. Our God never fails. He will answer our prayers for the salvation of our family members at the right place, at the right time. Why did God take so long to answer? I can only say that God works to prepare the hearts of our loved ones through our continuous and faithful (never give up) prayers!

God's Divine Healing

By Jennifer Shanta

LAST year, in the month of February, I went to Roopi Medical Centre for a check-up. The blood test showed that I was having a thyroid problem, high cholesterol of 6.4, high ALT enzymes in the liver and high blood sugar of 7.6 which indicated diabetes. I have also been on hypertension tablets for the past 16 years; and have also started experiencing some side effects like giddiness when I lie down or rise up from the bed earlier in the year.

"I sought the Lord and asked Him for His wisdom and understanding."

In April, I went for a second check up in a government "Kilinik Kesihatan". The blood test showed the same results, high sugar level and high liver ALT enzymes. The doctor told me that I was diabetic and that I needed to be on medication. I was quite reluctant to be on more medication.

I sought the Lord and asked Him for His wisdom and understanding. I also shared my condition with my life group member, Jesse Dass, who told me to drink bitter gourd juice with lemon in it. I also googled for natural remedies and found many alternatives. I even found out the root cause for my liver problem was the hypertension medications that I had been taking.

Eventually, I decided on cutting down on my food intake, exercised, fasted and also took natural source of food for the problems. I even stopped taking my hypertension



medication.

My third blood test results in the month of September were so amazing. They had all improved. My sugar level was normal (6.1), my cholesterol was 5.8, thyroid normal and the ALT enzyme normal.

All glory to God for healing me!

Ordeal of Covid 19

By Jason Tan



Jason with his lovely wife and children

SEVEN days at home, ten days at the hospital and 14 more days of self-isolation! It was an ordeal I do not ever wish to go through again.

Sometime after a staff meeting with my boss, I had a high and persistent fever. I thought it was just the usual minor illness until on the third day, I was told that my boss had been infected with Coronavirus. That meant I should be tested.

"Ultimately, I was most worried for my family. I decided to take things one at a time and trust that everything is in God's hands. "

However, when I drove to the Ampang Mewah Hospital, I was rejected on the grounds that I was only in the same room with my boss. Instead, I was advised to do a self-quarantine and to monitor my own condition. Feeling feverish and very ill, I drove on to the Sunway Medical Centre Velocity. Regrettably, the doctors who did the tests were in a meeting that would only end at 5pm. Feeling quite desperate and very ill, I continued to drive to the Gleneagles Hospital. However, not only was it extremely expensive, but I had to make an appointment to be tested in a few days' time. That would not do, as I wanted it as soon as possible. Therefore the following day, I went back to the Sunway Medical Centre Velocity to be tested.

Totally exhausted and feverish, I drove home and spent the next few days living up in the attic of my house, to avoid contact with my family. The waiting period for the results was most unsettling. Not only did my fever not recede, I developed a mild cough and slight breathlessness. It was a difficult and confusing time as I could not decide anything until the results were out.

Two days later, the Ministry of Health (MOH) called to inform me that my test result was positive. Despite finding out that I had the dreaded coronavirus, I was a wee bit relieved, for at least I knew what would happen next and could start planning. That phone call was just a Contact Tracing call, (history of all the places I was at) and not to admit me!! I had to wait even longer because my test was done at a private hospital, and a re-test had to be done on my test sample.

On the seventh day, the MOH finally called to confirm that their van would pick me up. I waited until 10pm before a van came with three other patients. We were all admitted to the Sg Buloh Hospital.

More tests were run the next few days. I was quite hazy as I was getting worse: diarrhoea, a loss of appetite, taste and smell. It was a struggle for me just to get out of bed, and another feat to walk to the door to get my meals, all these interspersed with coughs and breathlessness. Although I had no appetite at all and had oxygen tubes in my nostrils, I forced myself to eat,

I managed a few video calls with my family but not for long due to the breathlessness. Having to fight these daily battles was extremely tiring, so much so, that even when I heard that my boss had succumbed to the virus, it did not register much. The family of my late boss could not even attend his cremation which made me wonder if I would ever see my family again.

I was diagnosed as level 4B which is very serious. If it hit level 5, I would have to be intubated and put in a medically induced coma with no guarantee of regaining consciousness.

Ultimately, I was most worried for my family. I decided to take things one at a time and trust that everything is in God's hands.

I am really grateful for all the prayers of my brothers and sisters in HGC. Ps Khor rang me up numerous times to pray for me. I wanted so much to worship together with him when he started to worship over the phone, but I could not, even though I exerted my strength. Each time Pastor ministered to me, I was very much comforted and encouraged.

I am also thankful to Valerie Seow and Dr Lee Kai Chee for their constant updates when I could not get any news.

All in all, it had been a tough time. Finally, after 10 days in the hospital, the day came for me to be discharged. I was truly glad. I felt like I was stepping out into a brand-new world and was extremely thankful to God for my recovery. However, the miracle is, not that I recovered but that my wife and children and mother, whom I had such closed contact with, were not infected with Covid 19. I missed them terribly and had to exert strict control not to hug or even touch them throughout the ordeal. God had protected and saved us.

Drawn to His Bosom

By Chin Wei Ling



THE Morning Prayer has always been in my list of desires but it had been difficult for me to join. I had to struggle between sleep and the need to take care of my mother after she had a stroke which was not easy.

Right before the Movement Control Order (MCO), my sisters and I had to make the difficult decision whether we wanted to admit my mother into the hospital for rehabilitation as was scheduled. We eventually decided to admit her on the first day of MCO as her blood pressure was not stable. During the period of hospitalisation, we took turns staying in the hospital day and night to take care of her. It was quite distressing having to do that as well as having to juggle with working from home. The concern, fear and tiredness troubled me and all the more when the travelling ban was announced.

" I felt like I was going back to the bosom of the Father."

My heart was without peace. However, when I made the effort to join the online live Morning Prayer one day, my tears flowed, and I cried nonstop. It was so anointed; praising and worshipping the Lord. I felt like I was going back to the bosom of the Father. I deeply appreciated then what Jesus said, "Come to Me all you who labour and are heavy laden; and I will give you rest." He is my comfort and refuge. I experienced the relief and security in the presence of God. A big thank you to those who made it possible for all of us to connect together amid the lock down!

From Darkness to Light

By Loong Ly Sha



I was just like any other modern person today. I had a good job and was well-respected in my place of work. I did good deeds in and outside my job as an oncology pharmacist helping many patients. I did not get there easily; it was all through my own sure hard work. And I thought, "Well that's life."

However, five years ago, I began to fall ill. First, it was insomnia. I could not sleep a wink at night for years. Then I became gluten or flour intolerant; after that both my legs started to become painful when I walked; and then I became intolerant to sunlight. There was no medical explanation for what I had, though I sought and consulted specialists. Despite my dilemma, I was still working and "surviving" through my life. I began to seek alternative therapies for my health problems and became involved in some occult practices. And that was when the carpet was pulled from under my feet.

I began to "sense" entities around me and would feel ill. I was a devout Buddhist then, so I sought help from all types of "si fu", including the "9 king temple" in Ampang. I would be well for one or two days but then I would feel sick again. I truly appreciate my family, especially my parents, for what they went through with me during that time. All the "si fu" asked me to pray and chant Buddhist mantras facing the altar, and so I did. Whenever I chanted, even in the mornings, I would feel "entities" coming to surround me.

By that time, I had become so ill with fever and heart palpitation so much so that I could not work anymore. In my desperation, I looked up to the sky and prayed to God to help me. And HE did. Because of the months of fear and anxiety I spiralled down into clinical anxiety and depression with suicidal thoughts.

At wits end, my parents brought me to see a pastor. He did not do anything except to share the gospel with me – me who would put my hand up every time someone tried to talk about God. But as I listened, my fever suddenly subsided, it was gone. When he asked me if I wanted to try and accept Jesus as my Lord and Saviour, I said yes, and immediately cleansing happened.

From then onwards, began an amazing journey that God led me through step by step – on one side treating me medically by bringing to me the most suitable doctor; and on the other side bringing spiritual cleansing to me through HIS Word, prayer, worship and fellowshipping with Him.

Now, I sleep like a baby at 10pm, eat whatever I want, and even ran my first 5km "marathon" in 5 years. Not only that, there has been healing in relationships. It has been life transforming.

I believe this is only the start of my journey. By His grace, I was able to secure a PHD candidacy that was all planned out, with funding grant, proposal or simply put, I am paid to study. I cannot say I know for sure where God is leading me with this study, whether it is to combat antibiotic resistance or to do His work in my workplace, but I know and am assured, "He will instruct me and teach me in the way which I should go; He will counsel me with His eye upon me" (Psalm 32:8), not by my own hard efforts but by His grace.

"In my desperation, I looked up to the sky and prayed to God to help me. And HE DID."

If anyone has doubts as to whether there is a spiritual realm, I assure you there is. If anyone has any doubts as to whether there is a one and only true God that reigns supreme over this realm, I assure you there is and He is. If anyone has any doubts about God's love and grace for you, I assure you it is real. God answered my sincere prayer as an unbeliever who has probably done everything detestable to Him.

I do not wish anyone to have to go through what I did to find God, but at the same time, I am thankful that I did, for through it I got into deeper fellowship with God. If you are reading this today, it means God is already calling to you, for He said, "Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with that person, and they with me" (Rev 3:20).

So, I invite you, no, implore you to invite the only living God into your life and receive a life so abundantly which He wants to give to each one of us. If you want to hear more about God's grace you may speak to me personally!! I stand today only by His grace; I give Him all the glory and praise.

MCO – My Change Over

By Samantha Victor



BEFORE this MCO (Movement Control Order) started, my lifestyle was pretty normal. Going to school, church and where ever I liked; except that I do not spent much time at home except in the evenings. It was just eating, sleeping and movies most of the time.

For a girl born and bred in a Christian home, you would think that I would be super into Bible Knowledge (BK) or that I prayed like crazy. Besides, as a pastor's daughter certain expectations are on me. Some friends in school have said, "She's definitely getting the highest in class for BK, " or " I don't want to be her friend, she's too holy." To be honest, it really pressured me.

I always had too much schoolwork to handle, which became an excuse for me not to be able to do any house chores! Hence, expecting to be waited on hand and foot, I would laze around at home including weekends. An added flaw in me was that I was absolutely insecure. I took whatever was said about my appearance to heart and kept it there. Trying to improve my looks, I would criticise myself for my shortcomings. I even tried to starve myself to lose weight, just to please people.

My change over began while being stuck at home during this MCO, for God came during this time and reassured me.

One night, whilst asleep, I saw Isaiah 61 flashed up in black lettering. I woke but did not think much about it. However, later, I was prompted to read it. I was amazed how God had shown me this part of the Bible which talks about the good news of salvation. The one verse that stood out more than the others was Isaiah 61:3b…. "That they may be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that He may be glorified."

I knew it was God telling me to reach out to people around me; like neighbours and friends whom I can contact through the social media. He planted me where I am to fulfil His purpose in sharing this good news so that He may be glorified.

In the process of getting to know God during this MCO, He has changed several aspects in my life. In my own strength, I had lost most of my battles but now I have the victory because God who fights for me will never ever lose any battles. He has already shown me so much in His Word and I am excited to continue further in this journey. I am ready to accept what He wants to reveal to me.

When this MCO started, all I thought of doing was to continue doing what I usually do, plus a binge watch on dramas. I did that for about two weeks. A few days before Good Friday, my dad asked me and my sister to read about seven Columbian youths who went to heaven and hell. Truthfully speaking, I was afraid after reading it; and when I came to the last few paragraphs, I cried, knowing that I was making the same mistakes as some of the people the seven youths saw in hell. God was breaking down my walls. These walls are things that I do instead of seeking Him. From that point on, I was determined to change the way I did things. That very night, I started reading the Bible and prayed. My urge to watch any drama was gone.

"One night, whilst asleep, I saw Isaiah 61 flashed up in black lettering."

Then on Good Friday, my Christian Fellowship leader called my cell group (CG) up to share about Good Friday and Easter. He led us to pray a prayer of reassurance. Along that week, I asked my dad if we could revive the family devotions. He agreed. The following night, I was in my room when I heard him playing the guitar outside and by default my body went out to the living room. We sang and prayed; and while praying, my dad asked me to pray for my sister. I felt a great pain in my heart and cried. I could not say a single word. I did not know what it was. When my dad asked me why I was crying, I told him about the pain and he said that God had allowed me to feel how He felt. Ever since, new ideas flowed in on how to lead my CG via my daily devotions. God said to me that, whether now or after this seasonal lockdown, many things are going to change, and it will not be easy. He showed me Mark 5:36, "Do not be afraid, only believe," and 1 John 4:4, "He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world." He reminded me of a verse we taught in Children's Church, "I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; marvellous are Your works, and that my soul knows very well. Psalms 139:14

I now confidently declare that I do not care what others say about me anymore because I am assured that I am a beautiful creation made in God's image.



What is the Great Tribulation? Is it a period of God's judgment or of Satan attacking? When will it be?

By Loke Wai Keng

Opening of the seals in the book of Revelation

Tribulation

GENERALLY, the term tribulation in the Bible is often used quite closely with other terms like: a time of distress or trouble (Psa 34:17-18), suffering (Rom 5:3-4) misery (Rom 8:35) affliction (2 Cor1:3-4), persecution (Matt 5:12), trials or testing (1Pet 4:12-13). Followers of Jesus Christ were instructed to expect all these in some way or another as Jesus Himself said in Matt 5:11-12, "Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of Me. Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you." Jesus forewarned His disciples of things that are to happen before His return.

The term great tribulation is used by Jesus in Matt 24:21, "For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be." The context of this verse is Jesus answering His disciples' question in Matthew 24:3 concerning His coming and the end of the age. Jesus used this opportunity to teach His disciples about His return, telling them of signs and things that would come, as a warning for them.

Rev 12:12 tells us that Satan knows his time is short and is coming to an end. He knows that when Jesus returns, he will be totally eradicated and banished into the lake of fire (Rev 20:10). Thus, he is working overtime to persecute the Church. This prophecy is relevant for us today. As we wait for Jesus' eminent return, we are and will witness satan's onslaught on believers.

"Believers are assured of God's protection even in the midst of persecution and suffering. God will strengthen their faith."

Is it a period of God's judgment or of Satan attacking?

It will be a period of God's judgment for those who do not believe in Jesus Christ as their Saviour. But judgment is a warning, which means there will still be time for people to repent.

But for those who stand up for their faith in Jesus, it will be seen as Satan attacking. Satan's goal is to steal, kill and destroy the faith of believers. However, God is sovereign and in divine control. He will not allow Satan to do as he likes. Believers are assured of God's protection even in the midst of persecution and suffering. God will strengthen their faith.

When will it be?

All through the centuries of Christendom, tribulation already existed. The tribulation will increase in greater intensity with time, till the Great Tribulation just before the return of Jesus.

BakedCheesecake

By Lee Seol Mei





Ingredients:

12 pieces digestive biscuits

150 gm butter
(at room temperature)

4 eggs

50 gm sugar

2 tsp vanilla essence

½ lemon juice

1 kg cream cheese
(at room temperature)

Method:

1. Preheat oven to 180°C.
2. Blend or crush digestive biscuits.
3. Add butter to the crushed biscuits. Mix well
4. Divide mixture into 4 parts and place into 4 rectangular aluminum containers. Press firmly into base of container.
5. Blend 4 eggs and sugar with a cake mixer. Add in vanilla and lemon juice. Add in cream cheese to mixture and blend till smooth.
6. Pour blended cream cheese mixture on to the biscuit base.
7. Place the aluminum containers into a *water bath (Add about 1 inch of hot water onto the baking tray carefully) and bake at 180° for 50 mins.
8. Once the oven is off, leave cake in the oven for 10 mins before taking it out.

A water bath is simply a pan of hot water placed in the oven which adds moisture to the oven so that the cheesecake will not crack from the heat of the oven as it provides a more even, slower heat source than the direct heat of an oven.











HAPPENINGS IN HGC

CHURCH EVENTS | Jan to June 2020

CHURCH EVENTS

Sunrise Service	**1 Jan**
Leaders Prayer @ Peacehaven	**4 Jan**
CNY Combined Service	**25 Jan**
HGC 26th Anniversary	**15 Mar**
Good Friday & Easter Service via FB	**10 & 12 Apr**



MISSION

Sibu – Ps Wah Yaw **9 Feb – 11 Mar**



IN LOVING MEMORY

Our beloved brother Andy Wan **23 May**



NEW BORN

Noel Yap **25 Dec 2019**
Firstborn son of Yap Chin Yau & Chia Wan Tin



Ho Sze Ning **28 April**
2nd child of Ho Peng Fong & Chan Sook Yee



ONLINE WEEKLY ACTIVITIES IN HGC



Sunday Online Service via FB



The Little Lighthouse Children's Church via ZOOM



Morning Prayer Live via FB



Wed Corporate Prayer via ZOOM



Youth

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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