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Premarital Preparation for Christian Couples



New Things - Isaiah 43:18-19

By Rev Dr. T. Jeyakumar
Bishop of The Methodist Church in Malaysia



Throughout Scripture, we read about GOD doing new things. And we Methodists are not unfamiliar with new things that GOD did in early Methodism.

1. John Wesley learnt field preaching or open-air preaching from George Whitefield but he did not stop there. Unlike Whitefield, Wesley put the new believers in small groups and nurtured them.
2. At a time when priests guarded their parish boundaries, Wesley criss-crossed between parish boundaries and preached all over. He wrote to a colleague in Oxford saying, "I look upon all the world as my parish."
3. He invited other Anglican priests to join him in criss-crossing the country and preaching in open fields.
4. Wesley initially focused mainly on the poor who were often neglected.
5. Wesley involved women in ministry.

The truth is, throughout history, we find that God has been doing new things. In this Isaiah passage, God made the following announcement to a people who were in exile and despairing.

Isaiah 43:14-21 – God had judged Israel for their sins. In this passage, God says He will judge the Babylonians who had invaded Israel without mercy and had taken the people into exile. God will rescue them. Then the Israelites will see "new things" done by GOD. "Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland." (vv.18-19). It suggests to us that there is going to be a time of healing, blessing, forgiveness, renewal, restoration and the presence of GOD with His people. Seeing what GOD does, it is hoped that GOD's people will declare His praises.

We know today that this promise was fulfilled. God brought out the people who were in Babylonian captivity and brought them into the land of Israel. God kept His promises. God indeed had done a new thing for His people. He brought them back from the exile.

Much earlier when GOD brought the people out of Egypt, He parted the Red Sea and made it dry to help the people cross it (Moses' time). Now GOD is saying, that HE is going to make a road in the wilderness and rivers in the desert in order to save His people. God is promising a second exodus for His people.

When God says, "Remember not the former things," He is not saying that we forget all His works of deliverance. Rather, God is saying, we don't have to focus on the way He did it. Maybe the people were thinking that God was going to send another Moses and God was going to part another sea. God can do a new thing to bring deliverance and renewal.

How does this passage apply to us today?

1. We can always expect God to do a new thing because He is a Creator GOD.
2. We must not expect GOD to work today the same way He worked in the past. He can do just the opposite. His methods can vary. The God who made a way through the waters, can now make a way through the desert. The dry ground is not a hindrance to GOD, just as the wet area was not.
3. We should focus on the Maker of new things. Don't focus on the methods. The wilderness is a place we can get lost in. But if our focus is on Him, we will find a road in the wilderness as God personally guides us.

God has taught us lately that God is able to do new things in this nation just when we thought that we were in a political wilderness. At what appears to be like the worst of times, yet the best of the "new things" happened. May we continue to trust Him for more new things to happen in our beloved nation.

4. The church should be a place where new things take place. Methodism is a renewal movement. Don't forget.

5. We need to discern together what GOD's work is and what is not GOD's work. Years ago, Billy Graham said the United Methodist Church in US is the country's greatest hope for evangelization. Can we say the same today about UMC in US? If we are not constantly discerning and recognising GOD's works and ways, and at the same time rejecting what is not of GOD, we might miss GOD's blessings.

6. If GOD wants to do a new thing in your life, don't resist Him. Otherwise, you might miss His blessings. Ever since I understood the meaning of the hymn, "While on others Thou art calling, do not pass me by," I have always prayed to GOD in the words of this hymn, that HE will not bypass me and HE will not bypass the Methodist Church.

7. We, who have received the forgiveness of GOD through Jesus Christ our Lord, must let go of the past sins and the memories of the past sins and tragedies. Let God renew our hearts and minds. If the Israelites in the Old Testament times could trust GOD for forgiveness and for renewal, you and I, as GOD's children can trust HIM even more, because our Lord Jesus has purchased the pardon for our sins.

8. Do not ever forget how GOD saved you in the past. Don't ever forget the great works of GOD in the past. Declare His praises!

"Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland."

(Isaiah 43:18 - 19).

General Conference Special Session Part II 9th – 11th August 2022

By Daniel Khoo, *General Conference Secretary*



Bishop Dr T. Jeyakumar



Holy Communion at the Opening Service on 9 August 2022

The General Conference Special Session Part II saw the gathering of delegates from all six annual conferences in Malaysia. The atmosphere at Port Dickson Methodist Centre (PDMC) was filled with much excitement and joy as 100 people gathered for the anticipated reunion – the first in-person-only gathering of the GC (post-pandemic).

NEW THINGS

At the opening service, Bishop Dr T Jeyakumar preached from Isaiah 43:18-19, reminding all present the nature of our Creator God, who may not work in the way He worked in the past, but to trust Him for more new things to happen.

Bishop also encouraged the MCM to discern where the Lord is at work, to refrain from resisting His work, to allow new things to take place in and through the church. As His people, we rest in the assurance that the Lord has purchased the pardon of our sins and we should remember His great works in the past and declare His praises.



EXPANDED JUDICIAL COUNCIL

Delegates voted in favor of a proposal to expand the composition of the Judicial Council (JC) from 9 to 18 members. The larger pool of JC members will allow the JC to function with adequate quorum in situations where several JC members have had to recuse themselves due to conflict of interest.

The following additional members were elected to the Judicial Council:

MINISTERS

Rev Joseph Ng Shiong Kim	SAC
Rev Tan Chung Kiat, Nicholas	SCAC
Rev Shearn Sya	TRAC
Rev Ningkan Galung Anak Suring	SIAC
Rev Lau Chung Wu, Dennis	CAC

LAY MEMBERS

Ms Rebecca Jeyanthi Selvara	TAC
Mr Jason Wong Seng Ho	SCAC
Ms Le Qiu Yi	CAC
Mr Richard Lon	SIAC

EXISTING SUBSTANTIVE JUDICIAL COUNCIL MEMBERS

MINISTERS

Rev Dr Chu Leng Chek	CAC
Rev Jatan Badi	SIAC
Rev Ashok Amarasingham	TRAC
Rev A James Ravindaren	TAC

LAY MEMBERS

Mr Loi Kwong Fon (President)	CAC
Mr Keith Chin Hsiun (Secretary)	SCAC
Datuk Anthony Lau Bong Horng	SAC
Mr Daniel Ong Boon Khen	TRAC

NINTH MEMBER (MINISTER OR LAY MEMBER)

Rev Dr Ling Tung King	SCAC
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Delegates voting on a petition

SEVERANCE OF OFFICIAL TIES WITH THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH (UMC) USA

Delegates at the special session also voted in favor of a petition to sever official ties with the UMC in the United States of America on grounds that the UMC had moved in a different direction with their homosexual endorsements. This historic vote would allow the MCM options to having affiliations with other emerging Methodist denominations.



Chairman of the Discipline Review Council, Rev Wong Vic Cern, responding to a point of clarification

Other major highlights included revisions to the **Rules Governing Marriage** – a petition by the Council of Bishops to empower ministers to take an even more pastoral approach in response to societal needs of the present generation.

The Order of Services in the Methodist Book of Discipline (MBOD) will also be removed and published as another book called **The Book of Worship of The Methodist Church in Malaysia**. This is to ensure that we can constantly update the said book with more Order of Services.

Delegates also voted unanimously in favor of recognizing the legality of **online meetings**. Having conducted meetings online during the pandemic, this was a welcomed move.



Following the **establishment of the MCRD** (Methodist Crisis and Relief Development) Council, delegates voted in favor of a petition for its equivalent to be formed at each annual conference at a suitable time.



The Council of Bishops addressing delegates before the final vote

The Final Day saw delegates share passionately their views on the last petition – to allow LPL holders to conduct Baptism and serve Holy Communion. A vote was taken via secret ballot before dinner.

A total of 98 petitions were considered, debated, and voted upon. 48 petitions were accepted, including the final petition whereby **LPL holders can be authorised by their respective Conferences to conduct Baptism and serve Holy Communion** with

a process being put in place to ensure sanctity of the practice. 16 petitions were deferred for further discussion with organizations and stakeholders involved.

Although there were important matters to discuss and decide upon, delegates found time to reconnect, to celebrate one another, to pray for one another and to worship together as The Methodist Church in Malaysia.



Delegates from Chinese Annual Conference

Delegates from Sarawak Iban Annual Conference



Delegates from Trinity Annual Conference

Delegates from Tamil Annual Conference



Delegates from Sabah Annual Conference

Delegates from Sarawak Chinese Annual Conference



Delegates to the General Conference Special Session Part II



Assistant Secretaries

Worship Team from Mega Chinese Methodist Church

Celebrating the birthday of Rev Dr Grace Wong of SCAC





Methodist Education Foundation

The Methodist Education Foundation (MEF), established in 1984, continues with its noble objectives to help needy Malaysian students realise their dreams of pursuing a higher education by providing financial assistance in the form of loans and grants.

Over the years, MEF has helped more than 2000 students and hopes to continue to help more Malaysian students to attain a degree to help them get a headstart in life.

This year has proven to be especially difficult in sourcing donations as high inflation sets in and cost of living increases dramatically. Many understand and appreciate the objectives of the MEF however, giving in these challenging times becomes even harder. It is even tougher for these students who have gained entry into a college or university to

pursue a diploma or degree course but are unable to do so, simply because they cannot pay the required fees and some do not even have sufficient funds to purchase a laptop, so crucial to their studies.

Hence, MEF is once again appealing to members and churches who would like to help these needy students. Any donation - big or small - will go a long way towards helping MEF achieve its objectives. To be a part of this cause, donors may bank in directly to Methodist Education Foundation (HSBC Account No. 302-311618-001) and email the bank-in slip with contact details to mef@methodistchurch.org.my. A tax-exempt receipt will be issued.

For more information on the MEF, please visit our website at www.methodistchurch.org.my and click on the tab 'Methodist Education Foundation'.

OLM-Plus in CD2: Exploring Spirituality in Community

By Dr Moses Samuel, Associate Lay Leader,
Trinity Methodist Church Petaling Jaya



TRAC Bishop Joshua Khong



Group photo



Rev Ronald Yap

On 13th and 14th August 2022, ninety-one church leaders from TRAC Central District 2 gathered at Trinity Methodist Church Petaling Jaya to attend OLM-Plus organised by TRAC Institute for Christian Ministry (ICM). OLM stands for Organizational Leadership Modules, and OLM-Plus is an extension of two previously very successful OLM modules, OLM1 and OLM2. Participating churches comprised Damansara Utama MC, Emmanuel MC Petaling Jaya, Klang Wesley MC, Life MC Puchong, Living Hope MC, Subang MC, Sungei Way-Subang MC, and Trinity MC Petaling Jaya. Church leaders attending comprised pastors, members of the LCEC, small group leaders, and heads of ministries, as well as emerging leaders from participating churches.

The theme for OLM-Plus was "Spirituality in Community" and the main aim was to bring together church leaders to explore, learn and understand what it means to live out their calling and role as spiritual leaders, and grow in becoming a leadership community. OLM-Plus was facilitated by TRAC Bishop Joshua Khong and Rev Ronald Yap.

The 4 sessions in the module covered:

1. Spiritual Leadership - Leading with God's Agenda.
2. Spiritual Community - Cultivating a Leadership Community.
3. Spiritual Conversation - Fostering Healthy Dialogues; and
4. Spiritual Legacies - What Legacy are We Leaving Behind?

The first session led by Bishop Joshua Khong provided an overview of the module and examined the attributes of spiritual leaders. It explored the crucial link between Spirituality and Community, which has been brought into sharp focus over the past two and a half years, during the pandemic. It highlighted that spiritual leadership is not narrowly confined to the

church but also involves the community. Leaders are expected to be 'a light to the world.' Among the other topics discussed was 'toxic leadership', set in contrast to genuine 'spiritual leadership' which involves imitating Christ (1 Cor 11:1) and being yoked to Christ, so that leaders see and embody His vision.

Session 2 facilitated by Rev Ronald Yap explored the concept of a Spiritual Community. It underscored that leadership is not merely functional, ie., focused on tasks and targets. Instead, leaders need to practice relational spirituality in which love for God and love for others is organically linked (Luke 10:25-37). In this regard, this session challenged participants to shift their focus from a committee orientation to a community orientation, drawing lessons for communal or relational leadership from Jesus, as portrayed in Matt 20:26-28 and John 13.

Session 3 involved a group activity in which participants reflected on the quality of their conversations and dialogue with each other. This session demonstrated the need for a spiritual leadership community that not only listens to each other but discerns God's voice while interacting with each other.

In Session 4, Bishop Joshua Khong pulled together the main threads of the module and invited participants to prayerfully consider the question, what spiritual legacy are we leaving behind? Spiritual legacy involves leaving behind "godly imprints and holy footprints" and is a vital part of the stewardship role of church leaders and all members of the community of faith, to inspire and equip subsequent generations.

OLM-Plus provided a space for dialogue, conversation, and reflection on issues that matter to church leadership, so that Christ and the Church would be the center of community life.

Why Premarital Preparation for Christian Couples is Important

By Stella Hoh, Damansara Utama Methodist Church

The Case

“The Day America Told the Truth” states that 1 in every 2 marriages ends up in divorce. Malaysia is heading in the same direction. According to the data last released by the Department of Statistics, the rate of divorce in Malaysia between 2016 and 2018 was around 25%. In 2019, there was an increase to 28%.



The Initiative

This burden was one that Bishop Jeyakumar carried for MCM and in March 2021, he put together a ‘cross-conferences’ team and tasked them to design two manuals, a Couple’s Manual and a Counsellors’ Manual for the Methodist churches in Malaysia.

With God’s help, the team had sufficient expertise

to ensure that the manuals were based on Biblical principles, comprehensive for inexperienced Counsellors, scalable for churches of different sizes and needs and professionally designed to attract the young people of today. Most importantly, it is totally made in Malaysia!

The Manuals

The Manuals have an Introductory session and 11 topics relevant to preparation for marriage. Though all topics are important, each church and its counsellors, have the prerogative to decide which topics they wish to use.

The Couple’s Manual consist primarily of questions that they need to prepare individually, prior to the premarital counselling (PMC) sessions.

The Counsellors’ Manual is thicker because it provides suggestions on how each PMC session could be conducted based on the topics covered. For each topic, there are Teaching Notes which provides the Biblical context for the topic, some tools that would help enrich the learning and short stories that could help emphasise the lessons.

The Counsellors’ Manual also guides the counsellors on how to help the couples inculcate a devotional and prayer life together.

The Church is not excluded. Though there is no formal statistics for churches in Malaysia, conversations with pastors both from Singapore and Malaysia, have confirmed that the divorce rate mentioned is reflective of marriages in the churches here. Please note that the divorce rate does not reflect couples who may not be divorced but remain married for different reasons (which include children, religious conviction, and finance) but live as if in a state of divorce.

The impact of divorces is not confined to the divorced couples only but have a devastating effect on the next generation as seen in this 3-minute video, titled “Divorce and Children: The Facts” (<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1n46Vyl5GI6WNEQkCeldwaNv1CTK9dJEq/view?usp=sharing>)

Families are the building blocks of a community, and communities ultimately create a nation.

Therefore, should the Church not place importance to prepare its couples adequately before they say ‘I will’ at the altar? After all, if we are all willing to spend both time and money to obtain diplomas or degrees for careers that end at retirement, should Christians not be willing to spend some time on a premarital programme to prepare themselves for a marriage that is to last a lifetime?

Post-wedding interventions are remedial at best and may often be a little bit too late.

The Pilot Test

Both Manuals were pilot tested by counsellors representing all the major Conferences over a 6-month period, from January to June 2022. These are some of their feedbacks:

ALL said yes to recommending the use of these Manuals.

Theological explanations for a Christian Marriage. All are convincing and supported by biblical verses.

Very comprehensive and easy to understand.

Detailed description on how each lesson and every question is to be conducted are very helpful.

All necessary topics to set up and build a Christ centered family.

Very practical.

It helps us reflect and remind us about God’s purpose for marriage.

The Devotion and sharing gives a good platform to introduce and practice devotional time with God as a couple.

Good reminder for us as Counsellors as we prepared. Helps to self-evaluate our own relationshipd with spouse & also with God.

Allows us see clearer what God’s will is in marriage and how God leads our marriage.

Discussing the PMC content point us to God, the ultimate Source of love in our marriage and interpersonal relationships.

If couples faithfully study the material and do the assignments, they will gain a sound biblical perspective of each topic to begin their married life.

Further to the feedback on the manuals, three pairs of counsellors shared that whilst using the manuals with their respective couples, two unbelieving potential spouses accepted Christ and one potential spouse who was initially not a committed believer, decided to be baptised.

May the Lord continue to use the manuals to bless and build couples in their spiritual life as they prepare for their marriage.

The Resource

Should you wish to obtain copies of the Manuals for your church, you can contact Patricia Lim at the General Conference (GC) Office or write to her at pat.lim@methodistmy.org.

The prices for the manuals are as follows:

1. A Marriage Preparation Guide for Couples - RM8.00 per book
2. A Marriage Preparation Guide for Counsellors & Handouts (loose-leaf for photocopying)- RM36.00 p/manual and RM3.00 p/set of handouts

These manuals can be collected from the GC office or couriered to your church, if requested. For courier arrangements, courier charges will apply.

The translations to Chinese, Bahasa Malaysia and Tamil is currently in progress.

My Personal Experience

The reason why I agreed to being involved in this MCM-PMC project was because God had tasked me previously to use my instructional designing skills to design a counsellors’ manual for my church. That was in 1997 and in 2014, we did a check on how the marriages of every couple who went through the PMC programme in our church fared. This was the result:

	No of Couples
Total application for PMC	402
Total weddings conducted	322
Total discontinued during PMC	20
Total who divorced	2
Rate of divorce	0.62%

These 20 couples concluded themselves that they should not proceed towards marriage because their differences were just way too big, and they were not willing to adapt to and live with each other. To me, this was not a failure but that we helped saved 20 marriages from potentially ending up in divorce.

Therefore, premarital preparation for our young people today is worth investing time in, to build their marriages, to build their families and to build the nation.



Ho Seng Ong (1898 - 1965)

Pioneer Educator and Pastor

By Dr Tai Kim Teng, Executive Director of DCB Asia

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Ho Seng Ong was born in 1898 in Kuala Selangor, a seaside town on the west coast of Peninsular Malaya. His parents were both Peranakan or Straits-born Chinese. At home, they spoke a unique form of the Malay language mixed with English. His father, Ho Kok Leng, was born in Singapore in 1868 and was educated at the prestigious Raffles Institution. In 1891, the senior Ho married and started work as a chief clerk in the District Office of Kuala Selangor.

One day, the Reverend William E. Horley, an English missionary and principal of Methodist Boys' School (MBS) in Kuala Lumpur, visited the town and met Kok Leng. The end result of that encounter was the miraculous conversion of the latter who then agreed to send his sons to MBS Kuala Lumpur, boarding with some local families.

Seng Ong was admitted into MBS in 1906 at the age of eight. This was the turning point of his life. One of the most drastic measures taken by Reverend Horley was the cutting off of the tauchang or queue years before the practice ended in China. Ho was one of three boys who had their queue removed. The queue was a Manchu hairstyle where the forehead and sides were shaved and the rest of the hair braided into a pigtail that hung down the back. When the Manchus conquered China in 1644, they forced Han Chinese men to adopt the hairstyle. Following the 1911 Revolution that overthrew the Manchus and ended the Qing Dynasty, the victorious revolutionaries put an end to the practice.

At school, Ho applied himself diligently to his studies. Not only did he pass the Senior Cambridge, he went on to pass the Teacher's Normal and London Intermediate Arts examinations. In 1914, at the age of 16, he became a teacher at MBS Kuala Lumpur with a salary of around \$55 per month.

Addressing his fellow teachers years later in the February 1926 issue of The Malaysia Message, he quoted from the words of George Samson who had written in John O'London's Weekly:

"If by the time they are fourteen we have given our children the beginnings of command over their own language, if we have taught them how they can learn and go on learning what specially interests them, if we have taught them how much loveliness there is for them to enjoy, if we have taught them to be grateful and comely in person and behaviour, if we have taught them to hate laziness and dirt and cruelty, if we have taught them a sense of personal and corporate responsibility, we have taught them the elements of the greatest of all vocations, the vocation of being members of Christ, children of God, and inheritors of the kingdom of heaven."

He added that for his part, he "was going to read these lines over and over again this year, so that I may not fail in my 'high calling' but may know why I go to school 200 days of the year to face a crowd of young minds."

Addressing students in the same article, he suggested the following motto: "Play the game; Win if you can, Lose if you must, But be a man!"[1]

Marriage and family

In 1920, Ho married Wong Hong Neo, an orphan under the care of some Methodist missionaries. They had met and become close friends at the Epworth League (now Methodist Youth Fellowship) where boys and girls were encouraged to mingle outside of school hours, chaperoned by their teachers. Both Ho and his future wife were baptised on April 12, 1914 by the Reverend W. G. Parker. After passing her Senior Cambridge and Teacher's Normal examinations, Wong became a teacher with an initial salary of \$30 a month.

The wedding was reported in the Malay Mail: "A very pretty wedding took place yesterday afternoon at the Methodist Episcopal Church, Petaling Hill, the parties being Miss Wong Hong Neo and Mr Ho Seng Ong. The bride and the bride-groom belong to the staff of the Methodist Girls' and Boys' Schools respectively, and their popularity was testified to by the large attendance at the church as well as at the reception held at Holt Hall."[2]

The couple had four children. Robert was born in 1921, Edward in 1924, Mary in 1925 and Ruth in 1927. Ruth later became principal of Methodist Girls' School Ipoh.

On September 4, 1927, Ho sailed alone for England to further his studies. "Mr Ho, don't expect to get a penny more in your salary when you return," his superior at the school had told him when the ambitious young man wanted to go to England. At that time, all the top posts in the Department of Education were monopolised by Westerners.

Ho earned his B.A. (Honours) degree in geography at the University of London in just one year. Eight years later, he returned to the Institute of Education at the same university to obtain his Teacher's Diploma in education and Master of Arts with distinction. He was also inducted as a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society (FRGS).

On his return to the Methodist Boys' School Kuala Lumpur, he was promoted to senior teacher. On January 20, 1930, he became the principal of the Anglo-Chinese School Malacca.

"He is a man of fine literary ability and an excellent teacher. He also bears a character which is of a high order. He is courteous and a gentleman. His Christian values are many and he takes his stand for righteousness, truth, temperance and purity of life. The boys of Malacca A.C.S. will find in their new Principal, a scholar, a teacher and a man who plays the game in every department of the life," said the Reverend W. E. Horley when introducing Ho Seng Ong to the school staff and students.[3]

Reverend C. C. Underhill had started ACS Malacca on January 24, 1910 with seven pupils in the home of a Chinese gentleman in Heeren Street. When Ho took over as principal, it was the turning point in the school's history. He devoted all his time and energy to the task of re-organising and improving the school and started a boarding school in Tranquerah Road to cater to boys from the surrounding towns of Alor Gajah, Jasin, Tangkak and other states.

The school enrolment grew rapidly and he launched a campaign to raise funds for a new building. The staff donated a month's salary each. The new school building on a seven-acre site was officially opened in November 1941.

Unfortunately, war broke out less than two months later and the school was occupied by the Japanese who used the building as a Naval Training Centre. Sadly, all the new furnishings and furniture were completely looted.

War years

World War II arrived in Malaya on December 8, 1941 when Japanese troops set foot in Kota Bharu. The atrocities committed by the Japanese army against the Chinese during the Sino-Japanese conflict caused many Chinese in Malaya to fear for their lives. On January 9, 1942, the Ho family left Malacca for Singapore, then considered "an impregnable fortress". Twenty young girls from Shellabear Hall (the Methodist Girls' School hostel) accompanied them. The convoy of nine vehicles stopped at Yong Peng to spend a night at a friend's house in a rubber estate. The roads were full of vehicles, many of which were army trucks. After a journey of 150 miles, they arrived in Singapore. By God's providence, the family managed to stay temporarily with friends. Singapore was under constant bombardment and most of the time, the evacuees had to seek refuge in the nearby air-raid shelters.

On the night of February 8, 1942, the Japanese crossed the Causeway linking Johor Bahru and Singapore. A week later on February 15, 1942, the British commander, Lt-Gen A. E. Percival, surrendered to Lt-Gen Tomoyuki Yamashita. All evacuees to Singapore were ordered to return to their homes in Malaya. After a gruelling and harrowing journey past many Japanese sentries, the Ho family, with the 20 girls in tow, arrived safely back in Malacca. The next four years were uncertain times.

When the war ended, the family moved to the Manse in Bickley Park in Malacca. It was next to the Anglo-Chinese School which was re-opened on September 24, 1945. About 900 students applied for admission, compared to the pre-war years of 350 students.

"Our schools are a mere skeleton of what they were. Boys have no books and they are more like a mob than a set of school children," observed Ho.[4]

He quickly renovated and furnished the damaged school. The playing field was enlarged and a new tuck shop was built.

Post-war years

On September 1, 1946, Ho became the principal of the Anglo-Chinese School Ipoh. He proceeded to renovate the school which had been partially damaged during the war. Under him, a Form Six or post-senior class was introduced, the first in the country, and studies in Chinese, Tamil and Malay were started. Between 1946 and 1948, Ho also served as the pastor of Wesley Church Ipoh. In 1948, he left for the U.S. for a year to further his studies. He was awarded the degree of Doctor of Education (EdD) by the University of Denver, Colorado. Upon his return in 1949, he was appointed as the first Asian principal of Anglo-Chinese School Penang.

Ho then returned to his alma mater, Methodist Boys' School Kuala Lumpur, as its first Asian principal from 1952 to 1955. He completely renovated the main block, the Assembly Hall was redesigned, and a stage was built with improved acoustics. In 1954, a Form Six class was started, with its own library.

Ho's role as a pioneer Methodist educationist spanned a period of almost 50 years until his retirement in December 1963. He was also a man of God. In January 1939, he was ordained a deacon in the Methodist Church. He was the first Asian minister of Wesley Church, Malacca and Kuala Lumpur, the first Asian secretary of the Annual Conference and the first Asian member of the Methodist Board of Mission in New York. Ho was the first chair of the Malaya Annual Conference-Historical Society and president of the Malayan Christian Council.

On December 19, 1949, Ho was ordained an elder of the Methodist Church by Bishop Arthur J. Moore. He was then serving as principal of the Anglo-Chinese School Penang.

His contributions to the country were no less as he served as a member of the Malayanisation Committee, Central Advisory Education Committee, Staff Side of Federation Arbitration, director of YMCA and member of the Singapore Public Service Commission.

"We are interested in how men live and earn their living. We are concerned that people shall live decently and under the best conditions of wages and housing. We are against exploitation of any kind and favour the greatest amount of freedom for men consistent with the need for security, peace and order," he declared when speaking at the Methodist Southeast Asian Central Conference in Singapore in 1960.[5]

He also served with distinction as a member of the board of missions under the Division of World Missions of the Methodist Church in the New York office from 1959 to 1960. A major part of his role was to travel all over the U.S. to speak about the new nation of Malaya.

Ho wrote *Education for Unity in Malaya* (Malayan Teachers' Union Penang, 1952, 209 pages) which stressed on nation-building through proper education in a multi-racial society. In his view, the British did very little to bridge the gap between races and classes. He believed that although education was not the only means of achieving unity, it was the single most important factor for social integration in the context of Malaya's racial, religious and cultural fabric.

Towards the end of his career, he published *Methodist Schools in Malaya, Their Record and History* (843 pages). The book is a valuable historical record of the Methodist schools of his era.

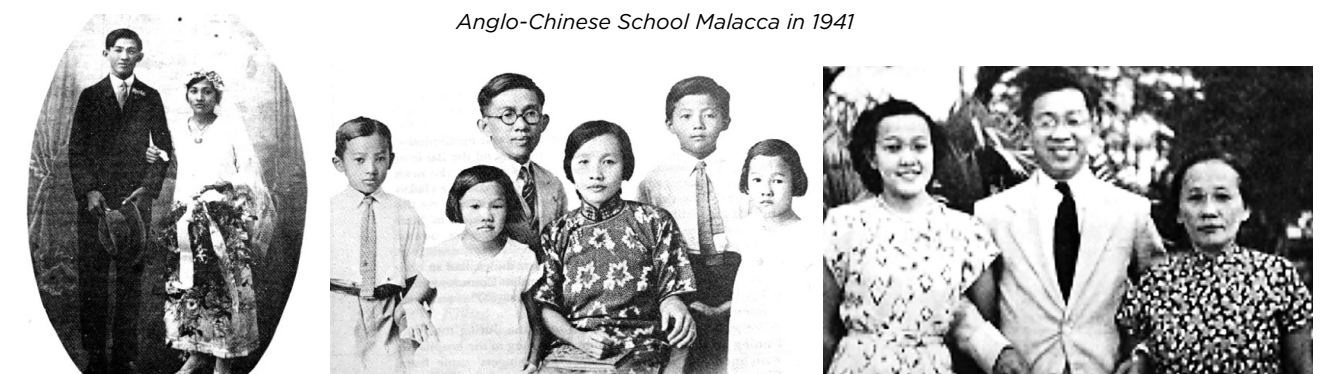
Ho passed away in Singapore in 1965. In a tribute at his memorial service, the late Bishop Emeritus Dr T. R. Doraisamy said: "Although a man of superb talents and ability he was a humble, affectionate and compassionate man. He liked to help, as he said, 'the lame duck' and to 'help a lame dog over a stile'." [6]

The *Voyager*, the magazine of the Anglo-Chinese School Ipoh where he had served as principal between 1946 and 1948, paid tribute to him in its November 1965 issue by quoting Bishop Hobart B. Amstutz: "We are proud that we have such a man as Ho Seng Ong: teacher, pastor, leader in educational matters, a delegate to world conferences in Africa, Scotland and India, a world citizen wherever he has been sent." It added: "The life and career of Dr Ho Seng Ong provides a striking example of what the people of Malaysia can do for their country if they use their talents and opportunities wisely and carry out their daily duties loyally, conscientiously, and with a sense of vision and mission." [7]

His contributions as an educationist led to his being conferred the Order of the British Empire (O.B.E.) in 1955 by Queen Elizabeth II. In 1956, the University of Malaya awarded him an honorary LLD degree in recognition of his many achievements.



Anglo-Chinese School Malacca in 1941



Ho Seng Ong and Wong Hong Neo on their wedding day. From Ruth Ho, *Rainbow Round My Shoulder* (Singapore, Eastern Universities Press, 1975)



(from left to right) Ruth Ho, Dr Ho and Mrs Ho

Notes

- 1 ^ Ho Seng Ong, "Play the game... but be a man!", *The Malaysia Message*, February 1926, in *MACS Centenary 1910-1920: Dear ACS, We're proud of thee*, by Tedin Ng Bin Abdullah (Malacca: Print Reaction Enterprise, 2012), 35, <https://fliphtml5.com/etwt/ylhp/basic/48-49>. Accessed January 2, 2021. *The Malaysia Message* was one of the main periodicals of the Methodist Church, later known as *The Methodist Message*. John O'London's Weekly was a literary magazine published by George Newnes Ltd between 1919 and 1954.
- 2 ^ Ruth Ho, *Rainbow Round My Shoulder* (Singapore, Eastern Universities Press, 1975), 72-73.
- 3 ^ "New Principal. Mr Ho Seng Ong Goes To Malacca", *The Straits Times*, December 27, 1929, 19, <https://eresources.nlb.gov.sg/newspapers/Digitised/Article/straitstimes19291227-1.2.141>. Accessed January 2, 2021.
- 4 ^ Ho, *Rainbow Round My Shoulder*, 187.
- 5 ^ "Pastor makes call for Christian work in unions and labour", *The Singapore Free Press*, August 30, 1960, 7, <https://eresources.nlb.gov.sg/newspapers/Digitised/Article/freepress19600830-1.2.89?ST=1&AT=search&k=Rev%20Dr%20Ho%20seng%20ong&QT=rev,dr,ho,seng,ong&oref=article>. Accessed January 2, 2021.
- 6 ^ Tong Hoo Ing, "The Rev Dr Ho Seng Ong: A trail blazer in Asian Methodism" in *The Methodist Message* (November 2014), 21, https://issuu.com/methodist.message/docs/mm_nov14_23oct-web/21. Accessed January 2, 2021.
- 7 ^ "The passing away of a great man - Rev Dr Ho Seng Ong" in *The Voyager* (Anglo Chinese School Ipoh, Vol. XXXIII, November 1965), 25, <https://acsipohalumni.files.wordpress.com/2011/11/voyager-1965.pdf>. Accessed January 2, 2021.

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Seminar on Job

When Life and God Don't Make Sense

By Lee Ching Wei

Article taken from Clarion Newsletter an official organ of Trinity Methodist Church Petaling Jaya.



Bishop Dr Gordon Wong
The Methodist Church in Singapore



Overall View of participants

Little Lisa's burial at the cemetery took place many years ago. It was a wet Sunday afternoon on earth. People there were clutching umbrellas. The little coffin was lowered into the grave. Little Lisa was only two and a half years old.

[Story shared by Bishop Dr Gordon Wong in his sermon on 31 July 2022]

'WHY, God?' How many of you have uttered this question?

When we read of the suffering of innocent people in wars and hear of the pain felt by those whose loved ones are lost in senseless killing.

When we see the good perishing while the wicked prosper.

Or if you yourself have experienced such sorrow, like Lisa's parents and don't understand the reason behind such hurt.

'Why, God?'

The book of Job was written to address the issue of human suffering. And in this seminar 'When Life (And God) Don't Make Sense, Bishop Dr Gordon Wong brought us through this journey of not only to better understand the interpretation of the text but also to pick up on the wisdom (pastoral qualities) offered by this book.

The seminar was carried out across two days; with the first session on the night of July 29th, Friday and three other sessions on Saturday morning, July 30th.

Job 1-2: Patient Job

This opening session addressed two questions: "How could a good God allow such a terrible test?" and "Patient and protesting: are there two different Jobs?"

Job was a righteous man who feared God. And yet, he suffered so much.

Patient Job appears in the first two chapters, where he lost his livestock and servants to robbers and a fire. Then his sons and daughters died when the house they were in collapsed on them when a mighty wind from the desert swept in. If that was not bad enough, Job himself was afflicted with painful sores from the soles of his feet to the crown of his head.

His initial reaction had been one of patience; "Naked I come from my mother's womb, and naked I will depart. The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away; may the name of the Lord be praised" (1:21) and "... Shall we accept good from God, and not trouble?" (2:10)

In this, we find the wisdom of **'Be prepared. Suffering on earth will not always make sense'**.

Job 3-37: Protesting Job

But from chapter three, we see a protesting Job in the dialogues; "I wish I was dead!" (3:1-3), "A test? I wish God didn't care!" (7:17-19), "What wrong have I done that deserves this?" (7:20-21, 10:21), "Smiling doesn't stop the pain!" (9:27-28) and "You are destroying me!" (16:7-8).

One can almost hear the agony in Job's voice as we read the verses above.

In this, we surely must know and recognise that **'Suffering produces different emotions and even contradictory reactions and reasoning within ourselves'**.

We get to know of Job's friends in these chapters. It was heartening to read that three of them; Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar, when they heard about all the troubles that had come upon Job, set out to go and sympathise and comfort him. They sat on the ground with Job for seven days and seven nights. And no one said a word to him, because they saw how great his suffering was.

But as Job opened his mouth and cursed the day of his birth, protesting his suffering, his friends then attempted to console him.

As we read the conversations between Job and his friends, we find that their speeches appeal to the revelation from the Spirit of God, traditional wisdom and divine wisdom. We may even think that some of the things shared by his friends made sense; "human suffering is common to all" (4:7), "suffering can be a blessing and mark of God's loving discipline" (4:17) while others seem to border on being insensitive; "You are full of hot air, accusing God of being unfair!" (8:2-3), "...Your children suffered because they sinned" (8:4) and "Someone needs to correct your mocking" (11:2-3).

I wonder how many of us have been in situations where in our attempt to comfort a friend, we either do not know what to say or worse, say something which ended up wounding our friend even more?

If you've experienced this, remember these pastoral wisdom:

- Don't presume personal sin is the main cause of suffering
- Don't parrot pious platitudes
- Empathize (cry) rather than Explain (clarify)
- Offer practical compassion rather than philosophical correctness/completeness

Job 38:1-42:6: God Rebukes Job

In these chapters, it is worth noting that God spoke to Job twice.

God's first speech (38:1-39) touches on the stars, skies, stream, and animals, how God created and control them all while His second speech (40:6-41) mentions two creatures; Behemoth and Levethian, which are symbols of terror and chaos in the Jewish culture, and that again, God was the one who created them and can control them.

God's speeches underline how Job cannot hope to comprehend God's incomparable greatness as creator of all. This point is made in two different ways:

1. God creates and cares for many different creatures. The Universe is not just about you and me (human beings).
2. Even *Mighty Terror* and *Evil Chaos* are under God's creative control, and you can't manage or understand them while He can.

On why God spoke twice, **God wants more than our resigned silence. He wants us truly to know that humans have neither the capacity nor right to know why so much suffering afflicts the world.**

Having said that, this does not mean God will be angry if we cry out but in the end, we need to recognise where we stand in such matters; that we neither have the capacity nor the right to know why.

Job 42: God Restores Job

This final segment sees God restoring Job.

Here, we also see the rebuke that God gave to Job's friends, that they have not spoken the truth about Him. Eliphaz was philosophically correct but pastorally wrong; "We reap what we sow" has biblical truth even if the story makes clear that this is not always true in earthly experience.

The point here is to remember **to prioritise pastoral compassion over proverbial correctness and that it is only human to express anger and demand answers, but it is harmful if our anger becomes abusive and our demands become destructive to others and ourselves.**

In the end, Job reconciles with not only his family but his friends as well.

The happy ending affirms that heavenly joy will ultimately triumph over earthly sorrow. It does not, however, promise a life on earth free from suffering.

The book aims to help us trust in God's sovereign control and compassion especially when we do not know who or what to blame.

It is also a reminder that when suffering and God make no sense, hold on to the divine promise of family fullness and joy.

A Faith Wet with Tears

On that day of Lisa's burial, just before the ground crew would start to shovel the wet soil over the coffin, Lisa's mother asked if the pastor would lead in singing Lisa's favourite chorus of 'God is so Good'. And as they sang, Lisa's mother and father held on and supported each other. They were singing, but not loudly or triumphantly. They were singing and crying, with tears running down their faces.

Lisa's parents were still asking those anguished questions. God didn't answer them, just as He never answered Job's. But Lisa's parents kept faith in God, even though God never answered.

This is a faith that is wet with tears. Faith which has made peace with a God who sometimes does not answer our questions. Like Lisa's parents, Job also kept faith in God, despite the pain and the loss he had to live with.



Bishop Dr Gordon Wong and participants

THE SEVEN PASTORAL QUALITIES/WISDOM FROM THE BOOK OF JOB:

- 1 Be prepared. Suffering on earth will not always make sense.**
- 2 Suffering produces different emotions and even contradictory reaction and reasoning within ourselves.**
- 3 Prioritise pastoral compassion over proverbial correctness.**
- 4 God wants more than our resigned silence. He wants us truly to know that humans have neither the capacity nor right to know why so much suffering afflicts this world.**
- 5 It is human to express anger and demand answers, but it is harmful if our anger becomes abusive and our demands become destructive to others and ourselves.**
- 6 The book's aim is to help us trust in God's sovereign control and compassion especially when we do not know who or what to blame.**
- 7 When suffering and God make no sense, hold on to the divine promise of family fullness and joy.**

Dedication Service of the General Conference Methodist Women Centre 15th July 2022

By Ms Evelyn Sim, GCMW President (2021-2024)



The long-awaited day for the dedication of the GC Methodist Women Centre came on 15th July 2022 and God blessed us with a beautiful day - bright and sunny with clear blue skies. This dedication was postponed three times due to the prolonged pandemic and Movement Control Order.

The Dedication Service was led by Bishop Dr T. Jeyakumar with GCMW President, Evelyn Sim as the Liturgist. Bishop Jeya shared a meaningful message entitled "Offering of Love" and the scripture passage was taken from John 12:1-11. The MWC renovation works was able to be completed because of the Offering as well as a labour of love of those who were involved - the donors and the workers. He left

the following message to the women (and I believe the men too 😊)

1. This building is our offering of devotion, of love to Jesus.
2. Our giving to build this building cannot be understood by all.
3. We could have spent the money on something else
4. There will always be a need somewhere else eg. while we raise this, we also give to others
5. We seize the moment to give to Jesus - we did not let go of the opportunity - to serve women through this building
6. Offering will benefit many others

7. Long after we are no longer on this earth – this gift will be remembered. We are not doing it so that we can be remembered but for the legacy to come.
8. Do not lose focus. This centre is not about making money – but to bless the needy women and girls.

After the Dedication Service inside the Sanctuary, all guests adjourned outside for the unveiling of the plaque to commemorate the occasion. Bishop Jeya and Dato' Ir. Alice did the honours of unveiling the plaque.

About 80 people – invited guests and Methodist Women members, came along to join us in this joyous occasion. Our consultants and contractors came to celebrate with us too. You can see the joy of the Methodist Women members from all the six Conferences, smiling all the way glad for this day. Our toil and efforts to raise funds to renovate this building has fruited in this beautiful complex. We want to give thanks and praise to the Lord God Almighty for all that He has done throughout the years. The first 2-storey building was completed in 1957 (65 years old) and the 3 storey Hostel block was completed in 1991 (31 years).

Indeed, with a grateful heart, we thanked our missionaries for their foresight to bless us with this piece of land and buildings. They had worked hard

to use this property to spread the gospel and to provide for the needy then. They had served as our role model paving the way for this generation and the generations to come.

Today, we thank God for the provision and the wisdom to embark on a massive renovation project to the two blocks as it stands today, and our generous God has not stopped His providence – getting the right consultants and contractors who were accommodating and friendly and of course the funds to complete this project. We are forever thankful to our brothers and sisters in Christ who supported us with their generous donations for this project to materialise and be a blessing for generations to come. Unity, harmony and faith among the six conferences are of utmost importance for the way forward.

We pray that the Lord and the community will help us to follow the footsteps of our missionary sisters to make good use of this building for His glory and redemption of His Kingdom.

We also want to thank Mr John Ho, Mrs Ho and their daughter Esther Ho for gracing this occasion. Mr. John Ho who was the architect for the 3-storey Hostel Block was sadly called home to the Lord on 16th August 2022.





Bishop & CAC members

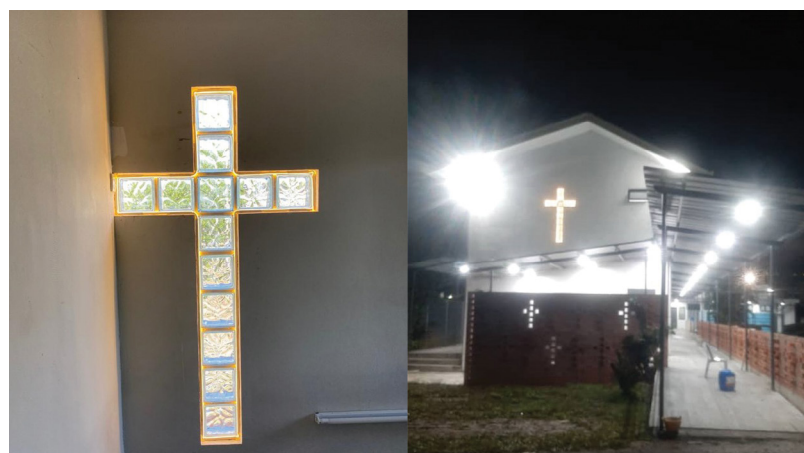
Mr John Ho



The task force chairman with her 2 "sidekicks"



GCMW Exco



Girls' Brigade Sarawak Celebrates 55 Years

By Captain Lau Sie Bing, SRC Publicity Officer

The Girls' Brigade Sarawak celebrated her 55th anniversary on 1st May 2022 (Sunday) with the theme "United in Christ, One in GB." The Thanksgiving Service was conducted in a hybrid mode with a physical service at Trinity Methodist Church, Kuching, as well as an online live stream via YouTube.

The Girls' Brigade (GB) is an international girls' organisation. It began in Dublin in 1893 and arrived on Malaysian shores in 1938. The first Sarawak company, 1st Kuching Company, was formed in 1967 at St. Thomas's Cathedral by Miss Ruth Duncombe. In 1972, the Sarawak Group Council (SGC) was formed. It later evolved into the Sarawak District Council (SDC) in 1978 and finally, the Sarawak Regional Council (SRC) in 1994. To-date, there are altogether 45 active companies all over Sarawak with a total of 4,600 members ranging from 6 to 17 years old. Today, the Girls' Brigade is recognized by the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Youth and Sports as a uniformed organisation for girls.

"Coming together to celebrate our 55th anniversary showcases that we are united as one organization, in Christ Jesus, spread all over Sarawak and having grown from one to 45 companies today," explained Lt. Wong Huang Yung, the current SRC President, who is also the National Vice-President (East) of the GB Malaysia.

The Thanksgiving Service was graced by officers from the early days, such as Madam Angela Tan Kok Han from 1st Sarikei Company (SGC President, 1972-1974), Miss Thay Yong Hua from 1st Sibu Company (SDC President, 1980-1987, 1989), Miss Evelyn Chew from 2nd Kuching Company (SDC President, 1988; SRC President, 1994-1997), and Madam Joyce Ong from 1st Kuching Company (SDC President, 1990-1993).

The SRC Chaplain, Rev Dr Lau Hui Ming, who is also the Bishop of Sarawak Chinese Annual Conference of The Methodist Church in Malaysia, was the honourable preacher. Bishop Dr Lau reminded the congregation that as a Christian community, we are to reject individualism that creates competition. Instead, we are urged to work towards completion. Everyone should try to offer each other's strong points without the concern for who will get the credit for the good work accomplished in the end. This in turn will promote interdependence on each other as the body of Christ, resulting in completion and unity. Consequently, the much-anticipated outcome will be the whole community to grow as one united GB in Christ.

Apart from the encouraging sermon, there were also quite a few presentations from different GB communities, exhibiting the fruits of labor among the



Presenting a bouquet to Madam Angela Tan Kok Han (left) from 1st Sarikei Company (SGC President, 1972-1974) by Lt. Wong Huang Yung (right), current SRC President, with Captain Yvonne Law (middle) (1st Sarikei), Madam Angela's daughter. This is a beautiful testimony of mother to daughter legacy in God's ministry.



Recognizing the labor of the early pioneers, Miss Thay Yong Hua (1st Sibu) (SDC President, 1980-1987, 1989) received a bouquet from the state chaplain, Bishop Dr Lau Hui Ming



The National President, Chp. Lau Mee Ting (3rd Kuching) (left), presenting a gift to Miss Evelyn Chew (2nd Kuching) (seated), who acted as the SDC President, 1988 and SRC President, 1994-1997.



Madam Joyce Ong (left) (1st Kuching), the SDC President, 1990-1993, together with National President, Chp. Lau Mee Ting (3rd Kuching)

girls and officers over the years. The 2nd Kuching Company led the Praise and Worship session. The 3rd Kuching company presented a hand chime performance. The Sibu companies offered a virtual band performance of the GB anthem. Besides that, members and officers from all over Sarawak also came together for a virtual choir.

One of the memorable moments during the Thanksgiving Service was the lighting of candles by iconic people in the GB Sarawak, each representing a different era in the past 55 years. A lighted candle was passed from the pioneer generation to the younger ones. The start of the lighting journey was the 55 candles in the shape of a cross on stage, representing the 55 years of grace. Bishop Dr Lau, as the state chaplain, passed the light to Miss Tnay Yong Hua, who represented the Pioneers in GB Sarawak. As the candlelight was passed from one person to another, the congregation were also invited to light up their candles when their age group were represented. The last recipient of the candlelight was a young Pre-Cadet, indicating the hope and well wishes for the future years. It was indeed heartening to see all the candles being lit up in the end. The whole ceremony portrayed the passing of hope in Christ, as well as a continuing legacy of faith from generation to generation to see girls' lives being transformed and God's world enriched.

Not only that, the Down Memory Lane video also recapped the past 55 years. As the setting up of different companies and councils were revisited, tribute was paid to the saints that laboured and toiled in the kingdom of God. Moreover, the testimonies of the members and the officers from different age groups and locations were also inspiring. The reason

for joining GB, what in GB attracts them, their hope for GB, and many other details were showcased in an interesting manner bringing laughter, sweet memories, and encouragement to those in attendance. In conjunction with the Thanksgiving Service, a mini exhibition was also set up, showcasing GB facts and historical highlights.

Captain Cindy Chow, the Sarawak Regional Representative cum Organizing Chairlady, shared her thoughts. "When I knew we were going to celebrate our 55th anniversary, and I was tasked to chair this committee, I struggled a bit along the way. 55 years – what is it that we want to know, or see and hope for. I don't want it just to be another celebration, take photos and that's it. I asked God what we should do. Along the way, God helped us to see that over the 55 years, it is not about us, the humans, but how God has brought GB Sarawak together. Along the way, there were some issues, hiccups and challenges. Yet, God is always there to pick us up and walk with us. We are thankful. It has kept me thinking, wow, it is really a glorious 55 years, but what's next? In line with the theme, 'United in Christ, One in GB,' we are called and reminded to come as one in Christ and be one in GB and to pass on the legacy to our future generation, one after another."

All in all, it was with gladness and gratitude that the whole event concluded with honor and glory to the Great Chaplain, Jesus Christ and God Almighty.

Those wishing to catch up on the Thanksgiving Service may view the recording at <https://youtu.be/9vKmXJXkrsg>.

Testimony

Captain Yvonne Law (1st Sarikei)

I first started joining GB when I was around 12 years old, because my mum was a company Captain. Actually, I joined GB because of the uniform. My super seniors all looked very smart when they were in uniform. Besides that, I was also attracted to our company band. It was the first band group in Sarikei. The teaching in GB changed my life in all aspects. It taught me how to come before Lord Jesus Christ when I face difficulties or when I need guidance and help. I let Lord Jesus Christ to guide my life. I continue joining GB until today because to me, this is one of the platforms to introduce girls to get to know Jesus Christ. I think this is one of our responsibilities. That is why I have stayed on until today.

Senior Charlotte Chong (3rd Kuching)

I think GB is just like a second family in my life. My mother is an ex-GB girl from 1st Sibu company. She always described GB as a fun and friendly place to grow up in. Besides, there were a lot of colourful posters and pictures about the exciting things that we can do in GB on my school notice board, too. So, I have always wished to join GB since very young. I love everything about GB. I'm very thankful that I can see my officers and friends every week. There are always things for me to learn and useful skills to pick up. Most importantly, I learn a lot about God's Word and His everlasting love for all of us. I am very determined to share this love and passion with my friends and relatives by inviting them to join GB. By the way, I am considering becoming a GB Officer when I grow up. I think I will definitely let my children join GB.

AW May Lim (1st Kuching)

Based on my memory, I first started GB meeting at the age of four. GB has become my second family that I can share the joy in learning God's Word and help each other to grow spiritually, physically, educationally, and socially. I hope to remain in GB and continue my family's legacy in the Brigade as my uncles, aunties, dad, mum, and grandfather have all been BB and GB members.

AW Renee Ling (9th Kuching)

I joined GB when I was around Primary 1. I joined because I think GB has its serious and fun side, lots of activities, and I also get to make new friends. My favourite part in GB is the achievement session where we get to learn all sorts of new skills, such as sewing, crafts, and baking. GB has made quite a huge impact in my life, especially my faith. Even though I grew up in a Christian family, I never really knew Jesus. But I accepted Jesus as my personal Saviour through GB. The thing that keeps me serving is that I want to continue to serve God in any way I can because it's what I can do right now before I go for further studies. This is also a chance for me to fellowship with other girls and officers so that we can all grow in Christ.



The lighting of candles ceremony, with representatives for the various era over the past 55 years.



The lighting of candles ceremony: the congregation joined in with their own candles.



The cake cutting ceremony



Sermon by Bishop Dr Lau Hui Ming

Team Ministry Sitak Bintulu 2022

Disediaka TS Paderi Limbai Banyang

Sitak Bintulu udah mujur ngator Team Ministry Sitak Bintulu kena 24 - 25 June, 2022 ba Rh. Radin - Gereja Methodist Iban Labang, Bintulu.

Team Ministry tu udah digulo 25 iku anemiak gereja ari GMI Bandaraya Miri, GMI Pasar Bintulu enggau ari GMI Jalai Sebauh & Area Labang. Pengawa tu dipenyadi Bishop Bonnie Sedau ti bisi mega mai ajar "Besanggup ka Tuhan", kelimpah ari Paderi Ningkan Suring ti mai berita pasal Methodist Theological School. Pengelicha bukai ti bisi bekunsi ka penerang mega maya tu ianya Mr. Jefri Ngalmabai, Chairman Bod Pengator & Pengiga Belanja ti nerang ka pasal belanja SIAC, Mdm Collin Untan ti berandauka pasal Pengerai & Ngulu Besampi sereta mega Mdm Lily Dosson ti mai penerang pasal Bala Indu Methodist.



Sekeda anemiak gereja ti bisi datai



Bishop Bonnie Sedau & Mr. Jefri Ngalmabai sama bisi bekunsi ka ka ajar & penerang



Mdm. Collin Untan, Mdm Lily Dosson & Rev. Yan bekunsi ka penerang pasal Pengerai, Bola Indu & MTS



Taja pan nadai bala sida ti biak ti patut sama ngulo lalu ningka ka Jaku Tuhan enggau penerang ketegai ti mayuh gawa di mengeri, Puji Tuhan program tu udah bejalai enggau lancar. Bala ti datai cukup rindu ulih besaum nengah pengawa besampi, makai serumpu enggau aktiviti bukai enggau sida anemiak di Rumah Radin maya nya.



Puji Tuhan lalu terima kasih ngagai siko anemiak Gereja, ianya Mr. Lamai Chaong ti udah sponsor penuh program Team Ministry tu gena belanja RM5,000.

Penampuk Paderi Pengajar Sitak Sarikei

24 - 26 June, 2022

Ari Paderi Olyver Aldyendess Anak Broken

Kena 24-26 Jun 2022 tu tadi, kami Paderi Pengajar ari Sitak Sarikei penyampau tubuh 10 orang diketuaika Tuai Sitak Paderi Lawrence Ingai bisi ngatur penampuk (retreat) ka Paderi Pengajar Sitak Sarikei ke taun 2022 di Gereja Methodist Iban Bandaraya Kuching. Taja penampuk tu udah diperambu kenau ari taun 2020 tang ketegai Pandemik Covid-19 pengawa tu dilanjarka ngagai taun 2022 tu. Puji Tuhan kami bisi peluang besaum enggau diri sama diri dalam penampuk Paderi Pengajar Sitak Sarikei ke sekali tu. Maya tu kami bepeluang ningka jaku Tuhan dibai Rev Fr Dennis Gimang ari Gereja Anglikan St. Francis, Kota Samarahan. Iya bekunsika pasal "The Roles of Pastors Today". Kelimpah arinya kami mega bepeluang nemuai sambil belajar ngagai "Borneo Cultures Museum" ti alai mandangka jerita lama enggau keresa lama menua kitai. Mayuh pekara ke baru dipelajarka maya penampuk Paderi Pengajar Sitak Sarikei ke sekali tu. Kami Paderi Pengajar Sitak Sarikei ngenataika jaku terima kasih ngagai bala tuai Gereja enggau bala nemiak Gereja Methodist Iban Bandaraya Kuching ke udah kiruh nyambut sereta ngintu kami sepengalama tiga hari nya. Meri besai terima kasih ka bala Gereja ke bisi meri saup ke pengawa tu. Terima kasih. Tuhan enggau kitai.



找回传福音的热忱

“Recovering the Passion for Evangelism”

By Rev Liew Kek Ming, Acting Bishop of the Chinese Annual Conference

年会布道部推出“赢人福音运动”，然而，这真的能发挥传福音的效用吗？有关的答案，只能拭目以待。无可置疑，各牧区若待之为一项纸上谈兵“运动”，欠缺积极回应，又不“派兵”参与行动，最终将变为专属年会的“计划”。过去牧养的经验告诉我，教会每年可以安排不同福音聚会、活动和培训，但没有获得会众的响应，最终是昙花一现，看不见福音的收效。故此，教会的计划取决于信徒的参与；再好的计划无人问津，必定以失败收场。疫情后，教会虽处于重振和恢复的阶段，但信徒仍可依靠圣灵，扎根基督，激发爱心，以便能目睹不一样的丰收。简言之，此运动是否催化传福音的效用，取决于信徒对人灵魂的热忱关怀，容我以一个见证彼此共勉：

1912年4月，铁达尼巨船在大西洋撞向冰山而沉没。在那溺毙人群中，有一位传道者，名叫赫伯·约翰（John Harper），应芝加哥慕迪礼拜堂之聘，去当牧师。有人说，当船往下沉时，赫伯仍旧站在船旁，倚着栏杆，向人谈论福音；及至众人上了救生船，他却不肯上。他先让妇幼上去，其次则是尚未得救的人，末了甚至将他的救生圈让给别人。有一苏格兰人，住在加拿大安达利均含密顿，该船搭客之一，侥幸生还，并述说其经历：“我在水里，抓住一根圆木，任凭水流荡漾。赫伯亦抓住浮在海面的破具，被水流冲至我的旁边。他问我：“朋友，你得救了

吗？”我回答：“我不能老实的说我得救了。”他说：“信主耶稣，你就得救。”那是最后一次我看见他，不久他就被海水淹没。我在那海中，底下有两英里长的冰块，决志信主，将全心交给祂。我是赫伯最后的一个果子。

关键时代，我们能为主做什么呢？教会迫切关注世界末日，或是主再来临的日子愈来愈近。可是，有多少人愿意在末后抓紧机会传福音，并且问：“朋友，你得救了吗？”、“信主耶稣，你就得救。”其实，我们所关心的问题决定自己的人生观和价值观。普遍上，大家关心的是：“吃饱了吗？”、“一个月赚多少钱？”、“什么时候换新车？”、“考试获得多少A？”、“要不要投资地产或地皮？”无可否认，这都是人生重要的议题。但是，试想一个人若遇上巨船被撞沉，却无法逃出生天，当下何为其最关心的问题？一场新冠肺炎疫情，不仅夺走数以万计宝贵的性命，亦让人们惊觉生命是何等脆弱，自由是奢侈的事。疫情唤醒基督徒重新思想人活着的意义和使命。主耶稣给予我们最大的使命——“所以你们要去，使万民作我的门徒，奉父、子、圣灵的名给他们施洗。”（太28：19）许多时候，并非基督徒不想传福音，更不是没有负担，而是欠缺怜悯和热忱的心，不关注人们生命走向沉沦的问题。我们必须找回传福音的热忱，装备自己，带领更多人认识基督的救恩！

参阅：<https://www.xinde.Org/show/10382>。

Priesthood of all Believers

நீங்களோ, உங்களை அந்தகாரதினின்று தம்முடைய ஆச்சரியமான ஒளியினிடத்திற்கு வரவழைத்தவருடைய புண்ணியங்களை அறிவிக்கும்படிக்குத் தெரிந்துக்கொள்ளப்பட்ட சந்ததியாயும், ராஜாீகமான ஆசாரியக்கூட்டமாயும், பரிசுத்த ஜாதியாயும், அவருக்குச் சொந்தமான ஜனமாயும் இருக்கிறீர்கள்.

1 பேதுரு 2:9

By Mr. Jacob Korinthiar

மெய்யாகவே, நாம் 1 பேதுரு 2:9 வாசிக்கும்போது ராஜாீக ஆசாரியத்துவத்துக்கு இது ஒரு புதுபித்தலாகவும் காலத்துக்கேற்ற நினைவுறுத்தலாகவும் நம் யாவருக்கும் அமைகிறது. மூப்பர் வாரியத்தின் இயங்கலை வேத ஆராய்ச்சியில் பங்கெடுத்த யாவருக்கும் இது ஒரு அழைப்பு என கூறலாம்.

போதகர் பி.பி.ஆப்ரகாம், விசேஷ பேச்சாளர் மற்றும் மூப்பர் போதகர், 6 வாரங்களுக்கு இந்த காலத்திற்கு பொருந்திய தலைப்புகளை பற்றி பேச 23மே2022-லிருந்து கேட்டுக்கொள்ளப்பட்டார். பங்கேற்றவர்களின் எண்ணிக்கை முதல் வாரத்தில் 70 பேரிலிருந்து பின்வரும் வாரங்களில் 40ஆக குறைந்தது மிகவும் வருத்தத்துக்குரியதாயிருந்தது. 7 பேர் ஒரு மாகாணத்திற்கு என்பதிலிருந்து 5 பேர் ஒரு மாகாணத்திற்கு என குறைந்தது. அனைத்து கிறிஸ்தவர்களும் சமம் என்பதை வலியுறுத்தும் தலைப்புக்கு பங்கெடுத்தவர்களின் எண்ணிக்கை மிக குறைவு. இதை அறிவிப்பு செய்யும் வகை மற்றும் அதன் செயல்திறன் மறுஆய்வு செய்யப்பட வேண்டும்.

நமது சொந்த தலைவர்களில் ஒருவர், ஆசாரியத்துவத்தை பற்றிய தலைப்பு குழப்பத்தையும் முரண்பாட்டையும் ஏற்படுத்தும் என்று கூறியது நமது கவனத்தை ஈர்த்தது. இதை நான் கூற காரணம் என்ன? “ஆசாரியத்துவம் என்பது வேதாகமத்தின்படி அனைத்து விசுவாசிகளுக்குமா?” என கேட்டால், அது அதிகப்படியானதா? 1பேதுரு 2:9 பற்றி நன்கு தொிந்தும் நான் ஏன் இப்படி கேட்கிறேன் என நீங்கள் யோசிக்கக்கூடும். சிறந்த பேச்சாளர் போதகர் பி.பி.ஆப்ரகாம், தேவன் அனைத்து ஆத்துமாக்களும் இரட்சிக்கப்பட விரும்புகிறார் எனவும் அந்த எண்ணத்தை சபையார் ஏற்றுக்கொள்ள வேண்டும் எனவும் அவர்கள் முன் ஒரு சவாலை வைத்தார், அனைத்து தேசங்களின் ஆசாரியத்துவத்தின் அழைப்பை அடைய புரிந்துணர்வு விசுவாசம், மற்றும் முழு நேர

ஊழியத்தில் இருப்பவர்களுடன் சேர்ந்து பணியாற்றுவது அவசியம்.

வேதம் கூறுகிறது, தேவன் ஒருவரே, தேவனுக்கும் மனுஷருக்கும் மத்தியஸ்தரும் ஒருவரே (1 தீமோ 2:5), அவர் கிறிஸ்து இயேசு, மேலும் ஜனங்கள் தேவனிடம் பிரதான ஆசாரியராகிய இயேசு கிறிஸ்துவின் மூலம் வரலாம் (எபி 4:14-16). பழைய ஏற்பாட்டின் ஆசாரியத்துவத்தின் தேவைப்படி ஒரே பலியின் மூலமாக ஆலயத்தின் திரைச்சீலை அகற்றப்பட்டது. பழைய ‘முட்டைகளான’ யார் பொறுப்பு, மரபை பின்பற்றுவதல், ‘அபிஷேகம்’ பண்ணப்பட்டவரை தொடுபவருக்கு எச்சரிக்கை போன்றவை சபையாருக்கு உதவியாக இல்லாமல் அவர்களை மனத்தளர்வடைய செய்து அவர்கள் உலகத்திற்கு உட்பாகவும் ஒளியாகவும் இருப்பதற்கு சவாலாக அமைகிறது. மூப்பர்களாக நாம் நிச்சயமாக மெதடிஸ்ட் விதிமுறைகளையும் ஒழுங்கையும் எப்பொழுதும் கடைபிடிக்க வேண்டும். குழந்தை ஞானஸ்நானம், திடப்படுத்தல், சபைக்கு தவறாமல் வருவது, பரிசுத்த திருவிருந்தில் பங்கெடுப்பது ஆகியவற்றில் நாம் இன்னும் நம்பிக்கையுள்ளவர்களாக உள்ளோம். ஆனாலும், நாம் நற்கிரியைகளுக்கு ஆர்வமாக உள்ளோமா, நாம் சந்திப்பவர்களிடம் கிறிஸ்துவின் அன்பையும் சுவீசேஷத்தையும் பகிர்ந்துக்கொள்கிறோமா?

‘வாருங்கள் நாம்;...’, ‘இதில் நாம் ஒன்றாயிருக்கிறோம்...’ ‘என்னைப் பின்பற்றுங்கள்..’ என்று நாம் உண்மையாக கூறினால், திரளாய் அழைக்கப்பட்டால், வாருங்கள் நாம் ஒன்றாய் இதை செய்வோம் என போதகர் பி.பி.ஆப்ரகாம் நம்பிக்கையளித்தார், பலர்தங்கள் முதல் அடியை எடுத்துவைக்க உந்தப்பட்டு, விசுவாசிகளாகவும் சீஷர்களாகவும் நமது ஆண்டவராகிய இயேசு கிறிஸ்துவுக்கு ஏதாவது செய்ய நாம் உற்சாகப்படுத்தப்பட்டிருக்கிறோம் என நான் நம்புகிறேன்.



Wesley Methodist Schools Klang and Seremban Prayer Walks

A prayer walk was held in Wesley Methodist School Klang on 23rd June 2022 and in Wesley Methodist School Seremban on 21st July 2022 to ask the Lord for His guidance and protection during the refurbishment period.

Both schools embarked on a refurbishment programme to restore and upgrade the schools' facilities with minor renovations. Core members from the Methodist Council of Education and the respective school's principal and teachers made up the prayer walk team. We prayed for wisdom in optimising the improved spaces and facilities for fellowship among students and staff.

Interceding for the schools, the team walked from station to station while praying for different items such as dedicated teachers, the transition of new leadership, protection from Covid-19, spiritual formation, increased student enrolments and the upholding of school culture and core values.

The prayer walks were closed with thanksgiving for God's faithfulness, blessings and never-failing guidance throughout the academic year.



Prayer Walk in Wesley Methodist School Seremban



Prayer Walk in Wesley Methodist School Klang



WESLEY METHODIST SCHOOL

Wesley Methodist School Christian Ministry Retreat

Methodist Council of Education (MCOE) held a Christian Ministry Retreat for the bible teachers and Principals of Wesley Methodist School (WMS) on 19th-21st August 2022 at The Kandu Resort, Gopeng. The objectives of the retreat are to enhance the Bible Knowledge syllabus, rekindle teachers' passion for Christian ministries, and reconnect the inter-WMS Christian teachers' community.

Dr Ng Kee Chuan and Madam Chow Kwai Yok from Kota Kinabalu, Sabah shared their expertise in teaching the Bible and sharing the Gospel to youths. In addition, Scripture Union (SU) headed by Ms Marianne Liaw and the SU team were also invited to impart knowledge about Effective Chapel Engagement. As the fundamentals of Christian doctrine are vital to impacting students across all WMS, Pastor Christopher Toh from Hokkien

Methodist Church Kuala Lumpur joined the retreat to impart his teachings on Christian Foundation to the teachers.

Mr Lim Kah Cheng, MCOE Private Education Director, started the event by asking participants, "if you met your students in Heaven, what would they say to you?" He reminded everyone that teaching is a ministry that touches lives, and that Spiritual Formation is a key pillar of WMS bible knowledge teaching. Mr Kwong Choong Vai, Chairman of WMS Board of Management (BOM), presented the Vision and Mission of WMS where Christian Ministry is important and the plan moving forward for WMS.

The event was also attended by Mr Tan Ay Zing, Vice Chairman of BOM and Dato' Dr Tan Kee Kwong, BOM member.



From Left: Mr Lim Kah Cheng, MCOE Private Education Director; Dr Ng Kee Chuan & Mdm Chow Kwai Yok, retreat speakers; Ms Elaine Ho, MCOE Program Manager; Mdm Rachel Kwong & Mr Kwong Choong Vai, Chairman of Wesley Methodist School, Board of Management; Mr Tan Ay Zing & Mdm Lee Sok Cheng, Vice Chairman of Wesley Methodist School, Board of Management; Pastor Christopher Toh of Hokkien Methodist Church Kuala Lumpur, retreat speaker; Ms Geraldine Rani, MCOE Head of Human Resource



Group Photo



Group Photo with Scripture Union



WESLEY METHODIST SCHOOL

Impacting Lives and Nation

Through The
Methodist
Education since
1891

Wesley Methodist School (WMS), being part of the Methodist Council of Education (MCOE), which has a long-standing legacy in education since 1891, is well-known for its academic excellence and transforming lives with its exceptional all-rounded education based on Christian Mission School ethos and values.

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