Happenings at Methodist College KL



• Pitching Tents: Which is the right side up?



• Practical session at the 'No Apologies' workshop.



• Staff and new students at SUFES Campsite.

Record January 2007 Intake

Everyone was looking forward to Wednesday, 3rd January 2007. Why? It was the day the newly enrolled students of the A-Level and AUSMAT courses began a new chapter in their lives - their first day in Methodist College Kuala Lumpur (MCKL). 61 new students showed up on that day, and 14 more joined the cohorts in the next few days, to make a record total of 75 students for the January 2007 intake!

The hard work in promoting and highlighting the excellent education opportunities available at MCKL seemed to begin to bear fruit. Visits and presentations have been made in schools, churches, youth camps and at education

fairs. All this is made possible by the grace of God. We thank God for His blessings upon the College and for giving us the good number of new students.

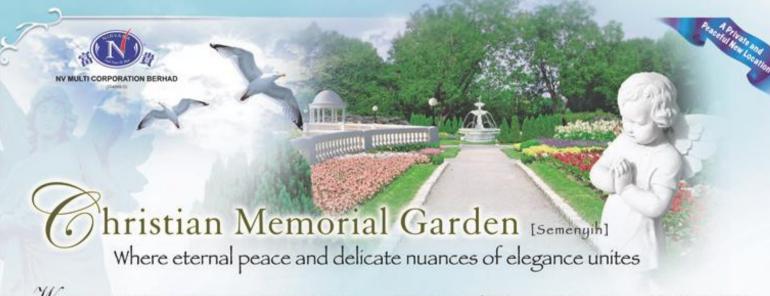
The noise and laughter of new students and returning seniors filled the College's courtyard. Excitement and expectancy of a great year ahead was very much in the air. The lecturers and staff were kept busy with the registration and academic counselling, yet very happy to see so many fresh faces. One lecturer remarked, "I entered my class and saw so many students; immediately my spirit was lifted up and once again I looked forward to teaching the students my subject area".

The new students settled in well and got on with the orientation programme, selection of subjects and buying of textbooks.

Camping at SUFES Campsite

An annual field trip was planned for the weekend of 26th to 28th January 2007 for the new and senior students. This year it took the form of a camping trip to the SUFES Campsite, at the foothill of Cameron Highlands, which included a two-day 'No Apologies' sex education workshop conducted by Focus on Family.

A total of 34 students and 8 staff signed up for this camping trip. Together they had an adventurous and wonderful time staying outdoors, pitching tents and sleeping in them. The activities included going on a 'night hike' on a jungle trail, and 'stream trotting' on a hot afternoon that ended with everyone taking a plunge



while Christians have achieved the all vital spiritual attainments, earthly concerns are still lurking whether we like it or not. How about the physical arrangement for a burial? What about the financial strain upon loved ones who have to fend for themselves? What if there is much confusion and hassle to contend with?

These are issues that will confront the bereaved family members of the deceased who has been called home by the Lord.

These earthly concerns are real issues that should be addressed. It should not be a legacy that comes to haunt the loved ones of the

dearly departed. Christians should be well prepared for this. And it is "biblical to bury the deceased in plots of land and preplan for a bereavement.

*See Genesis chapters 23 and 50.

And memorial garden pays tribute to the memories of the dearly departed amidst the most tranquil garden adorned with elegantly landscaped ambience. Here in Christian Memorial Garden, peace and harmony echoes through acres and acres of lush greenery that accentuates the beauty of the refined landscaping and soothing water fountains. It is the epitome of serenity for the bereaved.

Address: Nirvana Memorial Center, No.1 Jalan 1/116A, Off Jalan Sungai Besi, 57100 Kuala Lumpur.

For details, please contact: 1800-88-1818

Methodist Prayer Convention 2007



Monthly Prayer.

About twenty people came together at the Hokkien Chinese Methodist Church on Sunday 25 February to start off the monthly prayer for the MPC in August. Given the short notice and being the Chinese New Year week it was encouraging to have members from TAC, TRAC and CAC there. Bishop Hwa Yung led in a time of worship and then prayer for the various aspects of the Convention.

Bishop Hwa Yung shared briefly about two historical revivals, the first of which was the very one from which the Methodist movement started in England. The second was one in our own country in East Malaysia among the churches of the SIB in the 1970's. In both events the Spirit of God came upon those who had gathered to pray with fervour and desire for God.

There was a sense of unity and expectation as the gathering prayed together in one group and in smaller groups of threes and fours. Many matters were committed to God, big and small, the speakers and workshop leaders, the transportation and the microphones. But above all that God will prepare everyone to have a fresh encounter of His presence and blessings.

From March this prayer meeting will be on the third Sunday of the month from 7.30 – 9.30 pm at the KL Hokkien Chinese Methodist Church, Lorong Hang Jebat. All church members, intercessors and prayer coordinators are welcome to fill the hall and with one voice pray for the Convention.







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Pelita Methodist

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What is Happening in our Annual Conferences?

March

16-18	Fri-Sun	TRAC School for Intercessors – Part 3
21-22	Wed-Thu	SCAC District Superintendents Retreat
27-30	Tue-Fri	TRAC MSF Camp
27-31	Tue-Sat	TAC School of Evangelism
29-31	Thu-Sat	Council of Presidents + GCEC Meeting
30-31	Fri-Sat	SCAC Pre-Marital Seminar
31	Sat	TRAC Board of Social Concerns District/
		Local Church Moderators Retreat
A n	ni1	
	21-22 27-30 27-31 29-31 30-31	16-18 Fri-Sun 21-22 Wed-Thu 27-30 Tue-Fri 27-31 Tue-Sat 29-31 Thu-Sat 30-31 Fri-Sat 31 Sat

April

J-11	Will Wed	5171C Bourds Meeting
9-14	Mon-Sat	TAC MYAF Week
10-14	Tue-Sun	TRAC Pastors / Diaconal Ministers School
16-19	Mon-Thu	SIAC Pastors' School
19-27	Thu-Fri	CAC Mission Trip to Korea
20-23	Wed-Sat	SIAC Pastors & Lay Prayer Convention
21	Sat	TRAC Executive Board Meeting
23-26	Mon-Thu	CCM 12th Triennial General Assembly
27-29	Fri-Sun	SIAC Team Ministry with CHEMPRO* in Bintulu District
30-1/5	Mon-Tue	CAC Wesleyan Theological Seminar
30-5/5	Mon-Sat	SCAC Christian Listening Ministry Training

Mon-Wed SPAC Boards Meeting

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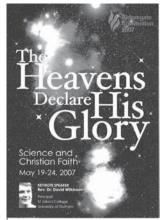
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Aldersgate Convention 2007 19-24 May, Singapore

The Methodist Church in Singapore organizes an annual Aldersgate Convention. This year's keynote speaker is the Rev. Dr. David Wilkinson, Principal of St. John's College, University of Durham.

The theme is **Science and Christian Faith**. Rev. Dr. Wilkinson is well qualified to speak on the subject, having doctorates in theoretical astrophysics and systematic theology. Besides that, he is a recognized cosmologist. Using multimedia presentations he will deliver a series of talks on this theme.

The Convention begins on Saturday (19 May) with the Aldersgate Seminar on Christian Apologetics in a Scientific World. The adult track in the morning

is entitled "Explaining Jesus in a Hitech World" and the youth track in the afternoon with the enticing title, "Jesus vs. Aliens: The Pilgrim's Guide to the Galaxy."

These are followed by three evening talks (21-23 May) discussing various aspects of the interface between science and theology based on the current state of research and understanding. The first will be on the question of the beginning of the universe, discussing the Big Bang and the views of Stephen Hawking. The second evening is on the topic of other intelligent life in the universe and the fascinating question if we are a "visited planet." And the third evening will look at the different scenarios about the end of the universe, not only the scientific views

but also the popular one from the Left **Behind** series of novels.

Besides these talks, the Sunday evening of the Convention will be given to celebrate the 300th anniversary of the birth of Charles Wesley. It will be in the form of a hymn festival by the Methodist School of Music at the Victoria Concert Hall.

The Convention will end with the Aldersgate Service on Thursday evening with Rev. Dr. Wilkinson preaching on "The Supremacy of Christ."

More information can be obtained from the website: www.methodist.org.sg

✓

Welcome Ms Tay Choon Neo



Tay Choon Neo is the newly-appointed Deputy Education Secretary at the Council of Education (Peninsular).

Choon Neo taught for 31 years before taking early retirement to join the COE in January this year. She has taught (mainly English) at 8 schools in 4 states and Putrajaya in West Malaysia. Having held various positions in these schools, at her retirement she was the Penolong Kanan KoKurikulum at SMK Putrajaya 1, a pioneer Smart School.

Choon Neo attended Teacher Training College (1974/75) and obtained the B. Ed. (TESL) from University Putra Malaysia. She has an M.A. (Media Technology for Teaching English as a Foreign Language) from the University of Newcastle Upon Tyne, UK on a Chevening scholarship.

She writes, "Even though the Lord has placed me in the schools as a teacher, I've always made myself available for His ministry. Coming out of schools, to this ministry in COE is just hearing and responding to God's call as in Isaiah 6:8, "Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, 'Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?' And I said, 'Here am I. Send me!'"

Besides her teaching career Choon Neo has been active in the Girls' Brigade for the past 30 years and is currently the National Vice President (West). She is also involved in teaching, worship leading, youth work and missions in her church, Wesley Kuala Lumpur and is a pioneer member of Life Methodist Church, Puchong.

Her view of her new ministry? "Coming from a non-Christian home I accepted Christ at 15 in MGS KL. Like many others, God has blessed me through my education in a Methodist school. My hope is that I be His obedient handmaiden and my dream is that our mission schools once again hold high the name of our Lord Jesus Christ and His Word."

in a pool at the bottom of a spectacular waterfall. In this field trip the students were quick to get to know each other, bonded well together as well as learnt to appreciate the manifold wonders of His handiwork. Such annual field trips will be a feature of the College's student activities from this year on.

Future Intakes: March & July 2007

The College has been busy attending to enquiries and registration for the next two intakes - in March 2007 for the new batch of A-Level and Diploma in Early Childhood Education (Dip. ECE) students, and in July 2007 for another intake of A-Level students. Classes for the March intake will begin on 19 March 2007 after the Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia (SPM) examination results have been released. A limited number of Merit and Special Scholarships are still available for students who register for the March 2007 intake.

About MCKL

Many more parents have come to know that Methodist College Kuala Lumpur offers quality higher education in the best of Methodist tradition and at affordable fees. The College also provides guidance and counselling in the selection and application for university admission and choosing the right career path. The lecturers are experienced and dedicated to their jobs and would like to see the young people under their charge realize their God given potential.

For registration or further information, please contact:

Director of Studies Methodist College Kuala Lumpur Off Jalan Tun Sambanthan 4, Brickfields 50470 Kuala Lumpur.

Tel.: 03-2274 1851 Fax: 03-2273 6102

Email: ask@MethodistCollegeKL.edu.my Website: www.MethodistCollegeKL.edu.my



Stream Trotting: Students hiking upriver.



· Spectacular waterfall at the end of the stream trotting trail.



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Subben Jeyaindran Class of 2006. Admitted to London School of Economics. U.K. to read Economics on Scholarship. Top 10 in the world for 'Accounting' in the Summer 2006 GCE A-Level Examination.



Joyce Fong Siew May Class of 2006 Admitted to University of Cambridge, U.K. to read Law on Scholarship. Top 10 in the world for 'Chemistry' in the Summer 2006 GCE A-Level Examination.



Chen Jit Ern Class of 2006. Admitted to University of Cambridge, U.K. to read Natural Sciences on Scholarship.



COURSE INTAKES

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January*, March & July

AUSMAT

January* only

Diploma in ECE March & August

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(all year round)

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* Forecast results for SPM/O-Level are acceptable for January intake.

A-LEVEL

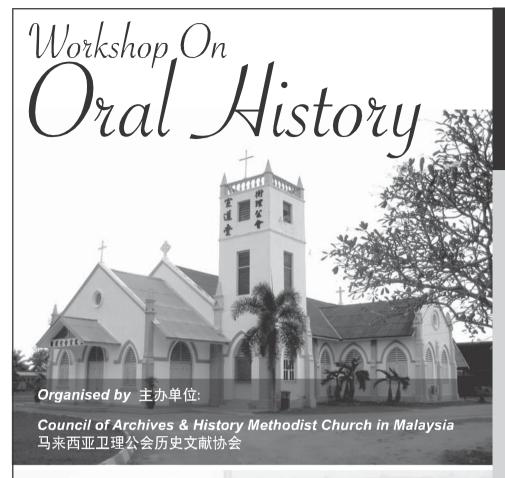


Register Now for LEVEL & Dip. in EC March 07 Intake

For more information, contact:

METHODIST COLLEGE KUALA LUMPUR

Off Jalan Tun Sambanthan 4, Brickfields, 50470 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia Tel: (603) 2274 1851 Fax: (603) 2273 6102 Email: ask@MethodistCollegeKL.edu.my



RESOURCE PERSON

Dr Jean-Paul Wiest, Founder of the Center for Mission Research & Study at Maryknoll, is presently on research assignment in China. He has been using and teaching Oral History Techniques for over twenty years.

资源人员

Jean-Paul Wiest 博士是 Maryknoll 宣教研究所的创办人, 目前在中国做研究。Wiest 博士已经使用及教导历史口述技术超过二十年。

AIM

Oral History preserves everyone's past for the future. This Workshop aims to provide participants with hands-on skills and techniques needed to collect individuals' living memories in order to document church/mission/ community history.

目的

口述历史保存每个人未来的往事。此座谈会的目的是提供参加者实用的技巧与技术收集个人生活回忆,以作教会/宣教/社区历史文献。

The same workshop will be conducted earlier in Sibu, Sarawak from 21-24 May at the Methodist Pilley Institute. The cost is RM50. Accommodation can be arranged at Wisma Methodist Sibu if needed. For further enquiries call SCAC Board of Archives & History at 084-345031.





Venue 地点: FLAMINGO HOTEL Sitiawan

Date 日期: 24th-28th May, 2007 2007年5月24-28日

REGISTRATION 报名

- Stay In 住宿者: RM250
- Day Participants 免住宿者: RM70
- Includes Methodist Heritage Tour 参观卫理遗物

WHO SHOULD ATTEND 谁应该参与

- · Church Historians 教会历史作者
- Members of Board of Archives
 历史文献部委员
- Church Archivists 教会档案管理员
- · Church Media Teams 教会传媒组
- Church/Seminary Librarians 教会/神学院图书管理员

MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION 媒介语 English and Mandarin. 中英

For further information and to obtain a copy of the application form call:

Shellatay Row

Tel: 03-79541811/ 016-2101508

Email: shellatayrow@yahoo.com
Aileen Khoo: khoohooiai@hotmail.com

Closing Date: 1st May, 2007 截止日期: 2007年5月1日





Vacancy

Applications are invited for the position of Director of the Institute for Christian Ministry [ICM] in the Trinity Annual Conference [TRAC] of the Methodist Church in Malaysia.

The person we are looking for would be under 55 years of age, and have at least 5 years' experience in Christian ministry in a church setting or in a para-church organization. Formal qualifications in Theology or Christian Education at the post-graduate level would be required. Candidates without this qualification, but possessing at least a diploma or bachelor's degree in one of the disciplines listed above, could also be considered; such candidates, if successful, would

be required to enroll for a suitable postgraduate course in an approved Seminary/ Bible School on an off-campus basis.

The Director reports to the Interim Board of the ICM and is responsible for the planning, development, implementation and evaluation of the education and training programmes of TRAC. The successful candidate would also be expected to undertake research surveys on the training needs of TRAC and its component churches.

The position carries remunerations and conditions of employment consistent with the administrative procedures within TRAC and would be commensurate with

the qualifications and experience of the candidate.

Applications, accompanied with a short personal resume, a recent passport-sized photograph, the names and contact numbers of 2 referees and a confidential letter of recommendation from the Pastor-in-Charge of the candidate's home church, should reach the following address on or before 31st March, 2007.

The Office Administrator,

Trinity Annual Conference, 2, Jalan 5/39, 46000 Petaling Jaya, Selangor Darul Ehsan. ✍



Latin American churches say they will go on denouncing injustice

• CLAI Assembly opened in a Buenos Aires Pentecostal church. Photo: Peter Kenny/ENI

Buenos Aires (ENI). Churches in Latin America remain committed to denouncing injustice, violations of human, economic and environmental rights, they say in a document after concluding a meeting of a governing body held every six years.

The Latin American Council of Churches, once known as a bulwark of liberation theology, has made available the final document drawn up during its fifth assembly. This was held from 19 to 25 February at Ward College, a Methodist institution in the city of Ramos Mejia on the western outskirts of Buenos Aires, and was attended by about 550 participants.

The final statement noted: "During this Assembly, we had the presence of churches and cooperating agencies of North America and Europe, who brought us close to their own struggles and hopes."

Some participants told Ecumenical News International the statement seemed aimed at deflecting criticism voice during the assembly that the council, known by its Spanish language acronym CLAI, had been forsaking attention to social and human rights issues in a bid to woo more Pentecostal and Evangelical churches into its fold. The packed opening

service was for the first time held in a Pentecostal church, one of the many that are experiencing rapid growth in Latin America compared to Roman Catholic and traditional Protestant churches.

There was also criticism from some participants about there not being a strong enough leadership voice in CLAI for indigenous people, women and young people.

The final document said, however, "We affirm the new horizons of the assembly in receiving greater participation in the decision-making processes of the council from the youth, indigenous peoples, and women, maintaining the validity of their respective programmes without renouncing their wide-ranging importance to the rest of CLAI's work."

CLAI, a 150 member church council represented in 20 countries, warned of "the risk that faces churches in accommodating themselves to systems that are opposed to the values of a Theology of the Kingdom of God". It is therefore urgent to continue exercising our prophetic voice in denouncing injustices, violations of human, economic, social, cultural, and environmental rights, thus announcing a liberating theology that

practices a communal, educational, and transforming ethic," said the church leaders in their final statement.

"We need to deepen our commitment in affirming full and abundant life in matters...such as the annulment of the illegitimate and odious external debt, of the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean ... the affirmation of the rights of native peoples, African descendants, women, children, youth and people with disabilities."

For the first time CLAI elected a descendant of black African origin, Anglican Bishop Julio Murray of Panama, as its president during the assembly.

The church grouping said it needed to continue awakening "responsible awareness to stop ... growing environmental contamination, global warming, and the tendency towards privatisation of natural resources".

Peter Kenny 5 March 2007

Ecumenical News Internationat http://www.eni.ch/ ✍

Bishop's Page



• Bishop Hwa Yung

Methodist Prayer

So will you be coming to the Methodist Prayer Convention 2007 (MPC)? This has been announced at the various Annual Conference sessions last year, through the Pelita Methodist and other Methodist publications, and by your pastors and leaders. It will begin at 9.00 am, Friday morning, 31st August, and end at 1.00 pm, Sunday, 2nd September. For those who are coming from Sarawak and Sabah, we would advise you to fly to Kuala Lumpur by Thursday, 30th, evening at the latest, and plan to leave by late Sunday afternoon flights.

The theme of the MPC is 'One in Christ through Prayer,' based on our Quadrennium theme, which is 'That We May be One in Christ (Jn 17:22)—Through Prayer, Studying God's Word, Discipleship, and Mission.' The goals of the MPC are fourfold:

- To bring Methodists from all over Malaysia to worship and pray together, thereby to know ourselves as a united people in Christ.
- To help foster a prayer movement at every level of the Methodist Church, from the local church to the General Conference.
- To come before God in repentance for our failures, and also to seek reconciliation and healing, both

- within each Annual Conference and between them, as the needs may be.
- To seek God together so that He may pour His Spirit out for the revival of the whole Methodist Church.

The venue for the MPC will be Sunway Pyramid Convention Centre, Bandar Sunway in Petaling Jaya. At the time of writing we are still awaiting confirmation for the use of an auditorium big enough to house more than 10,000 persons for Sunday worship on 2nd September. If this is approved, the Presidents of CAC, TAC and TRAC have agreed to ask all the churches in the Klang Valley to merge ALL their Sunday morning services with this one Combined Worship Service instead. Finally, for those who are able to come early on Thursday, 30th August, there will be a Preliminary Prayer Meeting from 7-10 pm at the Hokkien Methodist Church, Kuala Lumpur, to pray for the preparation, organization and smooth running of the MPC.

We are thankful to God for making it possible for us to have three outstanding Asian Christian leaders to speak at the MPC. Dr Sam Kamaleson was a prominent Methodist pastor in India before joining World Vision International more than 20 years ago. Since then he has had a wide speaking and lecturing

international ministry. Many of our own Methodists, especially those from the TAC, have heard him speak and been much blessed spiritually as a result. Rev Morley Lee (Li Xiu Ouan) has ministered extensively in student work and in churches in Taiwan and USA. He is presently the General Secretary of the Chinese Coordinating Centre of World Evangelism (CCCOWE), the Chinese wing of the Lausanne movement. Again, he is well-known to many of our Chinesespeaking Methodists. The third speaker is Dr Patrick Fung (Feng Hao Liu) who comes from Hong Kong, trained as a doctor and physician in Australia. and served many years as a missionary doctor in Pakistan. He has the distinction of being the first Asian General Director of OMF International, formerly called China Inland Mission.

This year is the 50th Anniversary of Merdeka, our nation's independence. It is only fitting that we should set aside Friday, 31st August, evening to celebrate and pray for our country. For that evening we are privileged to have two Methodists who have served the nation well through politics. YB Datuk Dr Ron Tan Kee Kwong is the MP for Segambut and Gerakan State Chairman, Wilayah. YB Ngeh Koo Ham is the State Assemblyman for Sitiawan, the State Opposition Leader,

Convention 2007

- To bring Methodists from all over Malaysia to worship and pray together, thereby to know ourselves as a united people in Christ.
- To help foster a prayer movement at every level of the Methodist Church, from the local church to the General Conference.
- To come before God in repentance for our failures, and also to seek reconciliation and healing, both within each Annual Conference and between them, as the needs may be.
- To seek God together so that He may pour His Spirit out for the revival of the whole Methodist Church.

and DAP State Chairman, Perak. Both of them will speak on our responsibilities as Christian citizens and how we may serve our country faithfully.

All the sessions will be in English and Chinese, with translation into Tamil and Iban provided via ear-phones. Further, at every plenary session, apart from worship and preaching, 30 minutes at least will be set apart for prayer for the various needs of the church, our nation and the world. There will also be time and space for anyone who so wishes to join others in prayer throughout the MPC.

Apart from the plenary sessions, eight workshops will be held each afternoon in English, Chinese and Tamil. These will cover a variety of topics focusing on prayer, the spiritual life, revival and missions. They will be led by our speakers. some of our pastors, and other specially invited workshop leaders. Of special interest to some will be the possibility of the presence of Graham Power, the South African Methodist whom God used to initiate the Global Day of Prayer Movement (GDOP), beginning in 2000. He is hoping to come with Dr Dion Forster, Dean of the Methodist Faculty, Johannesburg, who has been working with him on the GDOP. They will lead a workshop on how the Lord led them to launch the GDOP and how it has since spread all over the world.

The above is a quick run-down on the details of the MPC. How can you and your church prepare for it and help to advance its goals? First, join us to start praying regularly for God's blessings to be poured upon the Methodist Church through the MPC. Include it as an item of prayer in the life of your church and in your daily personal list. For those living in the KL/PJ area, please note that we will be having a prayer meeting every 3rd Sunday of the month at the Hokkien Methodist Church, Kuala Lumpur, from 7.30-9.30 p.m. For those living in other parts of the country, please take the initiative to meet regularly with other Methodists to pray regularly for the MPC.

Secondly, encourage as many as possible to come for this event. The Registration Forms will be out by March. Help us to disseminate them and encourage your fellow members to sign up. Further, there will be calls for volunteers for various tasks associated with the MPC through your pastors or church leaders soon. Please sign up to help in whatever way possible, as the Lord leads you. We

also need your financial support. The estimated budget will come close to RM400,000. If the Lord so moves you, send a gift to 'The Methodist Church in Malaysia' at 69 Jalan 5/31,46000 Petaling Jaya, Selangor. Be sure you earmark it for the MPC. Finally, if you live in KL/PJ, consider inviting fellow Methodists from other parts of the country to stay with you during the MPC. This will help those coming from outstation cut down accommodation cost and also find their way around much more easily.

One last thing. Of course we all hope that this will be a wonderful time of celebration and fellowship for Methodists from all over the country. Why shouldn't it be, when we are reminded to 'Rejoice in the Lord always!' But over and above all these we need to remember that this time is set aside for worship and seeking the Lord together in repentance and prayer. Let us ask God to prepare each of us that we may come with clean hands, pure hearts and humble spirits! Let us ask God to tear the heavens open (Is 64:1ff) and pour a mighty blessing upon His people called Methodists! Oh ... let us cry to God to visit us in His awesome holiness and power once again!

The People Called Ibans

This is part of a longer report on a Family Missions Trip to Rumah Tuan, an Iban longhouse, in October 2006.

The Ibans are the largest ethnic group (604,000) in Sarawak. They make up 29% of the total 2.1 million population in the State. According to Benedict Sadin, it is commonly believed that they can trace their origin from the Kapuas River basin in Western Kalimantan. Today, they are found mostly along the Saribas, Batang Lupar and Rejang River basins in Sarawak.

The life of the Ibans was based on fruit gathering, hunting and shifting cultivation. The quest for more new fertile land, coupled with their adventurous and courageous nature caused them to always move from one place to another. According to Derek Freeman, their shifting cultivation is one of the best hillfarming societies in the world. Farming is the activity that integrates and unites the society economically, culturally and religiously. The rise of education levels among the community in the context of national modernization, industrialization and social and economic development has caused a steady stream of rural to urban migration since the 70's. As a result, only the young and the old are found in the rural longhouses.

The Ibans live in longhouses under the leadership of a Tuai Rumah (Headman). The longhouses normally consist of 10 or more Pintu (family) where the Tuai Bilik (Heads of the family) are inter-

related with each other and with their Tuai Rumah. However, it would be wrong to perceive them as a communal community because they are autonomous in regards to the needs of the respective household. The Ruai (veranda) that runs through the longhouse is the hall where social, religious and political activities take place. In fact, the veranda could symbolize the heart of the entire longhouse.

The Ibans are generally very warm, open and religious people. Their belief system is very much derived from the daily life that evolves around rice cultivation and the jungle activities. Haddon said: "It is characteristic of Iban ... that the whole of their life is permeated with religious conceptions and indeed no distinction can be drawn in their life between technical and religious operations." Jensen also states that religion is almost synonymous with their life. An old Iban man confirms this by saying, "Our worship goes with our work. We don't worship unless it has something to do with our work..." Yet interestingly, there is no temple or holy images in their midst. Their religious leaders are the Tuai Burong, Tuai Rumah, Lemambang or the Manang-shaman. The Gawai Festival, Gawai Kenyalang, and Gawai antu are some of the major festivals in the community.

The Call to Reach-out

Statistically, 69% of the Ibans claim to be Christians. Yet, there are many unreachedlonghouses in the neighborhood. For example, on the way back from Rumah Tuan, we were told by an Iban man in the car that there are more than 20 longhouses in his area. At this moment, the church reaches only 3 of them. In other words, there are plenty of opportunities for the church to do outreach in the same area. As the 3 longhouses are now excited with their new found faith, the church must seize the opportunity to mobilize them in our joint-outreach efforts.

Personally, I always dread facing the parting hour at the end of each trip. The question of "When will you come again?" would definitely be raised. Be it a courteous or sincere invitation, their active and attentive participation in the programs shows that they are sincere and genuine.

Will you go to reach one of the longhouses? In fact, we do not have to go far to meet them. They are right in our neighborhood. The rapid rural-urban migration has brought a large crowd of the Ibans to work and live in the towns. Today, they can be found at the supermarkets, offices, factories, plantations, schools and construction sites. You will see them everywhere you



look. As a matter of fact, you could be greeted by them at the coffee shop or receptionist counters in Mandarin. The Lord has miraculously removed the language barrier between us. Therefore, don't wait for a thunder voice from heaven to send us forth.

The Call to Nurture

The issue of Christian education is a severe problem that posts a great challenge to the Christian community. The low pastor-believer ratio, long distance between longhouses, and low literacy rate among the older generation are hindering the nurturing process. This is reflected in the poorly maintained longhouse chapels, low number of full time Iban theological students and low giving in the church.

It is ambitious for an Iban pastor to look after 20-40 longhouses. Practically, it is impossible; financially, it is over burdensome for the pastor without generous support from the church. When there are no worship services in the community, the faith of the believers will not grow. This is even more real when the literacy rate among the elderly is low.

However, their simple faith has been courageous and contagious. Soon after Rumah Siba was evangelized by Wesley Methodist Church, the believers shared their faith with the neighboring longhouse, Rumah Tuan. Last April, the folks from the latter longhouse brought

the church team to go to Rumah Selaban. The act of sharing had opened doors for the church to reach one longhouse after another.

Today, the ultimate challenge for the church is go and nurture them in their faith so that they can become a self-propagating, self-governing and self-supporting Christian community in the interior.

The Call to Answer the Call

Firstly, make yourself available for the next trip to the longhouse. In the past, it was a dreadful thought to go to the remote longhouses. Today, the scenario has changed. If my children enjoyed their trip so much, there is no excuse that you will not like it. Furthermore, the longhouse could be just 1-2 hours drive away from home. You do not even have to stay over night in the longhouse. So what is hindering you from going?

Secondly, pray and ask God for a group of likeminded team to go with you. It could even be your small group project where all of you can be part of it. Basically, a team of 5-6 persons that cover the ministry of worship, teaching and children is ideal. The team must also arm themselves for spiritual warfare because of the religious allegiance of the Iban. They invoke the spirits for healing, protection, defense, blessing and many other purposes in their lives. So, clothe yourselves with the full armor of God (Eph. 6) so that you can minister powerfully.

Thirdly, possess a culturally sensitive attitude. The key to reach the longhouse is friendship. The best way to bridge the gap is through friendship with the Tuai Rumah. If you can evangelize him, you can win the entire community for the Lord. This also explains why the team needs recommendations from a Christian longhouse. Despite cultural differences, they are basically open and receptive people. And our multi-racial society has prepared us for cross-cultural ministry.

Finally, anticipate surprises and remarkable results from the trip. Our God is a God of surprises. Just exercise your faith and open your eyes to see what He has in store for you. Since it will be a journey of faith, do ask God for a strong heart for the many shocking encounters. My prayer for you is that both the longhouse folks and you would be blessed to the honour and glory of our God.



Rev. Hii Kong Ching Emmanuel Methodist Church Bintulu ✍

Faith to Live By: An Exposition of the Apostles' Creed

Roland Chia

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12. Second Coming and Judgement

from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

The Creed declares that the risen and ■ ascended Lord will return to judge the world, both the living and the dead. When will this event take place? And what will become of humankind and the world when Christ returns in judgement? The first thing that must be said in regard to the second coming of Christ is that it will take place at the end of history. This means that the world as we know it - this world that is fragmented and torn asunder by corruption and decay - will not last forever. History as we know it - not just human history, but also the history of the physical world - will be brought to an end with the coming again of the resurrected Saviour.

The return of Christ cannot be hastened by what we do; neither can we know, much less determine, when it should take place. Just as the first advent of Christ took place at the fullness of time, so his return will take place at the time that God has appointed. The Church can neither predict nor control when the return of Christ in glory will take place. The Church can only await his return in faith and in hope.

The Nicene Creed goes on to speak of the everlasting kingdom of Christ. The return of Christ does not only signal the end of history but also the transformation of the entire cosmos....The transformation that Christ will bring about will not only affect individual human beings, but the physical earth itself. Nature itself will be transformed as it is delivered from the curse under which it now exists.

The Creed speaks of the one activity that will be performed by Christ at his glorious return. He will 'judge the living and the dead'. The concept of judgement in the New Testament does not only have a negative connotation. Judgement also denotes the salvation that God will bring through Christ. Scripture everywhere points to the dual nature of the divine judgement that Christ will bring at the close of the age. 'For the Son of Man is going to come in his Father's glory with his angels, and then he will reward each person according to what he has done' (Matt 16:27). 'When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his throne in heavenly glory. All nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats' (Matt 25:31-32). 'For we must all appear before the judgement seat of Christ, that each one may receive what is due to him for the things done in the body, whether good or bad' (2 Cor 5:10).

Although it is not explicitly mentioned in the Creed, the dual outcome or destinies of the righteous and the wicked is taught in the Church and perhaps assumed in the Creed. The righteous will be brought into the eternal kingdom of God, where they will enjoy his presence forever. The wicked will be thrown into the 'outer darkness' where there will be 'weeping and the gnashing of teeth' (Matt 22:13).

Needless to say, the doctrine of hell has fallen out of favour in modern times. In 1985, a survey was conducted among the Roman Catholic population in the Romance language countries in Europe about belief in the afterlife, particularly the Church's teaching about heaven and hell. Only 38 per cent believed in heaven, while only 26 per cent believed in hell. Even among some evangelical theologians, the doctrine of hell is becoming increasingly unpopular. This is not the place to enter into the various debates regarding the doctrine of hell. It is sufficient to state here that several passages in the New Testament speak of conscious eternal punishment in hell. If the doctrine of hell is debunked, we would be hard-pressed to make sense of these passages.

When we stand before the judgement seat of Christ, all our deeds, our thoughts, motivations and desires will be exposed. There is nothing that we can hide from the penetrating eyes of the Lamb who knows the hearts of men. Before the judgement seat, no mask will be thick enough



to camouflage the truth, no disguise clever enough to deceive. All will be laid bare, the deepest secrets will be revealed.

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The Nicene Creed goes on to speak of the everlasting kingdom of Christ. The return of Christ does not only signal the end of history but also the transformation of the entire cosmos. With this statement, the Nicene Creed presents a more complete account of what will take place in conjunction with the Second Coming of Christ. The transformation that Christ will bring about will not only affect individual human beings, but the physical earth itself. Nature itself will be transformed as it is delivered from the curse under which it now exists. The Apostle Paul describes the present world as being subjected to futility and the creation as groaning and yearning for its emancipation, healing and release (Rom 8: 20-22). This will take place when Christ returns and brings this world to perfection by transfiguring it in his glory.

With the final judgement the righteousness of God will prevail. Herein lies the Bible's answer to the problem of evil. Many secular philosophers have maintained that the reality of evil poses a serious challenge to biblical faith. They assert that the Bible does not provide a solution or satisfactory explanation of evil, and that Christian theology is also unable to provide an adequate explanation.

The philosopher David Hume and his disciples would maintain that the existence of evil has made the God of the Bible untenable. The argument goes something like this. If God is good and sovereign, then he would not only want to destroy evil but he would also be able to do so. But because the reality of evil in the world is undeniable, God must be either unable to destroy it, which means that he is not sovereign, or he does not want to destroy it, which means that he is not good.

To be sure, the Bible does not deal with the problem of evil in the terms set forth by philosophers like David Hume. Neither does the Bible explain the origin of evil. The Bible's solution to the problem of evil is a theological and not an abstract philosophical solution. It posits the final and absolute eradication of evil at the end of time. It declares that at the end of time, God's righteousness will prevail, evil will be destroyed, and evil men will be punished. In the end, the righteous and the innocent victims of the Hitlers and Idi Amins of the world will be vindicated. All anti-God forces will be defeated and forever destroyed. This victory can be traced all the way back to the Cross and Resurrection of Christ.

The doctrine of the last judgement also challenges us today because this doctrine speaks of a terrible accounting that will take place in the future. When we stand before the judgement seat of Christ, all our deeds, our thoughts, motivations and desires will be exposed. There is nothing that we can hide from the penetrating eyes of the Lamb who knows the hearts

of men. Before the judgement seat, no mask will be thick enough to camouflage the truth, no disguise clever enough to deceive. All will be laid bare, the deepest secrets will be revealed. All will have to face the Judge – kings, queens, rich, poor, black, white, ministers and priests.

The truth will be revealed: the priest may be shown to be a hypocrite, the beggar a saint. Those who now command respect may be shown to be unworthy of it. Those now scorned will be elevated. The Magnificat surely has an eschatological ring to it: '[God] has scattered those who are proud in their inmost thoughts. He has brought down rulers from their thrones but has lifted up the humble' (Luke 1:51-2).

One of the most sobering passages in the Gospels is the warning that Jesus issued at the end of the Sermon on the Mount. 'Not everyone who calls me Lord, Lord', Jesus says, 'will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father' (Matt 7:21). In other words, religious frauds will be excluded from the kingdom of God, no matter how accomplished their fraudulence. The vision of the exalted and returning Christ will penetrate the masks and the husks of falsehood, reach the heart and inner condition, and expose what is hitherto hidden and cleverly disguised.

The Christian community knows that it exists in the shadow of the wonderful and terrible Day of the Lord. Christian conduct must be shaped by that Day which is both the day of judgement and the day of salvation.

The Methodist Church in Malaysia Calendar 2007

	Janua	rv.		June		
	3 Jan ~		CAC Isaiah School	1-2	Fri-Sat	SCAC Sunday School Teachers Training
	3 Jan ~		TRAC Jeremiah School	4-5		SCAC Christian Teachers Training
	6	(Sat)	TAC MMM Planning Retreat	5-11	Tue-Mon	TAC MYF Korean Trip
	11-13	Thu-Sat	TAC Boards Meeting	6-9	Wed-Sat	SCAC MJYF Delegates Conference
	8-10	Mon-Wed	SPAC Boards Meeting	10	Sun	Methodist Education Foundation Sunday
	11-13	Thu-Sat	SPAC Laity Seminar	15-17	Fri-Sun	SIAC Team Ministry with CHEMPRO*
				13-17	111-5411	
	19-20	Fri-Sat	TAC MYAF Planning Retreat			in Balingian
	22-24		CCM Heads of Churches Consultation	17-23	Sun-Sat	TAC Christian Home and Family Week
	18-25	Thu-Thu	Week of Prayer for Christian Unity	21-25	Thu-Mon	World Federation of Chinese Methodist
	30	Tue	TAC DS/Board of Ministry/			Churches (WFCMC) Mission Conference
			Board of Finance Meeting			(Sibu)
	31	Wed	TAC Executive Board Meeting (I)	27-29	Wed-Fri	SCAC Missionaries Retreat
	JI	WEG	TAC Executive Board Meeting (1)	41-47	wcu-i ii	SCAC Missionaries Refreat
	E 1			T 1		
	Febru			July		
	4-11	Sun-Sun	TAC MYF Youth School	10-12	Tue-Thu	SCAC Pastors Drama Therapy
				13-15	Fri-Sun	TRAC Board Of Youth Work National
	March	!				Counselors Retreat
	1-3	Thu-Sat	TRAC Board of Christian	13-15	Fri-Sun	TRAC Mission Consultation
		1114 15111	Education Retreat	26	Thu	TAC DS/Board of Ministry /
	1.4	TI C		20	THU	
	1-4	Thu-Sun	TRAC Board of Youth Work Retreat			Board of Finance Meeting
	5-8	Mon-Thu	SPAC Pastors' School	27	Fri	TAC Executive Board Meeting (III)
			SCAC Pastors' School			
	6-8	Tue-Thu	TRAC President / DS Retreat	Augus	t	
	9	Fri	SIAC Dedication Service of	8	Wed	SIAC Fund Raising Joggerthon
			Chapel at Rumah Dinis, Sarikei	9-11	Thu-Sat	Council of Presidents + GCEC Meeting
	0.11	Fri C.		13-19	Mon-Sun	TAC MYF Week
	9-11	Fri-Sun	SIAC Team Ministry with			
			CHEMPRO* in Sarikei District	14-16	Tue-Thu	TRAC MOT / Approved Supply
	10-13	Sat-Tue	TRAC Youth National Prayer Retreat			Pastors Retreat
	16-18	Fri-Sun	TRAC School for Intercessors – Part 3	17-19	Fri-Sun	TRAC BB/GB Officers Retreat
	21-22	Wed-Thu	SCAC District Superintendents Retreat	18-21	Sat-Tue	TRAC MW Conference
	27-30	Tue-Fri	TRAC MSF Camp	18-20	Sat-Mon	TAC MW 32nd Conference
	27-31	Tue-Sat	TAC School of Evangelism	20-22		SCAC Marriage Enrichment
			Committee CODO Martine	20-22	WIGH- WELL	
	29-31	Thu-Sat	Council of Presidents + GCEC Meeting	22.25	mi a	Retreat No.14
	30-31	Fri-Sat	SCAC Pre-Marital Seminar	23-25	Thu-Sat	SCAC Church Music Leadership
	31	Sat	TRAC Board of Social Concerns District/			Training Conference
			Local Church Moderators Retreat	25-31	Sat-Fri	TAC Week of Prayer and Self Denial
_				26	Sun	SIAC Dedication Service of New Chapel
	4 • 1					at Lempa Antu, Pakan
	April					
	<i>April</i>	Mon-Wed	SPAC Boards Meeting	31_2/9	Fri-Sun	
	9-11		SPAC Boards Meeting	31-2/9	Fri-Sun	METHODIST PRAYER CONVENTION
	9-11 9-14	Mon-Sat	TAC MYAF Week			
	9-11		TAC MYAF Week TRAC Pastors /	Septen	nber	METHODIST PRAYER CONVENTION
	9-11 9-14 10-14	Mon-Sat Tue-Sun	TAC MYAF Week TRAC Pastors / Diaconal Ministers School	Septen	nber Fri-Sat	METHODIST PRAYER CONVENTION SCAC Pre-Marital Seminar
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^{*} Community Health Education & Motivation Programme (SIAC Health Programme)



Specially Designed Burial Plots

Nilai Memorial Park

One of Malaysia's most beautiful memorial parks, Nilai Memorial Park is situated just 30 minutes away from Kuala Lumpur. Surrounded by lush natural greenery, the Park successfully combines the best of oriental traditions and architecture with western planning and design. Set amidst all this is a series of tastefully designed and crafted memorials and niche columbariums, which not only provide a serene final resting place for our departed loved ones but also for others to pay their respects.



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There is peace of mind in being able to fulfill your final act of filial piety and assurance knowing that every detail will be taken care of conscientiously. There is dignity in a meaningful ritual well planned and well performed. A Xiao En Bereavement Care Package ensures that the warm memories of your departed loved one will endure for generations to come.



Xiao En Centre, Jalan Kuari, Cheras New addition to Xiao En Group (Estimated Date of Completion, Mid 2007)

Xiao En Centre

Xiao En Centre provides facilities for memorial services and funeral rites as well as counseling services for the grieving and bereaved. The Centre's design combines modern sensibilities & traditional values with an appraisal of human values, and represents our unfailing strength & commitment towards life services. The Centre is complemented with facilities and activities for the aging people, including art exhibitions and cultural events.

New Bishop for Chinese Methodist Church in Australia

The 5th Session of the Chinese Methodist Church in Australia Annual Conference (CMCA), held on 29 Nov - 2 Dec 2006, elected Rev. Albert Chiew as the new bishop, and Mr. Joseph Ting as the Lay Leader.

Prior to that, CMCA held their Pastoral Summer School on 27-29 Nov 2006 in Melbourne. Later during the conference, the long expected Annual Conference Building was officially declared opened by Bishop Hwa Yung of the Methodist Church in Malaysia, Rev. Dr. Su Chii Ann of Sarawak Chinese Annual Conference (SCAC), the new Bishop, Rev. Albert Chiew and the out-going bishop, Rev. Dr. James Ha.

On 3 Dec 2006, CMCA celebrated their 20th anniversary of the beginning of the missionary work of the Chinese Methodists in Australia. In June 1986, a little flock of about 20 people gathered in the Kew suburb of Melbourne. This humble gathering marked the beginning of the great harvest. Two years later, in November 1988, SCAC commissioned Rev. James Ha as the missionary to Australia.

Through years of toil and labour with other coworkers, the Mission Conference of the Chinese Methodist Church was established in 1994. In 2002, it was officially upgraded to the Annual Conference of the Chinese Methodist Church in Australia. Their first bishop was Rev. James Ha.

The motto of the conference is: "To spare no effort in expanding the ministry of the Mission Conference to establish churches and preaching points in all cities and towns where the gospel can be preached to the Chinese immigrants or other English speaking peoples of Asian ethnic origins."

CMCA continues to strive to reach out to all people across the land of Australia. Their urgent prayer need is having a full time missionary or pastor to serve in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea.

CMCA has 9 churches, 6 preaching centres, 2 preaching points. They are served by 14 Elders, 6 Deacons and numerous local preachers. Their total membership is about 1500.

Winnie From Connection, 15 February 2007



 Opening ceremony of the Annual Conference Building. From left, Rev. Dr. Su Chii Ann, Bishop Albert Chiew and Bishop Hwa Yung.



• Bishop Chiew (middle) receiving a token from Bishop Hwa Yung.





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