

PELITA METHODIST

VOLUME 36, NO. 1/2
JAN/FEB 2011

PP3233/01/2012 (027056)



Out of the Church

Young people know
where their next stop is,
but what are they waiting?

BY MICHAEL WILLIAM

Moment



The Methodist Church in Malaysia celebrated its 125 anniversary in 2010. God indeed has blessed the church and growth in all areas of the church can be seen and be celebrated. Today, the Methodist Church is one of the three largest Protestant churches in Malaysia. Yet before we become complacent and even proud by our achievements, the church needs to see its relevance in society as the salt and light that God give to our world. It also needs to see on how we can improve to become more Christlike in our discipleship and education.

To ensure that this would happen, the General Conference Executive Council (GCEC) in 2008 made a request to the General Conference in September 2008 to look at four central issues in the life of the church, in order to provide a Road Map for the Methodist Church.

The aim of the Road Map is to help the

members of our Church to have a clear sense of direction on how we should move forward, and to do so together. Four areas of concern are covered: Evange-

'Each church and Annual Conferences will need to look into other aspects of the church life'

Bishop Hwa Yung wrote in the Introduction of The Road Map

lism and Church Planting, Discipleship, Church and Society and Missions. This Road Map is not meant as a comprehensive blue print to the life of the church but as a guide in these areas. And in the years to come, work would need to be done by each conference in these areas to further strengthen growth. Furthermore, the Road Map is a call to all Methodists to work together for the common good

sketched out over the next 10 – 20 years. The Road Map is an extraordinary document as for once there is a clear guide for all of us on the common directions of the many Methodist churches in Malaysia.

During the 125th Anniversary Service at the Chinese Methodist Church in Kuala Lumpur, the Road Map was officially launched. It follows after the same title stated in John Wesley's stated goal for the 18th century Methodist Revival - Spreading Scriptural Holiness, Transforming the Nation'.

All members of the Methodist should get view the Road Map from their churches. Together, and through the road map as our guide, it is hoped that the church can grow in depth and in numbers for the glory of God and the benefit of our country. [This article was adapted from the Introduction Section of the Road Map which was written by Bishop Hwa Yung]

PHOTOGRAPHED BY ISSAC NG

By Michael William

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Spreading scriptural holiness, transforming the nation.

Malaysia National Prayer Network

Church (The Lord is a great God)

"For the Lord is the great God, the great King above all gods. In his hand are the depths of the earth, and the mountain peaks belong to him. The sea is his, for he made it, and his hands formed the dry land. Come, let us bow down in worship, let us kneel before the Lord our Maker...Today, if only you would hear his voice, Do not harden your hearts..." (Ps 95:3-8, TNIV)

Pray for believers

| Resolutely live a Christlike life
| Devote ourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful



For our brothers and sisters who are being marginalised / facing injustice

| Church bombing in Egypt, Muslims-majority country.

1MALAYSIA

"This is what the LORD says: Do what is just and right. Rescue from the hands of their oppressors those who have been robbed. Do no wrong or violence to the foreigner, the fatherless or the widow, and do not shed innocent blood in this place" (Je 22:3, TNIV).

Continue to Pray

| For a society that seeks to do justice & love mercy, looks after & welcomes the poor, the strangers and the oppressed.
| For the governing authorities, the judiciary and the lawmakers: integrity and clean hands.
| For the religious authorities to respect individuals' rights to choose and worship religion of their choice.

Inbox

Would Five Loaves and Two Fish Be Enough for Jesus This Christmas?

From the past until present, God has been using people who are humble and give willingly, regardless of their externalities. As we observed from Andrew, who brought the little boy to Jesus, we'd learn to bring others to approach Jesus besides offering ourselves; and not to be a selfish Christian.

Jacquelyn Wong Siau Jye
PANDAN INDAH MC, CAC

Would Five Loaves and Two Fish Be Enough for Jesus This Christmas?

God graciously gave us His Son as a sacrifice for all of our sins, redeemed us, brought us into a relationship with God and gave

us eternal life. However, sometimes we choose to draw ourselves further away from Him by being selfish and hypocritical. In contrast, God had done incredible things that seems impossible in my life, yet, God is not looking for repayment. He takes me as I am. The only gift He wants is only myself, totally, completely, without reservation. He will change me through His Spirit and I will be bestowed with joy and completeness in Him when I focused on Him with full heartedly and mind. So let's commit and surrender to Him, allow Him to be the only direction in life. With such, I believe that He will lift me up beyond all my plans and desires to achieve an even greater purpose. Give thanks to the Almighty God. Amen.

Davey Ngu Yuet Saint,
MASLAND CMC, SCAC

PELITA METHODIST, PUBLISHER, BISHOP DR. HWA YUNG; CHIEF EDITOR, DR. HWA YUNG; EXECUTIVE EDITOR, MICHAEL WILLIAM; EDITORIAL BOARD, REV. LING HEU UH, REV STEWARD DAMAT MAMBANG, REV KHON WENG JOO, MR WONG MENG LEI, MR LILY UNG, MR ANTHONY ROW, REV SAMY DASS. ALL CORRESPONDENCE AND ENQUIRIES TO BE DIRECTED TO: PELITA METHODIST, 69 JALAN 5/31, 46000 PETALING JAYA, SELANGOR DARUL EHSAN; E-MAIL, pelita@methodistchurch.org.my; WEBSITE, www.methodistchurch.org.my; DESIGNED BY ISSAC NG; PRINTED BY ACADEME ART & PRINTING SERVICES SDN. BHD. NO 7, JALAN RAJAWALI 1A, BANDAR PUCHONG JAYA, 47100 SELANGOR DARUL EHSAN.

The Methodist Church In Malaysia

Annual Conferences of Methodist Church in Malaysia

CAC - Chinese Annual Conference **TAC** - Tamil Annual Conference
SCAC - Sarawak Chinese Annual Conference **TRAC** - Trinity Annual Conference
SIAC - Sarawak Iban Annual Conference **SMC** - Sengoi Mission Conference
SPAC - Sabah Provisional Annual Conference



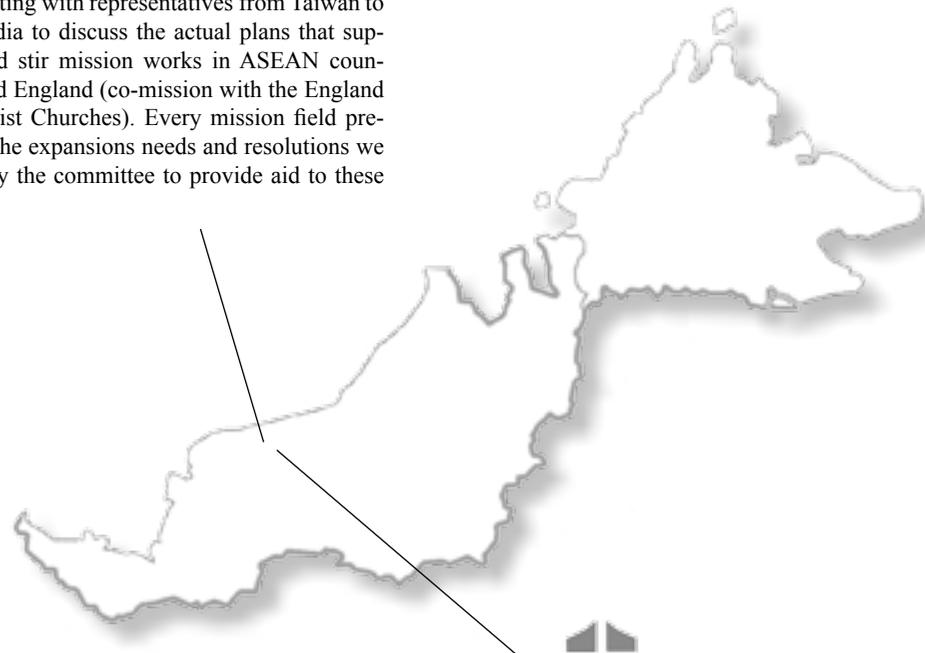
CAC Dedication of Newly Renovated Education Building in KL (Hokkien) CMC

The construction took 28 weeks to be completed since 2009. As the church congregation is currently more than a thousand members, is fully utilized the premises for all the various ministries especially by the Sunday School classes and various choir groups. Central District Superintendent, Rev. Tan Guan Hong, Conference Lay Leader, Richard Lim Chee Keong and Church Representatives from Central District Churches attended the dedication ceremony who chaired by President of CAC, Rev. Boh Che Suan.



SCAC World Federation of Chinese Methodist Churches Evangelism and Missions Committee

President of SCAC Dato Su Chii Ann chaired the meeting with representatives from Taiwan to Cambodia to discuss the actual plans that support and stir mission works in ASEAN countries and England (co-mission with the England Methodist Churches). Every mission field presented the expansions needs and resolutions we made by the committee to provide aid to these places.



SIAC Conference Board Meeting

Meeting that chaired by President Rev. Steward Damat discussed on conference's funds allocation, ministries that are running in 2011, future development, youth works and etc. Executives director of the board attended the meeting which took place in Sibu from 14 Jan - 15 Jan.

New Faces in Area Executive Council of The Methodist Church in Malaysia



Khor Hong Yin
Position: Executive Director
Department: Council of Education
Favourite Quote: Blessed is the one who does not walk in step with the wicked or stand in the way that sinners take or sit in the company of mockers (Psalm 1:1)



Lim Cheng Hin
Position: Manager
Department: Trustees Office
Favourite Quote: Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight. (Proverbs 3:5-6)



Teresa Sun
Position: Admin Assistant
Department: Administration Department
Favourite Quote: Pray everyday, praise everyday.



TRAC Enrolment in Jeremiah School

20 young people enrolled for the school from 5 Jan - 29 Jan and 9 Feb to 27 Feb 2011. Dr Chew Tow Yow, Rev Paul Christie, Rev Thomas Chin, Rev Yong Wai Yin, Dr Herbert Tan, Austin Sia, Alan Seow serves as teachers which is taking place in Golden Sands Baptist Assembly, Port Dickson. The syllabus of the school was developed to challenge the students in their walk with God. The areas include Spiritual Formation, Doctrinal Studies, Bible Studies and Theology, Personal Development, Ministry Skills and Practical Ministry.



SPREADING SCRIPTURAL HOLINESS,
TRANSFORMING THE NATION.

Council of Education Voicing Out in the Penang State Government

The chairperson of the Penang State Government Chinese School Affairs Coordinating Committee, Zhang Eng has welcomed representatives from Government Assisted Schools (Sekolah Bantuan Kerajaan) to be committees in the education board. This was suggested by the former headmaster of SMK Methodist (L) Penang, Mr. Khor (currently serving as the Executive Director, Council of Education Methodist). "The appointed committee should be acknowledged by all the schools," Zhang Eng responded the suggestion, "yet, we welcome them in joining us". The assigned member in the board, is also representative from the church that would discuss the quantum of the allocated education fund from the state government.

Methodist Malaysia Youth Fellowship (Persaudaraan Belia Methodist Malaysia)



Youth Quake

400 number of youths from Trinity Annual Conference were spending their holiday in building themselves into Christlike character. It was a 5-day camp which designed with a wide range of programs such as body building, workshops, seminars and more. The workshops were theme in three categories which were Personal, Family and Community that covered various of issues from utilizing the internet services, emotions quotient, living in a non Christian homes and etc. Other than workshops, they were able to attend practical training likewise drama, dance, lead singing and instruments playing.



Signing Up Happiness
Are they really happy?

Treasure in Clay Jars

Desperately seeking forever (namely eternal life) out of the church is an on-going scenario that the church is unacceptable which is now happening on young people

BY MICHAEL WILLIAM

2011 has come and many people would once again be deciding on their new resolutions for the year. Even with people's scepticism to this endeavour, they still do it anyway in the hope that these resolutions would enhance their life in some way or another. It just highlights that as the New Year dawns, we all desire for a better life. We may have everything in life but there is always the need for more – money, security, enjoyment, and pleasure and so on. For Christians, many also make new commitments to God for a deepening spiritual life that will glorify Him and bless our neighbours. All of us are searching for life eternal.

A rich young ruler came to Jesus with the same quest – to find eternal life (Luke 18:18-30). The surprising thing of this query was that this young man was rich, powerful and morally upright. Living in occupied Palestine at that time, one would be really blessed to be in such a position at a very young stage of his life. One would think that his query would be of a boastful nature and he desired the commendation of Jesus. He certainly deserved it. Yet maybe he was really seeking. There was this emptiness in him that desired for something more, for eternal life.

One only needs to look at experience to decide on his motive for asking that question to Jesus. Today we live in a world where resources are plenty. We are not poor to an extent where we lack the basic necessities in life. Our young people have everything, spiritually and physically. In terms of education, we have schools, tuition, books and the internet. For spiritual needs, our young people faithfully attend Sunday school and Youth meetings. Yet one only needs to spend time with our youth and learn that the quest for life is very much a big part of their lives. Our young people are seeking just like that rich young ruler who met Jesus. It is therefore

of great importance that we learn from Jesus to guide them in their quest for life eternal.

Bursting the Bubble of Perfection

There is this term 'Jars of Clay' in 2 Corinthians 4 which is used to show the fragility of mankind. All human beings are 'breakable' people and need to be handled with care. We all know how broken we are and much patched work is done to keep us intact. There is always a longing for a way out, a solution to our needs. This young ruler sought Jesus simply because in his eyes, Jesus was the good teacher who taught with authority and healed in power. He sought after Jesus' wisdom for life. And Jesus answered him.

Firstly Jesus showed him that as much as he sought after a good life, in essence man can never be good. No matter how much we do, we would never be good

Many of our young people do not go to church anymore in Malaysia, especially in the urban areas.

simply because of our brokenness and sin. Only God is good. Jesus was humble enough to show him that though Jesus is God, in the eyes of the people around him, he was only a man and therefore should not be addressed as good. Jesus was only a man in their eyes.

Secondly, Jesus pointed out to this man that though he may have been very religious and followed the letter of the law in strict obedience, he still lacked in dependence in God. We should not be mistaken that spiritual piety is not important as Jesus loved this man due to his obedience to the law (Mark 10:21). And it was because this love, Jesus pointed out his lacking that were hindering him for the life he sought after. He was too dependent on his wealth.

This young man left Jesus feeling sad and broken after hearing Jesus's call to sell every thing he had and to give it to the poor. He was very wealthy (Luke 18:23). Suddenly the notion of becoming poorer than the poor revealed how fragile he actually was, how he too was just merely a 'jar of clay' who needed wealth to keep it from breaking. He could not live the life of ordinary people because he could not fathom on how he was to obtain life eternal that way. Even the call to follow Jesus, the good teacher and powerful miracle worker could not give him the assurances and security to the life he sought.

Yet ironically this young man did not fathom that only by becoming this 'jar of clay' could he see his desperate need for God. And it is in God that he would then find life eternal only when he had released of all that seemingly had given him security and just trust in the God would he find life. He just had to imitate the life of Jesus and he would see how abundant this life would really be.

Our Young 'Jars of Clay' of Today

There are many 'rich' young people in our churches today who are also seeking life. They are rich in many ways – education, information, in friends, financially and so on. Many of our young people have been through the church education systems too through the Sunday school and also youth programs. Many have done well. They know the bible and are able to recite many bible verses by heart. Yet these same people are also seeking for life eternal. We can see these searches positively through their attendance in churches and their activities.

Sadly however, we can also see the indifferent attitudes towards our churches as well in some young people. Many of our young people do not go to church anymore in Malaysia especially in the urban areas. It would not be an exaggeration to say

that most of us would know at least one young person who has left the church after they have started working. Though there are many reasons for their departure, the saddest reason would be that they seem to think that they are not finding life eternal in the church. What is even more frustrating is that many of them would have been model youth in our churches. And like the rich young ruler, they would have been seen as morally and spiritually upright. Yet they are just not there anymore.

Following Jesus

This trend of our young people leaving church is growing. And before it gets too late, the whole church as the visible presence of Jesus on earth need to heed the lessons of Christ in teaching and nurturing our young people. We need to start in our families and our Sunday schools, when they are just children to follow Christ.

We need to show our young children that firstly, though they may be good and rich in many ways, our security and dependency has to be always only towards God. One way of doing this is to teach them to be grateful to God for everything. It is more than just being thankful for our food and the fine days God had provided. We need to be thankful for all aspects of our lives. Rarely do we thank God for our friends, our maids, our teachers and so on. And as Paul states in the book of Ephesians, we need to model kindness and gentleness in all our interactions.

Secondly, and this is difficult, we need to help our children and young people to learn to 'sell everything and give them to the poor'. In doing so two things happen – we help our young people become dependent to God as they learn the fragility of life and, we also show them life in its fullest. Let me elaborate this fact. One way of seeing the poverty of society is in our national primary schools. It would be safe to say that in the urban areas, very few Christian families send their children

...young people stand to gain the very eternal life they are seeking desperately

to these schools. It may be that the perceived standard of education is poor or the facilities are scarce. Some may not do it out of fear of the influence of 'poor' kids whom they would meet. Many of us would think that in sending our children to these schools, it would be akin to 'selling

all we have and giving them to the poor'.

Frankly speaking it would be just that!

My daughter has just begun primary education this year. She is studying in one of these schools. Most of the students come from the poorer areas of Petaling Jaya. In her class, she is the student who is a Christian and also the only student who is not Malay. I hope I am not being condescending here to state that my girl is 'richer' and therefore better than her new found friends but there are many who are 'poorer' than her. She had the privilege of going to pre-school at the very age of 3. And her exposure to languages and of skills is greater to many of her friends. And if we claim to know the only true God, my daughter should also be 'rich' spiritually.

Our first few weeks in school have been very trying to say the least both for the girl and also for us as parents. She has entered a new world that has given us such a culture shock. By going to this school, suddenly we come 'poorer' than the 'poor'. We realize how bad our Malay language is. We see how our daughter has to be exposed to a new religion overtly practiced in school. She has to also learn Arabic. Suddenly all our 'wealth' of language, abilities and money become of not much use in this situation.

We do all of this simply because we as parents want to believe that by doing so, in Jesus she would be able to learn to find life eternal in a seemingly desperate situation. And we are finding glimpses of this life even at the first month of school. My daughter is beginning to see kindness and gentleness through her friends. She is beginning to allow herself to be open to new possibilities beyond her control. And what is most important, as a family we are all showing our total dependence to God through prayer and following the ways of Christ in the bible. We suddenly have realized how fragile we are as parents and daughter. We need God. My daughter also has to learn to adjust her ways. She needs to learn on how to be kind to friends as well. She would surely be exposed to their lives and families. She would need to be part of the society that she lives in. And hopefully she would then be able to also hear the cries and desperations of our society and become the royal priest that God has called her to be for them.

This is only one example of 'selling all of our wealth and giving it the poor'. There are many more areas of need in our country. There are many cries for Christians to work in the rural areas of our country. There is a call for us to be involved in the public services and armed

forces. We need people to live amongst our indigenous peoples who live in some of the remote areas of Malaysia to teach and nurture them in modern living. We also need more pastors and missionaries. All of these examples are real needs in our country but the point of this story is that in these areas, many of our young people stand to gain the very eternal life they are seeking desperately.

Resting on the Promises of Christ

The rich young ruler left Jesus heart broken. It would an impossible task Jesus was asking him to do. What is sad is that he did not realize that Jesus knew he could do it and actually he was ready for it due to his spiritual upbringing. He had all the resources possible to accomplish this task actually. He had his wealth and he had the Law. If he had stayed longer, he would also have had the promise of Jesus that if were to live as called by Jesus, he would have 'had many times more than what he had and in the age to come, eternal life'. He would have seen that he would not be the only person who would have given their all to the poor – Jesus and his disciples were also living that way.

It was sad that the example from the 'good teacher' who taught with authority and had done many great miracles was not enough assurances needed to live that way. And we should not be too quick to judge as well simply because for this young man, he did not have the benefit of see Jesus as God actually. At that time, Jesus had not died and rose again. Furthermore he did not have the benefit of the Counsellor living him. So everything that Jesus had asked of him was perceived in a human way and therefore would have had been impossible. Yet in God everything is possible. If only he knew!

Today we do not need to live in such ignorance. We know who our Lord really is. And we have the strength of the Holy Spirit living in us. It would be even sadder that with such knowledge and resources of the Holy Spirit we doubt the very words of Jesus. But what would be a greater tragedy would be that we would not be able to experience life in its fullness the Jesus promised if we follow him.

So let us learn to teach our children and young people to search for life eternal in Christ. They can do it simply because they are rich and they have many resources. And by doing so, they will find 'treasures' even as they are 'jars of clay'.

May our resolutions this year be that we may truly be open to this eternal life that our Lord wants to give us.

Features

Sarawak Chinese Annual Conference



As imperfect as we are, testimonies of God's love and grace filled the hall of Grace Methodist Church sanctuary last night as I witnessed with humble thanksgiving the graduation of the Disciple Class 2010. This is the 5th consecutive year that my church, Grace Methodist has successfully conducted the Disciple Class series. In his opening welcome, Rev. Law Hui Seng praised God for the 28 graduates who persevered to complete the course. He also thanked the facilitators for their time and commitment in serving the church. The Pastor-in-charge also emphasized the shortage of facilitators and encouraged more volunteers to come forward to be trained. The facilitators for this year's Disciple Class were: D1 – Wong Yieng Eng, Amy Lau, Tien Cheh Onn and Ting Kong Yu, D2 - Leong Mui Foon and D4 – Rev. Law Hui Seng. There was no D3 class because of low enrolment.

"Eventually it is my desire to see every member in this church complete the D1, D2, D3 and D4 classes," said Rev. Law as he concluded his message. The highlight of the graduation ceremony was the uplifting testimonies from the graduates. Most of them shared their newfound experience of discovering God's love again and the unexpected camaraderie developed in each study group. The graduates also thanked their respective facilitators for their dedication throughout the nine months course.

Here are some of their testimonies:

"I've been a member of this church for six years. At the beginning of each year I

could see the announcement of the Disciple Class new intake published in the Sunday service bulletin. I've procrastinated enrolling to it year after year until now. I've been a Christian for many years and now I can proudly call myself a disciple of Christ." ~ D1 Class - Sanlin, a shipbuilding electrician from Myanmar.

"Romans 14:4 taught me not to be a judgmental person. I have learned to accept my own imperfections as well as others'. The only perfection is in Jesus Christ." ~ D1 Class - Chung Chee Ming, engineer.

"The nine months required were initially a huge deterrent. I couldn't commit to such a schedule but the desire to learn and understand more about God's heart prompted me to sign up. One of the significant lessons I learned was loving God and loving people, and bearing the inner mark of character and the outer mark of compassion. We were reminded that a disciple must have the heart to embrace the least, the last and the lost." ~ D1 Class, Grace Chiew, homemaker.

"As the saying goes, learning is life-long. Being the oldest student in the class, I'm much humbled to learn not only from the Bible but also from my facilitators and my peers. I am also reminded of our identity as the people of the New Covenant with God through our belief in Jesus Christ." ~ D1 Class, Goh Kwang Ging, retiree.

"After 34 years in the banking industry, I was finally able to sign up for the 34 lessons in the D1 Class – what a blessed coincidence on the number! Coming from a Christian family background, I feel spiritually refreshed after the course. I am also

GMC Disciple Class Graduation

BY James TC Wong

Graduation

Group photograph of the disciple class graduation in Grace Methodist Church.

constantly reminded of God's Word that helps to overcome any challenges. The sharing in class built us up as we learned from each other, praise God." ~ D1 Class, William Law, retiree.

"It was Lesson 27 that impacted me most. 1 Corinthians 13 (Love is patient, love is kind... And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love). Our love for others will be seen by all whether we are really Christians or not. By our love we will be judged by God and by the world whether we are who say we are." ~ D1 Class, Jessy Yong, GMC staff

"I'm much encouraged by the four books used in D2. God's greatest works are seen in the way He uses the poor, uneducated, the broken-hearted and depressed to achieve His plan. I too was struggling when Rev. Law nominated me to be in the 2011-2012 LCEC. But all this burden I had is now gone, thank God." ~ D2 Class, Lau Ming Hung, school teacher

"Greater heights, greater faith I have after completing the D4 course. The strongest message I received was the last lesson when each of us had to proclaim, I join the other Saints on the journey to the New Jerusalem." ~ D4 Class, Fidella Tiew, university lecturer.

"In the D4 course, one of the lessons was to show servanthood by emulating Jesus washing the feet of his disciples. At the same time we also had to pray for that person as we washed his or her feet. I had my reservations but when I did it, I felt my shoulders were lightened and I was infused with inner peace and joy – praise God!" ~ D4 Class, Margaret Lee, retired teacher.

带着耶稣的印记

邦咯岛上义务行医，体现爱人如己之精神

鹏程 采访整理



印着主爱行医
医务人员们在邦咯岛义
务行医时合照留念。

一群为数约30的医务人员，包括专科与实习医生，还有麻醉师、精神科医生、心理治疗师，甚至兽医。他们虽然忙碌，却愿意放下工作，到邦咯岛服侍有需要的人，并且花上几天时间，在岛上和岛民一同相处。

医务人员抵达时，住在邦咯岛卫理楼。里面只有三间大房，加30张铺在地上的垫褥。要专科医生睡垫褥，连床架都没有，但他们没有一句怨言。一个医务人员还满脸兴奋地说：“这里环境还真不错！”

邦咯岛只有一间政府诊疗所，设备不足，无法治疗比较特殊的病例，药物种类也匮乏。配合

医务人员到来，邦咯岛卫理公会办了一个嘉年华会，连续两晚都有医药讲座，邀请岛民来出席。第一晚讲的是“认识疫苗”，第二晚则是关于忧郁症与精神问题的讲座会。在岛上住着许多上了年纪的长辈，有些是渔民，他们半夜出海捕鱼，晚上能抽空出席。两晚的讲座会中，医生们为居民解答许多健康的难题。

嘉年华会的其他活动包括各类慈善活动、脚底按摩、社会关怀、义诊、戒毒咨询、选民登记，还有小孩子的填色比赛等。部分医生留在卫理楼协助看诊，有普通病症和精神病症的，也有人带宠物给兽医看

诊。有些医务人员分组到一些岛民的家中做家访和义诊，尤其是行动不便的病人。

廖春煌医生和Michelle来到一个简陋的家庭，这家庭住了一个精神出状况的儿子和他年迈的母亲。廖医生一面和她聊天，一面替她量血压和血糖。Michelle是药剂师，她替老婆婆检查要服用的药物。老婆婆的脚趾肿烂流脓，也有关节痛。廖医生说，那是尿酸，吃过量海鲜所致。廖医生写了一封推荐信，要求婆婆尽早去医院接受治疗。临走前，廖医生为婆婆祷告，把她的身体、信仰和生命，都交托给上帝。家访完毕，医务人员

们虽然又饿又累又热，但内心充满喜乐，因为他们身上带着的印记，是耶稣的爱。一位医生说：“我们到病人的家，不是我们在帮助他们，反而是病人诉说的人生经验，激励了我们。”

这印证圣经的一句话——万事都互相效力，叫爱神的人得益处（罗8:28）。

某天早晨灵修时，他们查读的经文，是“一个小孩献上五饼二鱼，让耶稣喂饱五千人”的神迹。医务团契的成员深深感受到，这几天的服侍虽短暂，却是硕果累累，因为他们把自己的才能献上，耶稣就这样使用他们去祝福邦咯岛的居民。

照片提供 - 《卫理报》

2011年卫神开学礼

池金代：凡事都应顺服神心意

韵琴 报导

“我们应当成为一个如大卫般合神心意的信徒，更要拒绝当一个如扫罗般用诸多藉口来搪塞上帝的人。”卫理神学院院长池金代牧师在2011年卫理神学院开学礼上苦口婆心地劝解众信徒，当要学像大卫般敬畏上帝。

“扫罗为了讨好众人而勉强地去献祭祷告，更指责撒母耳的迟到，在面对压力时降服于压力之下，最后还错用了祷告，他这一切的种种行为，都是不合神心意的行为。”池牧师提醒信徒们反省自己，是否也利用许多的藉口来违背神的心意？牧者是否为了讨好会友而不传讲神的话？而我们是否会为了牧师没有关心我们而不去做礼拜守主日？同时在政权的压力下，我们是否仍在行公义之事呢？甚至在祷告时，仅仅是敷衍了事？

“反之，凡事都遵行神心意的大卫顺服神的安排，也信靠神的名字，更尊重神的仆人，纵然有做错之处，但他认罪悔改并绝不再重犯。”

明知神要膏他为王，他顺服，在面对苦难时他也顺服，他信靠神的名打败敌人，纵然扫罗违背神的心意，但大卫仍然尊重他是神的受膏者而不加害于他。

池牧师促请信徒们学像大卫，无论是顺境或逆境都顺服，因为信主不是就等于进入天堂，就会事事顺心，上帝很可能会安排你要做一些你不喜欢的事，但你要顺服，要做到最好，献上最美，并靠住耶稣的圣名过得胜的生活，更要尊重神的

顺境或逆境都顺服
卫神院长池金代牧师
在开学礼上致词。



仆人（牧者），就算是多么地不喜欢，也要尊重他。

2011年卫理神学院于1月3日进行开学礼，主题为“合神心意”，其中一年级神学生有5位（1华、4伊班），宣教科学生有4人，一年级礼拜与音乐科学生有5人，神学系选修生有2位，第12届延伸神学教育学生则有7人。

短宣课程方面，伊班短宣生有6位，英语短宣生有21位，华语短宣生有57人，音乐短宣生则有21人。

从“守株待兔”到“主动出击”
卫理神学院迫切需要转型

在新时代的挑战下，卫理神学院迫切地需要转型成为一间“主动出击”的学院而不是继续被动地守株待兔，以便可以招募更多的学生。

针对学生人数似乎有减少的现象，院长池金代牧师在受访时说，卫理神学院长久以来都是被动地等待学生申请入院就读，从来没有外出招生，促使神学院一直处于被动的状态，这是神学院较弱的一环。

“如果卫理神学院可以开辟一

个招生部，如毕理学院一样，我们就可以有专人进行招生的工作，相信学生的来源也就不再是问题。”

他指出，行政、学术素质与市场（招生），原本就是一间学院必备的3个基本要素，但是卫神唯独缺了市场这一块，于是，学生来源的有所减少便是免不了的事。

2011年入读神学院的新生共有14位，分别是神学系5人（1华

4伊班）、宣教科4人、礼拜与音乐科5人，另外还有7位就读延伸神学教育。

他表示，上述的新生入学情况对于神学院来说，其实是有一定的危机，因为与前几届的新生相比，人数的确少了一些，尤其是华裔神学系的学生。

华裔神学生少了，就表示着未来可以为砂华人年议会服务的牧者就更少了，这也意味着砂华人年议会在未来的牧养策略比须做出进一步地修改。为此，砂华人年议会应该更加积极地鼓励年轻一辈就读神学系。

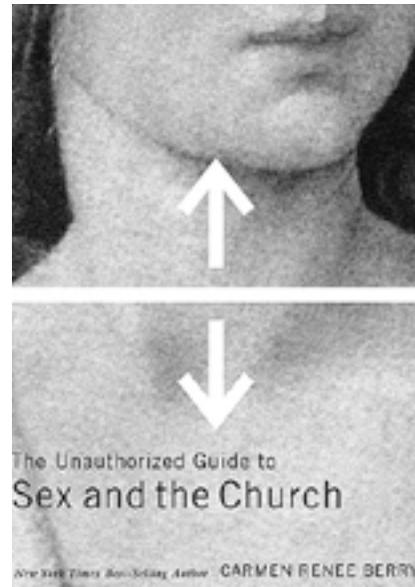
除此之外，砂华人年议会牧职部在近年来提高保送神学生的条件，也可能是其中一个导致神学生较少的原因，毕竟在灵命与学历方面都能达到要求，且愿意委身的人，并不是那么多。

另一方面，卫理神学院的新男生宿舍经已建竣，并已在开学时投入使用，目前已有神学生与短宣生入住新宿舍，但在建筑费方面，神学院尚欠200万令吉。

Arts

The LORD your God has chosen you to be a people for his own possession, out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth. (Deut 7:6)

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FIRST LINE

Sex is not a prevalent topic of conversation at most churches-at least not when it comes to personal disclosures.

BY MARCIA FORD

For all the talk about sexual issues with regard to the church - abortion, homosexuality, and celibacy come to mind - you'd think sexuality was the church's major concern. If that's what you think, well, it turns out you're not entirely wrong. Carmen Renee Berry's survey of Christian thought on sex reveals an inordinate amount of emphasis on the subject throughout church history.

Berry's "unauthorized guide" is divided into three major sections. The first traces the history of Christian (and Jewish) attitudes toward sex, as well as historical thinking on which sexual practices were considered appropriate and, of course, which were not. Conservatives and liberals alike would do well to read this section in particular; many Christians, I'm sure, would be surprised at how ancient laws regarding property rights helped shape ideas on sexuality that have survived to this day, for instance, or how Luther's early opposition to celibacy helped shape the thinking that led to the Protestant Reformation.

The second section examines four specific issues that stand as obstacles to church unity in contemporary society: sexual purity, celibacy, abortion, and homosexuality. Berry offers insight into each issue by examining them from a variety of perspectives and, in some cases, a variety of denominational perspectives - a particularly helpful bit of information for anyone who tends to lump all Christians together. The third major section looks at sex scandals in the church, providing some troubling statistics on the incidence of rape, paedophilia and other forms of sexual abuse, sex addiction, pornography, and the like within the church.

Throughout the book, Berry offers resources with regard to each specific issue

and provides a separate listing of resources in an appendix. Other appendices offer statistics on sexual misconduct, most of which specifically cite behaviour among Christians, and lists of questions readers can use to help discern where they stand on foundational beliefs such as Jesus and the authority of the Bible - beliefs that go a long way toward predicting and understanding a person's attitude toward sex.

If you're familiar with Berry's other books, such as *The Unauthorized Guide to Choosing a Church* and the *New York Times* best seller *Girlfriends*, you'll be glad to know that she continues with her warm, conversational style of writing in this book. In Berry's hands, church history becomes a series of delightful, interconnected stories that shed light on the way Christian thinking on sexuality has developed. As usual, her wit is never far from the surface.

Berry's purpose in tackling such highly charged topics is commendable; she'd like to see Christians on both sides of, say, the abortion divide talking to each other rather than attacking each other. The same goes for all the other sexually related issues that create division in the church. Berry writes in a way that shows she genuinely wants each side of a given issue to understand how and why the other side has reached the conclusions it has.

One can only hope that her readers will take the hint. Berry has done the church a service by providing a highly readable and entertaining look at the way diverse Christians approach sexual issues; the church would be wise to return the favour by encouraging those diverse Christians to begin a conversation with each other that focuses on finding common ground as well as solutions to sex-related problems that plague the church and society.



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