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METHODIST PRAYER CONVENTION 2014
PERHIMPUNAN DOA METHODIST
卫理公会祷告大会 2014

A CHURCH AFTER GOD'S OWN HEART
体贴上帝心意的教会
GEREJA YANG IMPIKAN HATI NURANI TUHAN
தேவனுடைய இருதயத்திற்கேற்ற சபை

29 & 30 AUGUST 2014
Sunway Convention Centre

SPEAKERS
REV. DR. STEPHEN SEAMANDS
2ND PLENARY SPEAKER
REV. DR. JOSHUA TING

31 AUGUST 2014
Putra Stadium, Bukit Jalil
Bt. Jalil - gathering of all Methodist churches for a time of prayer and celebration

Moment



31st AUGUST

MERDEKA DAY

MAY GOD BLESS

MALAYSIA

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Malaysia National Prayer Nurturing

Commit wholeheartedly!

In Luke 9:23, Jesus tells us what a person must do in order to be his disciple. We are asked to be willing to say “No” to ourselves and our own ambitions and follow Him, even to the point of being daily ready to give up our lives, that is, our relationships, possessions, socio-economical status, our perception of the world, the practices that we are used to, and the system which we are engaging in.

Saying “no” calls us to give up everything that makes up our identity, and to take on a new identity that is no longer based on family of origins, ethnic origins, or relationships of mutual obligation. The identity of a disciple is now in the new community that is centered on God and resolute faithfulness to Jesus’ message.

The way of the cross is the life of a faithful discipleship. Is Jesus telling us to embrace suffering? That’s not the point. We are called upon to identify with Jesus in his suffering even if we are not necessarily suffering or persecuted on account of our witness for him. Jesus Himself has unreservedly committed to the purpose of God, a purpose that is resisted by the world with hostility. Can we, who claim ourselves to be his disciples, expect less? Are we committed unreservedly to the cause of Christ? That’s the point.

Lord, make us disciples who are wholeheartedly devoted to You and Your cause.

- **Read Luke 9:23-27**

**I lift my eyes to You, O God, enthroned in heaven.
We keep looking to the LORD our God for mercy,
just as servants keep their eyes on their masters,
as a slave girl watches her mistress
for the slightest signal.
Have mercy on us, LORD, have mercy,
for we have had our fill of contempt.
We have had more than our fill
of the scoffing of the proud
and the contempt of the arrogant.
(Ps 123, NLT)**

Some grave concerns:

- Malaysia:
 - Spirit of integrity to rule the nation
 - The future of Selangor state
 - Malaysians found involved with Islamic State terror group (formerly known as ISIS), which is active in Iraq and Syria
- Gaza’s tiny Christian community undersiege
- Iraq-Syria crisis
 - Minority Christians being chased away by the threats of violence
 - The UN declared its highest level of emergency in Iraq as a humanitarian crisis follows the rapid advance by Islamic State militants in the north (<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-28785725>)
- Ukraine crisis.
 - At least 2,086 people have been killed in the east since mid-April, including civilians, the military and members of the armed groups, the UN said on 13 August. Nearly 5,000 people have been confirmed wounded. Ukraine said on 11 August that 468 of its soldiers had been killed. The rebels have reported losing at least 800 fighters. (<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-28770179>)

The Methodist Prayer Convention III is HERE!!!

The 3rd Methodist Prayer Convention (MPC3) will be held on 29th and 30th August 2014 at Sunway Convention Centre, Selangor. This quadrennial event occurring this year carries the theme “*A Church after God’s Own Heart.*”

The highlight of the event will be a combined Holy Communion Sunday *Prayer and Worship Celebration Service* at Putra Stadium, Bukit Jalil starting at 9.45 am, on 31st August 2014, which is essentially also the day Malaysia celebrates her 57th Merdeka.

The Methodist Prayer Convention is an event that brings together the whole Methodist Family in Malaysia which is made up of different ethnic groups. A total of about 2,700 participants from the 6 Annual Conferences and 1 Mission Conference – namely the Chinese Annual Conference, Tamil Annual Conference, Trinity Annual Conference, Sarawak Chinese Annual Conference, Sarawak Iban Annual Conference, Sabah Provisional Annual Conference and the Persidangan Missi Sengoi Methodist – will gather together, humbling themselves in penitent seeking of God.

This Methodist Family time of earnest praying is in humble response to God’s injunction in 2 Chronicles 7:14 - “*if my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land*”.

We especially chose to do this on the Merdeka weekend to seek God’s forgiveness and renewed favour on His Church and on our beloved country. Our participants will “stand in the gap” and ask forgiveness for the things that are wrong in God’s sight – in

the Church and in this nation.

This is made more imperative and urgent at a time when our blessed and beautiful nation – Malaysia – is experiencing increasing and unprecedented turmoil such as religious and racial tensions, political uncertainties, natural catastrophes such as the haze and drought, unparalleled shocks such as the loss of MH370 and MH17, security and health issues, increasing crime and violence etc at our doorstep – so that it is ever more important that we seek God’s intervening mercy, counsel and direction as we strive to move forward in Malaysia.

This MPC3 prayer gathering will culminate in a thanksgiving Prayer and Worship Celebration unto Almighty God – the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit by an expected combined congregation of approximately 15,000 members of the Malaysian Methodist Family in Putra Stadium, Bukit Jalil, Kuala Lumpur. It will be a time of great joy where the community of faith will sing, worship, pray and proclaim the name of the Lord as the sovereign God of His people called Methodists and of this land.

Thereafter, the Methodist Church in Malaysia prays to continue with even greater fervor as “*A Church after God’s Own Heart.*” that is - “*Growing deep and strong inside, Standing with Christ’s Body nationwide, Giving God glory from every side*”.

Rev Dr Ong Hwai Teik
The Bishop
Methodist Church in Malaysia

19 August 2014



Empowering Women to be the Salt and Light of Society



Group picture of the seminar participants, GCMW Exco, and the Speakers Prof. Dr. Jayum Ak Jawan and Assoc. Prof. Dr. Madeline Berma

The General Conference Methodist Women (GCMW) organized a Christian Education Seminar on 12th July 2014 at the Wesley Heritage Centre in Kuala Lumpur. The seminar was planned because of the concerns that had arisen in the Christian community, that affects our faith, beliefs, values, stands, and lifestyle. The objective of the seminar was to 'Empower Women To Be The Salt and Light of Society', as women are the key people who mould hearts and minds, instil norms, values and stands, build faith and create a Christian lifestyle.

The seminar was a call to women to come together to be preservers, as salt preserves, our Christian faith, values and stands in a changing society. It was also a call to be beacons of light, to illuminate the truth of God and His Word in our life and in the

life of our families, to the society around us. The thrust of the seminar was to enable women to be peacemakers, to be agents of change, and to be spiritual nurturers, who would sustain and strengthen Christian families to be a distinct people.

About a hundred women from the 6 Conferences gathered for the day's seminar that began at 9.00am with Praise and Worship. The Speaker for the first session was Professor Dr. Jayum Anak Jawan, Professor of Politics and Government of Universiti Putra Malaysia. He spoke on 'Women As Peacemakers In A Multi-Racial Society.' He led us through a brief history of our nation and what constitutes the present Malaysia, current developments in our country, and the need to know our rights and make right decisions for the common good.

The second Speaker was Associate Professor Dr. Madeline Berma of Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia. She spoke on 'Women As Agents Of Change In The Home And Society.' She spoke on the various roles of women not only in nurturing and caring in the home but also in society and in the labour force. She highlighted the various new features in modern families that have added to women's responsibilities, that compel women to be agents of change in their own lives and in the lives of their families and society.

The third Speaker was Rev. Dr. Sirirat, a Pastor and Founder of an orphanage in Chaingrai, Thailand. She spoke of her role as a nurturer to young girls and women forced into prostitution. Her message was that women need to look like light and taste like salt in a changing society.

Some time was given for Group Discussion, for the participants to discuss the 3 topics, to bring the message and formulate plans in their respective women's fellowships. The Organizing Committee of this seminar is grateful to God that the participants were blessed by the seminar and said an overwhelming 'Yes' to more of such seminars. All glory to God.

By Lila Chelliah
Chairperson, Organizing Committee
GCMW Christian Education Coordinator



GCMW Officers with Dr. Serirat of Thailand.



Christian Education Coordinator, Sister Lila Chelliah, and GCMW President, Sister Alice Jawan, handing love gift to Assoc. Prof. Dr. Madeline Berma.

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Devotion

DEVOTION

Hope against Hope

Faith is to believe what you do not yet see; the reward for this faith is to see what you believe.

(Augustine)

IN WORD:

Hope against hope. That's how Paul described the faith of Abraham, and by that faith, Abraham received God's promises. But he didn't see them with total clarity. Abraham had been promised a multitude of descendants, even while he was childless. As each year passed, the promise seemed more unlikely. Abraham questioned it at times, and he even tried to work it out in his own way (Genesis 16). But God had not promised Abraham descendants based on Abraham's own efforts. God promised according to His plan and His work. That's a huge difference.

That's the way it is with God's promises in our lives too. We are given many in His Word: eternal life, an inheritance with Jesus, answers to our prayers, fulfillment of our deepest desires, a godly character, fruitful work, and more. When years elapse between the promise and the fulfillment, we have questions. And like Abraham, we

One Year at the Cross Devotional by Chris Tiegreen

often try to work things out on our own. We forget the principle of hope against hope.

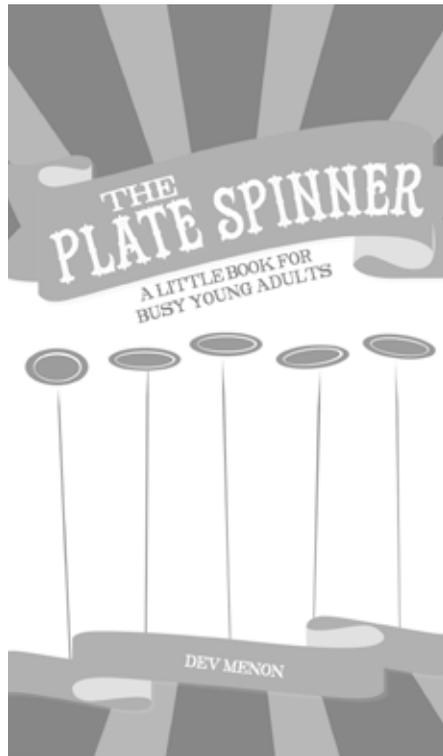
The death and resurrection of Jesus should be the final nail in the coffin of our doubts, but we often let the resurrection of our doubts loom larger than the resurrection of our Savior. The promises of God seem so far off that we despair, wondering if we've somehow misinterpreted them. We forget the truth of Hebrews 11:1, that faith is the assurance of things hoped for but not yet seen. We think if we haven't seen the promises fulfilled, they might not be true. Faith says otherwise.

IN DEED:

The life of faith—the pattern of relating to God from the beginning of time, but especially in the new creation—depends on seeing things that aren't seen. Faith is substance, our hope made real, the future promises made present. Our faith wages epic battles against our sight, and we must always let faith win. The principle that God honors is hope against hope, as long as it's based on His Word. Abraham was blessed by that principle; we will be too.

Against all hope, Abraham in hope believed.

Romans 4:18



The Plate Spinner: A Little Book for Busy Young Adults' by Dev Menon

Book review by Joshua Woo

A friend in cell group started his new job recently. He started doing over-time work on the third day onwards. This characterizes much of adult working life nowadays. Work changes us more than we realize. And more importantly, how we engage our work changes who we are.

This is a theme explored in Dev Menon's new book *The Plate Spinner: A Little Book for Busy Young Adults* (Singapore: Graceworks, 2014). The book serves as a guide for many of us who are swamped not only by our work but also other commitments such as friends, church, and family. We are frantically keeping many plates spinning at the same time---not a healthy way to live.

Dev reminds us that many plate spinners like to believe they are handling all the plates well, that they are keeping all of them spinning fine. Yet, the fact is that when we are so stretched, few if not all

of the plates are about to fall and break.

We can be physically present a church service or family gathering but we are mentally still working in our office. We may be sitting in a meeting with our clients, yet our mind is going through Bible Study questions for tonight's fellowship in church. He calls this 'Frenetic Plate spinner Syndrome' (p.20).

As Dev points out, our attempt to live a balanced life is impossible:

The whole concept of simply portioning out time and energy to the various segments of life and trying to do all of them well is completely ridiculous. It almost always leads to stress, pain and unrealistic expectations which are never met, causing a deep sense of inadequacy and guilt for those who try to follow, eventually leading to frustration and anger. (pp.31-32.)

Instead of trying to *balance* our various commitments, Dev recommends *centering*. We have to make Jesus Christ the center of our life. "Balance is rubbish. Balance will kill you. What we need to do is to centre our lives on... Jesus." (p.57)

When we make Jesus our center, we will learn the re-look at our priorities. We will learn to focus on what is most important at given juncture in our life. And so we also learn when and what to say 'No' to.

However, Dev reminds us that centering our lives around Jesus is itself no easy feat. It takes a lot of time, space, and money. And if we are not careful, centering becomes another plate that we spin. Dev's point is that when Jesus becomes the center of which our lives revolves around, then we don't need to spin any plate. We become the plate that Jesus spins---he is the source of our discernment and motivation in all that we do at any given point in life.

This is a helpful advice for young adults, especially those who just started work. For those who are already spinning plates, Dev has included a checklist as epilogue to help us move forward. Plate spinner might want to consider spinning this book. It might be the only plate you need at this moment.

Gateway to Asian Mission

In 2007, a group of church leaders in Malaysia asked AsiaCMS Executive Director, Dr Tan Kang San – who was then Head of Mission in Redcliffe College, UK – a question: “Why don’t you come back and initiate a missions training programme rather than the Malaysian churches and agencies sending missionary candidates to the UK for training?”

That small but weighty question set the ball rolling for **Asia Gateway**, based in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, and offers cross-cultural mission training with globally respected teachers and missiologists for missionaries from and to Asia, inclusive of Pakistan, India, Nepal, Myanmar, Japan, Korea and of course Malaysia.

After a period of time mulling over plans and getting the right infrastructure and people in place, **Asia Gateway** was launched in 2013. AsiaCMS (itself a recently created Asian-led mission organisation based in KL) led the way in setting up **Asia Gateway** – working alongside the Anglican Diocese of West Malaysia, the Methodist Church of Malaysia and mission agencies: OMF, OM, InterServe and SIM East Asia. Its first dean, Dr Lee Chul Woo, was appointed in 2014.

Former director of Koinonia Theological Seminary in the Philippines, Dr Lee holds a PhD in New Testament Studies from Stellenbosch University, South Africa. He and his wife Moon Gyung were OMF missionaries in the Philippines for 19 years.

Dr Tan Kang San and his wife Lee Loun Ling, Training Director of AsiaCMS, teach along with other eminent missiologists, on the **Asia Gateway** programme. Besides being the Executive Director of AsiaCMS, Dr Tan is the International Consultant on Inter-Faith Issues for World Evangelical Alliance and Lausanne Movement. He is also on the Adjunct Faculty of Seminari Theoloji Malaysia and Biblical Graduate School of Theology in Singapore. Loun Ling has been a trustee of Faith2Share, an international network which exists to strengthen indigenous twenty-first century mission movements, since it first became a registered charity in 2009 in the UK, at which point

she was lecturing in mission studies at Redcliffe College in the UK.

“**Asia Gateway’s** goal is to ensure that people working in mission – from those just starting out to experienced mission personnel, pastors and executive leaders – are better equipped to interact and engage with the non-Christian world in Asia,” says Loun Ling.

Christianity is growing rapidly in Asia, with about 352 million Christians. However, Christianity is still a minority in a sea of other religions – with 3.8 billion non-Christians (or 81% of world’s non-Christians), Asia remains by far the world’s largest mission field. Despite the growth in mission vision and engagement, mission training in Asia is lagging behind. There are as few as 15 specialist cross-cultural mission training centres or programmes in Asia. So the idea with **Asia Gateway** is to help plug the training gap in Asia and provide meaningful cross-cultural training for mission – from inside Asia.

Asia Gateway offers a range of training programmes – all with the same aim of laying down a firm foundation in cross-cultural training for mission. There is a strong emphasis on spiritual formation, which combines practical experience with theological reflection.

Currently these are the different programmes:

- An eight-week residential programme – aimed at new workers (both long-term and short-term), pastors and leaders who wish to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding to face challenges of spiritual maturity and integrity when working in difficult mission settings.
- A three-week residential Training of Trainers programme – for experienced mission workers – equipping trainers to return to their field/churches to train others
- A modular weekend non-residential programme where students can choose from topics like Biblical Theology of Mission;

Engaging with People of Other Faiths such as Buddhism, Hinduism and Islam; Communication and Contextualisation; through to Reading the Bible Missiologically and Intercultural Leadership.

Loun Ling explains that all the programmes seek to prepare mission workers for ministry among Asian cultures – with a particular focus on engaging with Asian religions. The high quality theory in the classroom – taught by experienced mission workers and lecturers – is combined with practical field trips and ministry – set alongside personal reflection and mentoring. Students get the chance to visit the many faceted ministries in Malaysia and meet the leaders of different faiths.



Asia Gateway’s first ‘graduates’ have recently completed a Training of Trainers course – a three-week residential enabling experienced missionaries to go out and train others in the field. The group comprised nine mission workers from Nepal, Mongolia, South Korea, India, Pakistan, and Hong Kong. One of the students, from South Korea, said this was first time he had participated in a training among such a multicultural community, with a team of multicultural experts.

One of the modules, *Living and Working Cross-Culturally* – is taught by Berdine van den Toren, a mission partner for mission education and consultancy at Church Mission Society and former learning and development advisor at CMS. The course is an eye-opener for many in knowing and understanding the different cultures, traditions, social and worldviews of diverse

people groups. The aim is: Be a learner first before attempting to even evangelise them.



Loun Ling summed up: “We called it **Asia Gateway** because we wanted it to depict a ‘gateway’ or channel through which people can come into something that’s very promising, a bigger vision and our hope is people who come through will be better equipped to demonstrate the love of God and share His word in Asia – so it’s a gateway to Asia. If I may stress, *this training is essential, not just for career missionaries or church workers, but for all who claim to be disciples of Jesus in 21st century Asia.*”

Adapted from an article by Sarah Holmes, Communications Officer of Faith2Share,

based on an interview with Lee Loun Ling, Training Director of AsiaCMS. (First published on Faith2Share website: www.faith2share.net June 2014. Used with permission)

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More details click on [Asia Gateway Website](#)

Features

The World Methodist Council Social Affirmation

We believe in God, creator of the world and of all people; and in Jesus Christ, incarnate among us, who died and rose again; and in the Holy Spirit, present with us to guide, strengthen, and comfort.

We believe; God, help our unbelief.

We rejoice in every sign of God’s kingdom:

in the upholding of human dignity and community;

in every expression of love, justice, and reconciliation; in each act of self-giving on behalf of others;

in the abundance of God’s gifts entrusted to us that all may have enough; in all responsible use of the earth’s resources.

Glory be to God on high; and on earth, peace.

We confess our sin, individual and collective, by silence or action:

through the violation of human dignity based on race, class, age, sex, nation, or faith;

through the exploitation of people because of greed and indifference;

through the misuse of power in personal, communal, national, and international life;

through the search for security by those military and economic forces that threaten human existence;

through the abuse of technology which endangers the earth and all life upon it.

Lord, have mercy; Christ, have mercy; Lord, have mercy.

We commit ourselves individually and as a community to the way of Christ; to take up the cross;

to seek abundant life for all humanity;

to struggle for peace with justice and freedom;

to risk ourselves in faith, hope, and love,

praying that God’s kingdom may come.

Thy kingdom come on earth as it is in heaven. Amen.

Adopted by the World Methodist Council

Nairobi, Kenya, 1986

Discipleship in the Wesleyan Tradition

Foundations of Wesleyan Discipleship

A. Sanctification and Christian Perfection

For John Wesley, faith was all about responding to God's grace and love. At the heart of his spirituality and Christian discipleship was his response to the immensity of the grace of God. He saw conversion as simply the beginning of the journey of discipleship, a process in which "God's love shed abroad in our hearts" effectively transforms both our consciousness and our actions. Justification is the start of the journey in response to God's grace; sanctification, pursuing a life of personal and social holiness towards Christian perfection or holiness of heart and life, is the continuing journey.

When asked to define Christian perfection, John Wesley often quoted Matthew 22:37: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind . . . Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" (KJV).

The journey of discipleship in the Wesleyan tradition is thus a continual process of being made perfect in our love of God, for each other, and the world, and of removing our desire to sin. In other words, becoming like Christ.

B. Discipleship in Community

John Wesley's understanding of faith is that it is not an individual affair. It is to be lived in community with fellow Christians and in society. The church is "the covenanted and disciplined community of those walking in the way of Jesus Christ . . . the joyful community of those who have traded everything else for the privilege of banding together around the person and the example of Christ and the cause of his kingdom."¹

Because Wesley understood that the journey of discipleship was not meant to be carried out alone, he worked out a system for his converts to be nurtured in community.

Wesleyan 'Model' of Discipleship

Within a few months of beginning field preaching in 1739, Wesley had already set up the basic system that would later lead to the amazing growth of the Methodist movement. Concerned that the old structures would not be able to provide the oversight, encouragement and accountability for his new converts to grow, Wesley adapted and created new structures.

The small group structure was thus formed so that Methodists could "watch over one another in love." It evolved into a system that provided structures, relationships and practices within a community to address the goal of ongoing discipleship, of deepening relationship with God and others, and of service to the community.

a. Structures

Wesley first formed societies² (equivalent to our congregations today) which had only one condition for admission - "a desire to flee from the wrath to come, to be saved from their sins." But because he was concerned that the societies were too big to watch over the spiritual growth of the members, he divided them into the different small groups.

(i) Small Groups (Face-to-Face Groups)

There were different types of small groups formed to serve different purposes and to meet different needs.

The Class Meeting - The society was subdivided into classes of about twelve persons each. Every member of the society was required to join a class. Wesley viewed the Methodist class meetings as a very effective means of instituting his principles of discipleship. Their primary purpose was actually discipline, to keep the members from straying out of the narrow path of discipleship. In the class meeting, Methodist doctrines, sermons and practices were explained. The members would share their spiritual state, struggles and sins committed. And they would encourage one another to grow in personal and social holiness through acts of charity.

The Band - Whereas the classes were the disciplinary unit of the society, the bands were the confessional unit. They were same-gender groups of five or six persons committed to each other and to live a holy life. Only about a third of the society members joined or were invited to join. Here they could pour out their hearts and share their spiritual journeys "without reserve and without disguise."

The Penitent Band - This "backslider's band" was designed specially for sincere people who kept sliding back into some habitual sin.

The Select Society - This was a small group for the leaders. Only the most faithful and dedicated were invited. It had no rules, no set procedure and no official leader. The purpose was to help one another advance in perfection, improve leadership skills and to have a select group where each can freely share.

(ii) Family Religion

This is often forgotten as one important 'group' within Wesley's discipleship structure. Families were encouraged to have family worship and study twice daily, morning and evening. Thursday night was to be given to one-on-one parent-to-child instruction. On Saturday, the family was to review what had been learned during the week. To help with family religion, Wesley wrote many books and even a service order for family worship.

(iii) Other Structures for Instruction

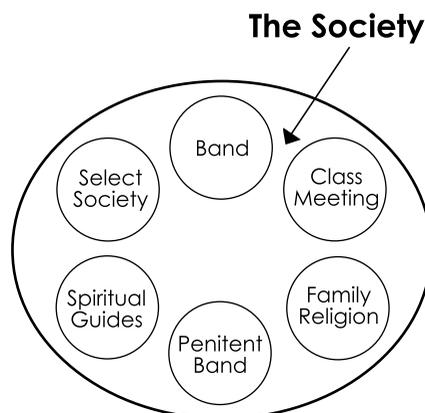
Structures for instruction in the early Methodist movement included Sunday worship, small groups, correspondence and one-to-one religious conversations, what we might call "directed studies" today. Wesley suggested readings, discussed theological issues, asked questions, and pushed his students to critically reflect on their faith.

b. Relationships

Besides the general relationships within the small groups, John Wesley emphasized various types of relationships for the 'care of souls.'

(i) Teaching Relationships

Ministers, leaders and teachers were an important part of the faith and spiritual formation of the lives of the members. They were chosen for their dedication to God and to the care of souls, their knowledge of doctrine, discipline



and practice, and their example of a holy life. The teaching role was a combination of proclamation, pastoral care, religious instruction, and modeling a faithful way of being. These relationships were significant in forming and nurturing Christian identity and vocation in the early Methodist movement.

(ii) One-to-One Relationships

Spiritual guidance was an essential element in the success of the Methodist movement although it is seldom highlighted. Wesley found the role of spiritual guide thrust upon him as people sought him out for direction in both secular and spiritual matters. He was convinced that spiritual guidance was essential for all Christians and that it was the responsibility of Christians to hold one another accountable spiritually. This took place in his small groups, families and especially in his “twin soul” and faith-mentoring³ relationships as described below.

Twin Souls - *Twin souls* (what some today might call spiritual friendships/peer mentoring) was a one-to-one relationship which Wesley frequently introduced to believers to provide mutual guidance and support. He repeatedly warned his people, both newcomers and veterans, that they could not keep ‘warm alone.’⁴

Faith Mentoring - In early Methodist practice, spiritual guidance would also take the form of a mature Christian watching over a

younger one. Sometimes a “babe” in Christ would be assigned to a “spiritual father” or “nursing mother” as Wesley would call them. He would also assign new or discouraged converts to ‘seasoned saints.’

c. Practices

For Wesley, learning and practical divinity are interdependent and inform and shape each other in the whole discipleship process. He thus laid down three general rules to govern how to live a life in love of God and neighbour: “do no harm,” “do good,” and “attend upon all the ordinances of God.” Examples of specific practices were given to illustrate each rule.

For example, in order to do no harm, behaviors such as profanity, drunkenness, etc., were to be avoided. To do good would involve actions like giving food to the hungry, and visiting the sick, those in prison, etc. These were what Wesley called **works of mercy**, outward expressions of our love for God shown in acts of loving our neighbour. Attending to the ordinances of God meant participating in spiritual practices such as corporate worship, private and public prayer, studying Scripture, etc. These were termed **works of piety**, ways of loving God shown in practices that served to deepen one’s relationship with God.

Thus the early Methodists had structures that instructed and fostered discipline and accountability, relationships that gave support and spiritual guidance, and practices with clear

expectations and guidance for living in personal and social holiness. As a result, the early Methodists, through the empowering work of the Holy Spirit, became a powerful movement for spiritual renewal and social change in the English society of that period.

NOTES

1. Howard A. Snyder, *The Radical Wesley & Patterns for Church Renewal* (Downers Grove: Inter Varsity Press, 1980), p. 113.
2. Religious Societies were already in existence in England during that time. When the Methodists spoke of a society, they meant a new association that they formed to spread their doctrine or one of the other Religious Societies that was now open to their new preaching. The main difference between the Methodist societies and the other religious societies was that the former were directly under the supervision of Wesley. Snyder, p.35.
3. This term ‘faith mentoring’ is coined by Wesley D. Tracy in his article ‘Spiritual Direction in the Wesleyan-Holiness Tradition’ in *Spiritual Direction and the Care of Souls*. Ed. Gary W. Moon and David G. Benner (Downers Grove: Inter Varsity Press, 2004) p. 123.
4. Wesley D. Tracy, *John Wesley, Spiritual Director: Spiritual Guidance in Wesley’s Letters*. Wesleyan Theological Journal 23:148-62, 1988.

Excerpt from Workshop Paper “Discipleship” by Rev. Wong Kah Nguon and Madam Goh Kim Guat which was presented at the 9th Session General Conference, September 15-20, 2008 at Kota Kinabalu.

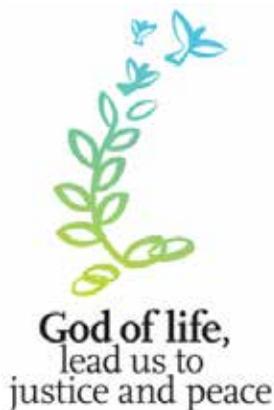
Notice

PELITA METHODIST would be trying out something new in the next 6 months. We are checking out the feasibility of expanding our publication to the cyber world through providing e-copies of the Pelita Methodist. Our aim is always to be able to have every Methodist member to have a copy of our magazine. Thus far since its inception, we have only been using the print medium.

Therefore for the next 6 month, we would also make e-copies available for anyone who wants it. Please email us at pelitamethodist@gmail.com if you want us to send you an e-copy of our magazine. You could also give us feedback about this idea or comment on any matter regarding Pelita Methodist at the same email address.

Michael William
Acting Executive Editor
Pelita Methodist





10th Assembly of the World Council of Churches

Introduction

The 10th Assembly of the World Council of Churches took place in Busan, Republic of Korea, from 30 October to 8 November 2013. There were about 920 delegates from all over the globe attended the Assembly. Whereas, there were about 3500 participants who participated in the Assembly where more than two-thirds were from Korea.

The assembly is the highest governing body of the World Council of Churches (WCC), and meets every seven or eight years. It is a moment when the fellowship of member churches comes together as a whole in prayer and celebration.

The assembly has the mandate to review programmes, to issue public statements and determine the overall policies of the WCC, as well as to elect presidents and a Central Committee that oversees the council's work until the next assembly.

The WCC was established at its 1st Assembly in Amsterdam, Netherlands (1948). Since then assemblies have been held in Evanston, United States (1954); New Delhi, India (1961); Uppsala, Sweden (1968); Nairobi, Kenya (1975); Vancouver, Canada (1983); Canberra, Australia (1991); Harare, Zimbabwe (1998); Porto Alegre, Brazil (2006), and Busan, Korea (2013).

The Theme and Programme of the Busan Assembly

The Theme of the Busan or 10th Assembly was **God of Life, Lead Us to Justice and Peace**. However, the core message was the call to **“Join the Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace”**. The Assembly hopes that or rather the WCC hopes that the 345 member churches will commit for this ecumenical movement towards Justice and Peace of the world.

Therefore, the programme was rooted in God of life, Lead Us to Justice and Peace and engaged participants in a response to this call. It covered five dimensions of being the church together in the world today – *koinonia* (one faith and fellowship in Christ), *martyria* (witness in the world), *diakonia* (serving justice and peace), *ecumenical formation* (for leadership) and *inter-religious cooperation* (a common context).

On the other hand, there were five plenary talks beside the theme plenary, namely, Asia Plenary, Mission Plenary, Unity Plenary, Justice Plenary and Peace Plenary. **Thematic plenaries** were large scale events presenting global challenges the churches must face together. They highlighted how churches and ecumenical partners should work together to address these challenges.

On top of that, The Assembly also prepared 21 Ecumenical Conversations for all participants. **Ecumenical conversations** were designed to promote in depth discussion on issues of common concern. Each conversation focuses on a unique topic and provides four 90-minute sessions for sustained dialogue. I attended the conversation called “Middle East: whose justice, what peace?”

Public Issues Adopted by the Assembly

Some public statements that were adopted by the Assembly include: Statement on the Way of Just Peace, Statement on the Politicization of Religion and Rights of Religious Minorities, Statement on the Human Rights of Stateless People, etc.

The statement entitled *On the Way of Just Peace* affirmed that “Peace constitutes a pattern of life that reflects human participation in God’s love and care for the world and all God’s creation”. With this affirmation, it re-

commends concrete actions and invokes commitment to share “God’s love for the world by seeking peace and protecting life”.

Another statement entitled *Politicization of Religion and Rights of Religious Minorities* called on the global ecumenical community to mediate with their respective governments “to develop policies of providing effective protection of persons and communities belonging to minority religions against threats or acts of violence from non-state actors.”

Human Rights of Stateless People was another significant statement, urged the “churches to engage in dialogue with states to adopt policies which confer nationality to stateless people and provide proper documentation”. The text also encouraged churches, civil society, human rights entities, United Nations agencies and regional organizations to collaborate effectively to reduce and eradicate statelessness.

The Newly Elected Presidents and Central Committee Members

The delegates of the Assembly elected 8 Presidents from 8 regions of the WCC and 150 Central Committee Members. (The list of 150 Central Committee Members is attached)

In one of the first decisions as the Central Committee for the WCC, the newly elected and installed 150-member committee made history moment by electing Dr. Agnes Abuom of Nairobi, from the Anglican Church of Kenya, as the moderator of the highest WCC governing body.

Rev Dr Wong Kee Sing

Reflection

(10th Assembly of the WCC and the Central Committee Meeting)

The 10th Assembly of the WCC in Busan and the 2014 Central Committee Meeting of the WCC in Geneva were well planned and organised. The programmes and topics covered by both the Assembly and Meeting were in line with the Theme – “God of Life, Lead Us to Justice and Peace”. I was so amazed and blessed by the Assembly and Meeting, especially the plenary sections.

The WCC also prepared various worship liturgies to cater to the various traditions of Christianity present: traditional, contemporary, orthodox, denominational, etc. In addition, the songs that were sung in the services were brought from all over the world and from all over the cultures that revealed

the thoughtfulness of the WCC in preparation. As I participated in the worship services, I saw the richness and abundance of God manifested. Indeed the Christian community is a global one, even though there are “strange cultures” that one has to adapt to.

On top of that, out of 920 delegates of the Assembly were by the Korean cuisine and language, to which many were not used to. However, I noticed the delegates tried their best to communicate and to enjoy the local food – using all means possible!

By having said these, I found one thing missing or rather lacking during the Assembly and meeting sessions. As we had come

from different places of the globe, speaking different languages, enjoying different kinds of food, one would have expected that as a Christian community we could partake in that one we share in common, and that is the sacrament of the Holy Communion. Apparently, there were outstanding divergences that prevented this celebration from taking place.

Nonetheless, it was a good experience to be part of a worldwide communion of believers. I thank God for being able to attend the 10th Assembly of the World Council of Churches. Also, I thank The Methodist Church of Malaysia to send me as a delegate of the Assembly. Indeed, it is a fruitful and eye opening experience.

- 1 Truly my soul finds rest in God;
my salvation comes from him.
- 2 Truly he is my rock and my salvation;
he is my fortress, I will never be shaken.
- 3 How long will you assault me?
Would all of you throw me down—
this leaning wall, this tottering fence?
- 4 Surely they intend to topple me
from my lofty place;
they take delight in lies.
With their mouths they bless,
but in their hearts they curse.
- 5 Yes, my soul, find rest in God;
my hope comes from him.
- 6 Truly he is my rock and my salvation;
he is my fortress, I will not be shaken.
- 7 My salvation and my honor depend on God;
he is my mighty rock, my refuge.
- 8 Trust in him at all times, you people;
pour out your hearts to him,
for God is our refuge.

Psalm 62

A Psalm of David

- 9 Surely the lowborn are but a breath,
the highborn are but a lie.
If weighed on a balance, they are nothing;
together they are only a breath.
- 10 Do not trust in extortion
or put vain hope in stolen goods;
though your riches increase,
do not set your heart on them.
- 11 One thing God has spoken,
two things I have heard:
“Power belongs to you, God,
and with you, Lord, is unfailing love”;
and, “You reward everyone
according to what they have done.”

First Methodist Church In Kuala Lumpur



The Tamil Methodist Church, Brickfields, Kuala Lumpur celebrated their 85th Anniversary on 6th September 1981 with a Thanksgiving Service at 9.00 a.m. at which an evangelist from India, Bagavathar Vedanayagam Sastriar was the guest speaker. The Malaysian Methodist Bishop, the Rev. C. N. Fang brought greetings from the General Conference and took part in the Holy Communion Service. This was followed by a fellowship tea and entertainment programme at which the Sunday School children and WSCS ladies gave song items and the MYF members put on an impromptu hilarious programme. The pastor of the church and president of TAC, the Rev. V. John Kovilpillai interviewed a few old members of the church, after which lunch was served, followed by a film show and tea.

In conjunction with the celebrations a fund raising subscription dinner was held at Hotel Merlin, Kuala Lumpur on Sunday 13th September, proceeds of which went to the 'TAC Multi-Purpose Building' project. This three-storey building will house the TAC and church offices, Conference Room, Library, Hostel

Rooms and other facilities. According to Mr. E. V. Nesaratnam, Vice President of TAC, the Multi-Purpose Hall will be used mainly for specific training and as a Resource Development Centre for rural work. The centre will provide training facilities for women from rural areas in health, nutrition, family planning and child care. Also for youth and children in kindergartens, pre-school and tuition for slow learners and drop-outs and for men to acquire appropriate skills in technical and vocational jobs to enable them to be self reliant. Another feature of the training planned is to develop leadership, so that those so trained, could go back to the rural areas and help in the developing of agricultural and animal husbandry projects, thus alleviating the poor economic and despondent social status that prevails now.

The Tamil Methodist Church has come a long way from its humble beginnings in 1896. According to Rev. V. John Kovilpillai, the church began with the dream of eight young men who met for Prayer and Bible Study in homes. These gatherings formed the foundation and the belief that a formal establishment

of a Tamil Church was necessary, and they approached the Malaya Annual Conference. On Friday 18th June, 1897, the Kuala Lumpur Episcopal Tamil Church was founded, and the Anglo-Tamil School was opened in July, 1897. Subsequently, land was obtained from the Government for a church building at Malacca Street, Kuala Lumpur. On 11th March, 1900, the Church was dedicated and served all Methodists — European, American, Chinese and Tamil congregations, until 1917 when the English speaking group moved to their own building and the Chinese congregation moved out in 1928.

However, as the Government land on which the church was situated was required for development, it was exchanged for a suitable land in Jalan Sultan Abdul Samad, Brickfields. The parsonage land being private land was sold for \$250,000 thus enabling the new building to be built. The foundation stone for the new church was laid on 22nd January 1961 by the Rev. S. S. Pakianathan, and the new building was dedicated by Bishop H. B. Amstutz on the 6th May, 1961, assisted by Dr. Ho Seng Ong, the most senior Asian pastor, the Rev. J. V. Ayaduray and the Rev. W. D. Stone.

Since then the church has also established preaching points in Sungei Way Subang, Ulu Klang, Bukit Rotan, Batang Berjuntai, Kajang, Rawang and is involved in the prison ministry.

As the pastor so aptly puts it "our rejoicing on this 85th Anniversary is not only concerned with our history, but also with the present and the future, it is a continuing vision of service to our Lord and society." He reminded the members of the challenges ahead. "There is a consuming and important work for each of us, if Christ's Kingdom is to grow on earth. Our witnessing and living must become effective; we are called to relieve some of the pain, misery and oppression in our midst, creating a society where the values of the Kingdom of God is cherished, established and lived."

Pelita Methodist
November/December 1981

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