



# World Federation of Chinese Methodist Churches 5th Mission Conference in Sibu, Sarawak

A record breaking 1,260 delegates attended this conference from 21-25 June. Delegates came from Myanmar (2), Korea (2), USA (9), United Kingdom (6), Australia (11), New Zealand (3), Canada (2), Sabah (19), Indonesia (29), Taiwan (68), Hong Kong (86), Singapore (99), West Malaysia (278), and East Malaysia (647).

In addition to the focus on missions, the concern for being a united, connected community was a prominent theme in

the conference. The main speakers and the plenary topics addressed this theme in one way or another.

In the opening sermon, Rev. Khoo Cheng Hoot, President of CAC of the Methodist Church in Singapore, asked if the gathered Methodists there can be as 'one man', willing to put aside all conflicts and disputes and let God bind them together as one body. Just as God can give new life to the valley of dry bones (Ezek.37), He can give flesh and

sinews to this body to do God's work

The keynote speaker, on the theme: In Mission We Connect and Unite, was Rev. Dr. Lo Lung Kwong, President of the Methodist Church in Hong Kong. With profound insights and humour he drew out the challenge of being in connection and missions.

The mark of disciples of Christ is their love for one another in unity. This goes beyond one's identification with culture, politics, clans, etc.; we are one in Christ. Disciples are also to bear much fruit as they abide in Christ (John 15). And disciples are sent to the world as Jesus was sent by God. Jesus is the first and best missionary example for us. Therefore, the purpose of connecting with one another is to enable others to believe Jesus, to glorify God and to let the world know the love of God.

The Bible studies, led by Rev. Dr. Ezra Kok, Principal of Seminari Theoloji Malaysia, expounded on the community in light of the New Testament – the Community of Disciples, the Charismatic Community and the Suffering Community.

And finally, the other plenary sessions dealt with the more practical issues of connectionalism. Rev. Dr. Su Chii Ann, President of SCAC, spoke on Connectionalism and Church Development. Rev. Khoo Cheng Hoot dealt with Connectionalism and Modern

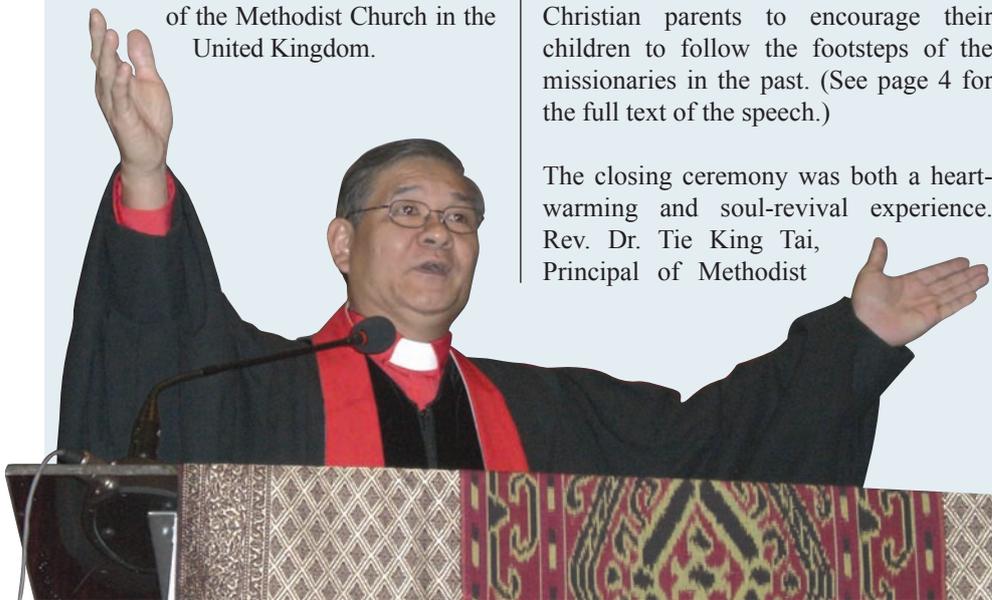


Bishop Hwa Yung giving the commissioning prayer.

>> continue on page 2

Church Management, and Bishop Hwa Yung, The Spirit of Connectional Methodism.

The honourable guests of the Conference were Dr. John Barrett, Chairperson of the World Methodist Council and Rev. Bill Anderson, Chairperson of the Birmingham District of the Methodist Church in the United Kingdom.



Rev. Dr. Su Chii Ann the new Chairman of the Executive Council

A new Executive Council (2007-2012) was elected, with Rev. Dr. Su Chii Ann as Chairman and Bishop Enoch Kuey of Taiwan the Vice-Chairman.

Before the closing, Bishop Hwa Yung was invited to give a commissioning speech. He pointed out the potential dangers of the future and challenged the Chinese Christian parents to encourage their children to follow the footsteps of the missionaries in the past. (See page 4 for the full text of the speech.)

The closing ceremony was both a heart-warming and soul-revival experience. Rev. Dr. Tie King Tai, Principal of Methodist



Theological student preparing the congregation for praise and worship.

Theological School, Sibui, encouraged the participants to be the wise man who chooses to do the will of the Lord. "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven" (Matt. 7:21). Rev. Tie later gave the congregation a five minutes quiet moment to pray and commit their lives to God.

At the end, the flag of the WFCMC was passed to the host of the next mission conference, which will be held in Taiwan in 2012.

Winnie Tie



Dr. George Hunter III

## The Changing World of Church Growth Through New Congregations TRAC Church Planting Conference, 25-26 May 2007

This was organized by TRAC Boards of Evangelism and Missions, the two day conference explored the current perspectives on church growth and church planting.

To do this the organizers invited Dr. George Hunter III from Asbury Theological Seminary, USA, as the main resource person. He has written much on church growth and evangelism, and is the co-founder of the American Society for Church Growth.

Dr. Hunter shared four seminars on "changing perspectives" related to church growth and new congregations. Admittedly, these observations were drawn from the development of new

churches in the West, particularly the United States. Nevertheless, they give much input to think about, and in some cases we see similar trends emerging in our own context, especially in the urban setting.

Although perspectives and practices may be changing, yet they are based on an unchanging conviction that "the main business of Christianity is apostolic" by which he means being "sent out" into the world. While the church, the ecclesia, is



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## What is Happening in our Annual Conferences?

### July

- 10-12 Tue-Thu SCAC Pastors Drama Therapy  
13-15 Fri-Sun TRAC Board Of Youth Work National  
Counselors Retreat  
13-15 Fri-Sun TRAC Mission Consultation  
26 Thu TAC DS/Board of Ministry/Board of  
Finance Meeting  
27 Fri TAC Executive Board Meeting (III)

### August

- 8 Wed SIAC Fund Raising Joggerthon  
9-11 Thu-Sat Council of Presidents + GCEC Meeting  
13-19 Mon-Sun TAC MYF Week  
14-16 Tue-Thu TRAC MOT/Approved Supply  
Pastors Retreat  
17-19 Fri-Sun TRAC BB/GB Officers Retreat  
18-21 Sat-Tue TRAC MW Conference  
18-20 Sat-Mon TAC MW 32nd Conference  
20-22 Mon-Wed SCAC Marriage Enrichment  
Retreat No.14  
23-25 Thu-Sat SCAC Church Music Leadership  
Training Conference  
25-31 Sat-Fri TAC Week of Prayer and Self Denial  
26 Sun SIAC Dedication Service of New Chapel  
at Lempa Antu, Pakan  
31-2/9 Fri-Sun METHODIST PRAYER CONVENTION

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# Are You Willing to Give Your Children If God So Calls?

Bishop Hwa Yung's Commissioning Address  
WFCMC Mission Conference 2007

The late John Paul II spoke of the 21st century as a "new springtime" for world mission. The focus will be on the task of world missions in the 21st century. But there will be a difference. It will be to look at world missions from the perspective of the non-western world where the majority of the Christians today live!

Chinese churches throughout the world are rightly excited about world missions. This is true of our meeting and also of CCCOWE, which had a huge conference in Macau last year. It is also true of the Chinese house churches with its Back-to-Jerusalem vision, and many others. And there is little doubt in my mind that the Chinese church worldwide will feature more and more strongly in world missions as the 21st century proceeds. There is indeed lots of energy and passion. And money will not be a problem.

But there is a deep concern in my heart which I believe is also God's concern for the Chinese church. The concern is simple: Does the Chinese church really understand that a genuine commitment to world missions will inevitably involve sacrifice and suffering? In the Back-to-Jerusalem vision of the house churches in China, they plan to send missionaries along the ancient

trade routes from Europe to China. Do we ever think that this can be done without sacrifice, suffering and martyrdom? We need to learn a lesson from our brethren in China. They tell us: Don't pray that we will be delivered from persecution. Pray instead that God will give us stronger backs to take it!

In Chinese there is a saying: A good son will never be a soldier! The meaning is clear. When I travel all over the world, I find Chinese churches everywhere very excited about missions. When it comes to giving money, attending mission conferences and taking part in short-term mission --- no problems! But where are those who are willing to give themselves or their sons and daughters to a life time in missions?

For example, if you go to Australia, half the Chinese Christian parents want their children to become doctors, and the other half want them to go into business! This, of course, is an exaggeration, but you get my point? Will the Chinese Christians in the 21st century develop a new saying: A good son will never be a missionary?

If the Chinese church is going to make its mark in world missions in the coming century, we cannot avoid the question of

commitment, sacrifice, suffering and even martyrdom! We will need to learn from those who gave up so much to bring the gospel to us in Asia. We need to have the faith of a Robert Morrison, the first Protestant missionary to China. We need to learn to give up the possibility of brilliant careers, like a John Sung, and teach our children to do the same. We need to be like the parents of Hudson Taylor, who secretly prayed for their son for years, until he ended up the most effective missionary that China ever knew.

We need to pray that God will produce a whole new generation of young men and women who will take the missionary calling seriously and treat it as a calling for one's whole life --- even at great cost to themselves. We need to remember Jesus' words: "Unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds." (John 12:24)

What about you and me? Am I willing to go when God calls and to wherever He sends? Am I, as a father or mother, so genuinely serious about mission that I will give my children with joy to the Lord if God so calls? Or, are we like those who say to God: Here am I, but send him!



# Christian Careers with a Difference GCYC Youth Conference

25-27 May 2007

This was the theme of the conference held at the Methodist Centennial Park, Sibul. What is the theme about you may ask? What is the difference between Christian careers and other careers? The two main speakers were Bishop Hwa Yung and Ms Annette Arulrajah, the General Secretary of the Fellowship of Evangelical Students.

This conference was held to address the issue of the shortage of fulltime workers and pastors in the Methodist Church which is a matter of some concern in some of the Annual Conferences. However, it was not just about this issue. Christian careers do not refer only to work within the church or other Christian ministries. They refer, rather, to the perspective and attitude a Christian brings to his/her career that is shaped by the Christian commitment.

It was this perspective that Bishop Hwa Yung laid the groundwork for understanding the difference a Christian has towards his or her career. His three messages dwelt on (1) God's Purposes for the World, (2) A Christian Understanding of Vocation, and (3) The Cost of Commitment.



Time to listen



Fellowship across the Annual Conferences



Now how difficult is it to get organized?

The Christian's work is always shaped by the calling to be the salt and light in the world. And as such his/her basic motivation is not for material gain or promotions but to seek to establish God's purposes in society and the work place. So one should see one's career as a way to serve Christ in the world and be committed to do the best in it. No doubt there will be a cost to pay because of the difference in priorities and goals that the Christian seeks to achieve.

Nevertheless, the concern shared by both speakers was the lack of Christians willing to take up the work of the pastoral or fulltime Christian ministry. Ms Arulrajah took two workshops on (1) The Missing Generation and (2) Opening the Eyes of our Heart.

She shared the sobering fact that out of 1000 Christian graduates every year, only less than 20 will work in fulltime ministry.



A time for prayer with Ms Annette.

Why is this so? Both speakers identified the same factors that were holding back young people to a fulltime ministry. One is the lure and attraction of what secular work offers in terms of monetary gain and security. But secondly, parents also encourage their children to take jobs that pay better and can sustain a certain kind of lifestyle. They consider fulltime ministry from the financial aspects, and often think of this career as the last option on the list.

The conference also addressed the practical questions on how to encourage more of our young people and graduates to take up fulltime ministry. One suggestion was to have some kind of mentorship programme in the church where school leavers after Form 5 & 6 can work in the church. They can then observe and gain some experience in the work of the pastor and the ministry of the church.

Rev. Christopher Rao, the TRAC Youth Director, also suggested that the GCYC Youth Council can play a part in bringing the youths from the Annual Conferences together and help to instill a heart for ministry and missions work. Mission trips can help expose youths to fulltime work in the church or in missions.

*This article is based on reports by Edmund Hunt of Wesley Methodist Church, Teluk Intan.*

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

**Roland Chia**

*Dr. Roland Chia is Dean of Postgraduate Studies and Lecturer in Historical and Systematic Theology at Trinity Theological College, Singapore.*

## *15. Forgiveness* *the forgiveness of sins*

The statement concerning the forgiveness of sin poses some difficulty to the modern reader because both sin and forgiveness have lost their meaning in our time. The evangelical theologian Bernard Ramm aptly entitled his book on sin, *An Offence to Reason*. This title is appropriate because it insightfully captures the sensibility of the modern man and his attitude towards what is traditionally called sin. For the modern man, the concept of sin is indeed an offence to reason because it injures his pride and sense of greatness. We have therefore invented a number of very clever euphemisms to replace the word sin: weakness, habit, orientation, tendency and fixation.

Our age also has a penchant for psychologising sin and for understanding sin not so much in relation to God but in relation to ourselves. The unhappy result of all this is that sin has lost its horror, being reduced to a psychological problem that can be treated. Once sin is psychologised in this way, salvation becomes nothing more than therapy. God himself is sometimes envisioned as a great therapist who is able to sort out or fix all our problems.

Just as sin has lost its true theological meaning in our modern culture, so forgiveness too has been grossly misunderstood. To begin with, forgiveness is something that most of us find difficult to give or receive. William Willimon has very insightfully said that it is very 'unnatural' for us to either forgive someone or receive forgiveness. It is 'unnatural' for us to forgive because we are 'naturally' vengeful. And it is 'unnatural'

for us to receive forgiveness because we are 'naturally' self-righteous. We find forgiveness difficult simply because sin has perverted our nature and created a barrier of self-righteousness and pride.

However, there is another way in which the idea of forgiveness has become problematic for us. In our modern world, forgiveness is no longer understood in relation to God, to sin and to justice. As a result forgiveness becomes sentimentalised and trivialised: it is understood superficially as letting people off. To understand the importance of the creedal statement about the forgiveness of sins, we must recover the biblical-theological understanding of sin and forgiveness.

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In order to understand what the Bible means by sin, it is helpful to examine some important words that it uses to refer

to it. The Bible sometimes describes sin as a 'transgression', a word which signifies stepping across or going out of bounds. Transgression refers both to the things that we do and the things that we have left undone. Another key word the Bible uses to describe sin is 'iniquity' and this has to do with perversion or distortion that is located at the very heart of the personality. While transgression refers primarily to some act which a person performs or fails to perform, iniquity deals with the disposition of the heart, the nature and attitude of the sinner.

The primary meaning of sin in the Bible is encapsulated in the concept 'rebellion', for in the Bible, sin has to do not just with the nature and inner disposition of man, but more fundamentally with the relationship between man and God. Romans 3 therefore provides the definitive description of the nature of sin when it characterises sin as rebellion: 'All have turned aside, together they have become worthless ... There is no fear of God before their eyes' (3:12, 18). Sin is described here as the autonomy that man wishes to exert over against God his Creator, the rejection of God's sovereignty and rebellion against his authority. The Bible does not trivialise sin by reducing it to a psychological state, but insists on the gravity of sin by pointing to its true nature and by emphasising the fact that sin is transgression against God himself.

Only when we appreciate the gravity of sin will we fully appreciate the greatness of God's forgiving grace which is extended not just to a group of individuals but to all, because all have sinned. The most powerful portrayal of God's attitude

towards the sinner is found in the famous parable of the prodigal son (Luke 15:11ff). In fact, the whole of Luke 15, which tells of three losses, provides us with profound insights regarding God's attitude towards sinful men and women, for these parables tell us that God is ever willing to welcome back sinners.

The parable of the prodigal son has much to teach us regarding sin, repentance and forgiveness. This parable, which is sometimes called the parable of the waiting Father, teaches that God is always waiting for his rebellious children to return, and that he is always ready to forgive them when they repent. The warm reception that the Father gave to his prodigal son when he returned (we are told that when the father saw his son coming at a distance, he ran towards him, embraced and kissed him), and the elaborate feast that he organised to welcome his son home, shows that the forgiveness of God of the repentant sinner is total and complete. This parable brings out the astonishing nature of forgiveness – forgiveness is all about the God who takes us back to himself when we have nothing to say for ourselves, no excuses to make and no self-justifications to offer.

We cannot think of sin and forgiveness without reflecting on the Cross of Calvary, the Cross on which Jesus Christ sacrificed

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his life in atonement of the sins of the world. The question regarding the necessity of the Cross for the forgiveness of sin has been frequently asked in the history of theology and something of an answer is provided by an eleventh century theologian, Anselm of Canterbury, in his famous treatise regarding the incarnation (Cur Deus Homo?).

*We can only attain forgiveness through the Cross of Christ, that is, through the loving self-sacrifice of the One who knew no sin but who willingly took upon himself the sin of the world.*

Space does not allow the examination of Anselm's arguments in detail, but for Anselm the necessity of the Cross for the forgiveness of sins has to do with the intricate relationship between sin, divine justice, and the mercy of God. Because sin is the great offence against God, sinners (the offenders) justly deserve punishment from God for their misdeeds. God, however, wishes to be merciful to sinners; but the question is, how can he do this without compromising justice and without in some sense trivialising the offence itself.

The incarnation and the Cross provides the answer in that through his substitutionary death on the Cross, Christ has taken our place and endured the punishment on our behalf, so that we might in turn receive God's mercy. Thus, because the demands of the divine justice are met by Christ's substitutionary death on the Cross, God can now show mercy without having to compromise his justice.

Even if we are not entirely satisfied with the explanation of this eleventh century theologian, we must acknowledge that the Bible, especially the New Testament, very clearly teaches that between the sinner and forgiveness stands the Cross of Golgotha.

In a culture in which sin and forgiveness are not taken very seriously, Christians often forget what it took for God to make his forgiveness available to sinners. The Cross of Christ brings home the profound truth that God's forgiveness for our sin is never cheap and that we cannot simply move from sin to forgiveness as if our sin is of little consequence and as if forgiveness comes easily.

We can only attain forgiveness through the Cross of Christ, that is, through the loving self-sacrifice of the One who knew no sin but who willingly took upon himself the sin of the world. Forgiveness has to do therefore with the great, unfathomable action of God in Jesus Christ that reverses the entire situation for the sinner who comes by faith to Christ. Through this divine act in Christ, God has forgiven the guilty, healed the leper, and liberated the prisoner – in a word, he has reconciled sinners to Himself.

The Reformers were right to stress that the forgiveness which is freely given and at great cost to God in the crucifixion of Jesus Christ, is something which we cannot earn. Forgiveness, to be sure, wins our response and makes available to us new and marvellous possibilities even as it opens our hearts to the Spirit of God and teaches us how to forgive others. But, as the Reformers are careful to point out, none of these things can be seen as a pre-requisite or as a prior condition of God's forgiveness; rather, in light of the Gospel, they must be seen as consequences, the result of having received the forgiveness of God.

This, however, must not lead us to the wrong conclusion that the Bible does not present any conditions for forgiveness, for nothing can be further from the teaching of the Bible. On this matter the Bible is very clear: there is no forgiveness of sin without a truly repentant heart which acknowledges the sinfulness of sin and renounces it with all its power and with honesty. As theologian Emil Brunner has so poignantly put it, 'To wish to have God's forgiveness without this renunciation of things contrary to God, that is crazy frivolity: that is to carry on a mischievous game with the grace of God'.

# 第一届 卫理宗信仰与传统研讨会

整理：杨证强、徐晓慧

第一届卫理宗信仰与传统研讨会于4月30日至5月1日假吉隆坡文雅酒店举办，特别邀请香港基督教循道卫理联合教会林崇智牧师担任讲员。此首届研讨会乃由年会友会事工部主办，有105位牧者及信徒参加。在四堂的讲题中，林崇智牧师提及卫斯理约翰的（一）救恩之道、（二）恩典神学、（三）宣教布道、（四）门徒训练。

## 救恩之道

救恩就是一个远离上帝的罪人，能够在上帝的恩典中，成为上帝的儿女，在生活中活出圣洁完全的生命。卫斯理约翰强调上帝的恩典是：（一）出于神本身的爱，是神赐给全人类的一份礼物，也是借着耶稣基督的死和牺牲为所有人所设的；（二）人得到救恩，被称为义，与上帝和好完全是上帝的恩典；（三）人接受恩典这份礼物，惟一需要的是信心，这信心也是他所赐的；（四）被称为义，与上帝和好的人，同时会得到一个新生命，被上帝的灵重生；上帝的灵在他生命中工作，改变他的意志，使他顺服上帝，离弃罪恶。

## 恩典神学

卫斯理约翰认为上帝最先彰显的恩典是在伟大的创造中，而受造的人类更有上帝自己的形象，有真理的仁义和圣洁（弗



4:24)。纵使人背弃上帝、犯罪、堕落、远离神，但上帝对人的爱并没有因此而减少。当我们还在罪恶中，神赐下“先临恩典”给全人类，呼唤我们回转。当我们愿意回应神的爱，神便继续赐下“称义恩典”，赦免我们的罪。当我们继续回应神的爱，他便赐下一生所需的“成圣恩典”，使我们活出圣洁生活。

## 宣教布道

卫斯理约翰当时讲的是新的福音信息，也推行露天布道和巡回布道工作，所宣讲的对象是穷人。这些举动使他被当时的教会冠为“搞乱天下”的人。卫斯理约翰在他的日记中清楚记载外展布道的次数，表明他心中那团布道的火已经停不下来。另外，在他进行布道工作期间，许多悔改信主的人从罪的辖制中被释放，进到单单遵行上帝的旨意里。

卫斯理约翰宣教布道的原则是：世界是我

的牧区，我要向所有愿意听的人传福音。我要牧养的是普天下的教会，这是一份没有界限的责任。

## 门徒训练

卫斯理约翰一生所致力，是教导已信主的人成为真正的门徒，使信徒不断在圣洁生命中成长。他经常在讲道上特别强调动态的、持续成长的成圣信仰，使那些已经决志、表现长进的信徒不会倒退。唯有信徒在属灵的战场上坚持下去，圣灵才会赐下恩赐与能力。人不可能一下子达到完全，无论其圣洁程度有多高，他还需要在恩典中长进，领受更多更大的恩典，在圣洁上站在更高的境地。

卫斯理约翰其中一个有效的牧养方式便是借着班会，给予信徒灵性生活上的鼓励、教导和查问。信徒在班会中彼此分担重担，互相分享生活所需，用爱心说诚实话，在灵上追求长进。

## 总结

卫理宗传统其中一个特色就是大公精神，卫斯理约翰认为凡是合乎圣经的，能改变人生命归向神的，有益处的事，不同宗派都可以使用。如今，我们不能一成不变照抄应用卫斯理那一套，因为历史、社会、环境、文化已经不同。我们应当注重及思考卫理宗传统的精神，从中发掘可取之处，以回应我们现在所面对的文化、处境和挑战。

*This is the translation of the above article.*

## Conference on Wesleyan Belief and Culture

The Chinese Annual Conference (CAC) held its 1st conference on Wesleyan Belief and Culture from 30 April to 1 May 2007 in Kuala Lumpur. Rev Lin Chong Zhi, Director of Wesleyan Christian Church Coordination, Hong Kong was the invited speaker.

The Conference was organized by the CAC Board of Laity. 105 ministers and lay members attended. Rev Lin spoke about John Wesley's views on (1) Salvation, (2) the Theology of Grace, (3) Missions & Evangelism and (4) Discipleship.

### Salvation

Salvation, according to Wesley, is the sinner, who has departed from God, but now has become a child of God through His grace, and is living a holy and perfect life. John Wesley emphasized God's salvation is from the love of God, a gift to all nations through the crucifixion

of Jesus Christ. When a man is saved he becomes righteous and is reconciled with God. For a man to accept the gift of grace, faith is needed and it comes from God. He is reborn in the Holy Spirit and lives a new life. God's Spirit works in him, changes his will, leads him to commit to God and leave the sinful nature.

### GRACE

John Wesley taught that the grace of God is manifested in His wonderful creation. Man is created in God's own image, in true righteousness and holiness (Eph 4:24). Although men betray God and are now separated from God, yet God's love has never lessened. When we are still in sin, God's prevenient grace is upon all, calling us to repent.

When we respond to His love, He continues to give us the "grace of righteousness", and forgives our sin. Then, when we continue in this



# 曼绒教区2007 “姿彩人生”嘉年华会

报导: 吕元山 整理: 杨证强

曼绒教区2007“姿彩人生”嘉年华会于2007年4月1日下午假实兆远英华中学(ACS)隆重举行,吸引了当地逾5千名民众与孩童前来参与。20间曼绒教区教会及布道所首次联合筹办嘉年华会活动,动员约600名义工,包括教会弟兄姐妹、专业人士及多个福音机构,透过多样精彩的舞台演出、专业咨询服务及摊位游戏,将欢乐与爱散播给当地的居民。

下午2时30分,所有工作人员及义工聚集礼堂内,由曼绒教区长王昆和牧师带领敬拜赞美及祷告,一同将荣耀归给神,并且为曼绒县祈求赐福。2时45分,礼堂外的乐队奏起号响,欢迎众嘉宾入席,包括卫理公会华人年议会会长莫泽川牧师,科学、工艺与革新部副部长拿督江作汉,民主行动党全国法律局主任、副秘书长及霹靂州委员会主席暨州议员倪可汉律师,霹靂州议会行动党领袖倪可敏律师等嘉宾,他们的莅临使场面生辉不少。

筹委会主席郭进吟牧师在致欢迎词时表示,嘉年华会是一个传福音的管道,以接触民众,将福音的种子撒在他们心里。他说,此活动汇集教会人力及财力,盼望能够服务当地的社区,筑起教会接触社区的桥梁。因此,此活动也可称为“社区服务节庆”。

拿督江作汉致开幕词时指出,嘉年华会不单吸引民众,其中一系列的活动与服务更有助于建立健康美好的社会。当天,他宣布拨款5千令吉作为此次嘉年华会的费。

倪可汉律师表示,举办嘉年华会犹如当年卫斯理约翰建设学校、医药所,照顾社会的需要,而此嘉年华会同样本着卫斯理约翰的哲理:教会进入社会,服务有需要的人群。他强调,基督徒的生活也是“生命之道”(A Way of Life)。

莫泽川牧师在致词上说,教会不单关心人群,也以实际行动服务人群,共同建立和谐、有爱心的社会,如开办美门残障关怀中心、举行爱心三合一捐血活动、组织爱心勇士做医院探访、参与抵抗毒品活动等。

青春歌手饶燕婷受邀担任当天表演嘉宾为观众带来多首动听的歌曲,如“伊甸园”等。她在台上分享说,感谢上帝让她能够在教会里找到真正的爱,使她能够克服少年时期忧郁的心理。她更盼望能够借着神赐给她创作歌曲的天份,与人们分享神的爱。

当天,礼堂内座无虚席,甚至连礼堂外也挤满了人。除了舞台上精彩的演唱及舞蹈演出,礼堂外还摆设了十个游戏摊位“挑战”孩童,更有5千份礼物等待他们赢取。人潮可说是络绎不绝,现场几乎挤得水泄不通。

在专业咨询服务方面,有眼科、牙科、中西医、刮痧、律师、美容、升学辅导等。此外,各大福音机构单位也参与展览,如思源报、思源神学中心、垦场博物馆、使宣、南钟、大马教会网、基督新报、马来西亚基督关怀中心、得胜之家、禧福中心、美门残障中心、书花书室等。

嘉年华会之前,即复活节期间,于3月13日起便已陆续举办各项预工活动,如3月13-16日一连四天在宣道堂举行“号角声”祷告会,近百位弟兄姐妹出席,为曼绒区传福音的工作及教会的复兴祷告;3月17日在十字路口举办个人布道培训;3月24日于甘文阁开垦纪念堂举行儿童填色比赛,约7百位孩童参加。3月28-30日,曼绒各教会的弟兄姐妹分队出外到各地区,分发嘉年华会宣传单。

嘉年华会后,即4月2-4日,牧者及义工们从早到晚,探访在活动期间留下资料的朋友。三天的时间里,牧者及义工们共接触了约三四百名未信者,并进一步向他们传福音。有180人决志信主,荣耀归给主!

延续嘉年华会服务社区的理念,实兆远宣道堂目前已经成立新希望关怀中心,继续关注当地社会各年龄层(青少年、成年人、乐龄人士)的需求,提供心灵上的帮助。该关怀中心的署理主席杨祖强弟兄分享说,“只要我们怀着服务社会,关怀众人的心,民众自然就会被吸引进来教会。”

The Manjung District of CAC organized this “Colourful Life” Carnival. It was held at ACS Sitiawan with 600 volunteers from the 20 churches in the District. Over 5000 people came to the afternoon of performances, games, and professional services offered to the community.

grace, He gives us the “grace of holiness” to help us live a holy life.

## MISSION & EVANGELISM

In his time John Wesley practiced a new way to share the gospel. He organized open air evangelistic rallies, and his target was the poor. Wesley clearly recorded the details of every outreach event, showing that many people repented, were set free from sin and committed themselves solely to God's will.

John Wesley's principle in mission and evangelism is: “The world is my parish”. He wanted to share the Gospel to all those who wanted to hear, not limited by boundaries. He wanted to minister to the church world wide.

## DISCIPLESHIP

Wesley also spent his life teaching about being a true believer, guiding them to live a holy life. He emphasized a proactive and continually growing towards holiness. The Holy Spirit will grant grace and power

to those who persist in the spiritual struggle. No matter how far one has come he needs to continue to grow in grace, to receive more grace for a higher life of holiness.

One of Wesley's effective pastoral methods is through class teaching, to encourage and check the spiritual life of believers. In the class, believers could share and lighten each other's burden of everyday needs, speak honestly with love and seek to grow in spirit.

## CONCLUSION

Rev. Lin concluded that one of the characteristics of the Methodist culture is its universal application. John Wesley acknowledged that anything that accorded with the Bible that is beneficial to transform one's life in God can be used by other denominations. Although we cannot duplicate Wesley's concepts exactly because of changes in history, society and culture, we can emulate the Wesleyan culture and excavate what is desirable in response to the culture and challenges we face today.

the “called out” people, it has an apostolic mission to the world. And part of this mission is to turn people and welcome them into the Body of Christ.

In his on-going examination of the church scene Dr. Hunter noted that the kind of churches we are to set up, and the way we “do church”, is largely shaped by the diversity of target populations that now need to be reached. He notes six characteristics that growing churches have.

Cultural relevance – there is an indigenous policy not to impose foreign cultural forms on anybody.

Emotional relevance – engaging people on the emotional level, addressing the range of emotions that usually drive their lives, and enabling them to receive the gospel emotionally.

Small groups – enabling a communal faith, where people minister to each other and deep needs are met.

Lay ministries – where lay people are involved in teams working together.

Outreach ministries – that go to where the people are and therefore can be in a variety of forms and programmes. These increasingly are the “side doors” by which people enter the church.

World mission involvement – not necessarily going beyond the borders but to have a world perspective, and welcoming people across the cultural and language barrier.



Rev. Ong Hwai Teik welcoming the participants.



Rev. Henry Yong (left), Chairman of the Board of Evangelism, and Rev. Lawrence Chen (right) with Dr. Hunter.

Current trends in the urban and suburban setting also suggest that future new churches will have “proliferation” growth. That is, like the analogy of a tree spreading its branches in all directions, churches will proliferate all kinds of small and large groups, teams for ministry and mission, a variety of outreach ministries, and have specialized leaders for these tasks and programmes.

As a result of “proliferation” growth Dr. Hunter sees that new churches are more likely to consist of multiple congregations and even multiple sites for their worship and ministry. These emerging characteristics of new congregations are the outcomes of answering two strategic questions that churches ask when they seek to extend their growth:

What constituencies (or target populations) are we called to reach that our present churches, with their present groups, ministries, and congregations cannot reach in substantial numbers?

What types of NEW groups, ministries, congregations, and churches will be required to reach them in substantial numbers?

These were among a number of interesting and important analyses Dr. Hunter presented.

Part of the conference was also given to local church planting experience. Rev. Ong Sek Leang, Senior Pastor of Metro Tabernacle, Kuala Lumpur and Rev.



Rev. Ong Sek Leang

Lawrence Chen, Group Executive Pastor of New Life Restoration Centre Churches were invited to share their experiences, principles and practice of church planting. Newly constituted TRAC churches – Trinity Methodist Church, Sungai Buloh and Life Methodist Church, Puchong – also shared their model of a newly planted church.

It was evident that some of the emerging trends and perspectives on new congregations were part of their experience and/or were factors increasingly coming to their attention in planting new churches.

The conference highlighted some of the important factors and strategic questions that confront the modern church in her calling to be an apostolic church, sent out to reach the peoples of the world. This is a challenge for Methodist churches to take to heart.

Christopher Cheah

# Book Review : Jewels of Cambodia

Using the analogy of jewels which are formed under intense pressure and obtained at high costs, Brenda Sloggett tells faith stories of lives transformed under equally intense difficulties and high costs but the end results are truly gems, hence the title of the book.



Lenita Tiong

She skillfully intertwined historical events such as the earlier hard years of mission work, the genocide years and the refugee camps with stories of lives touched and changed by the Gospel. Although she had never lived in Cambodia per se, she first traveled there in 1991 and since then had traveled there on various occasions meeting both Khmer Christians and expatriate missionaries recording their stories.

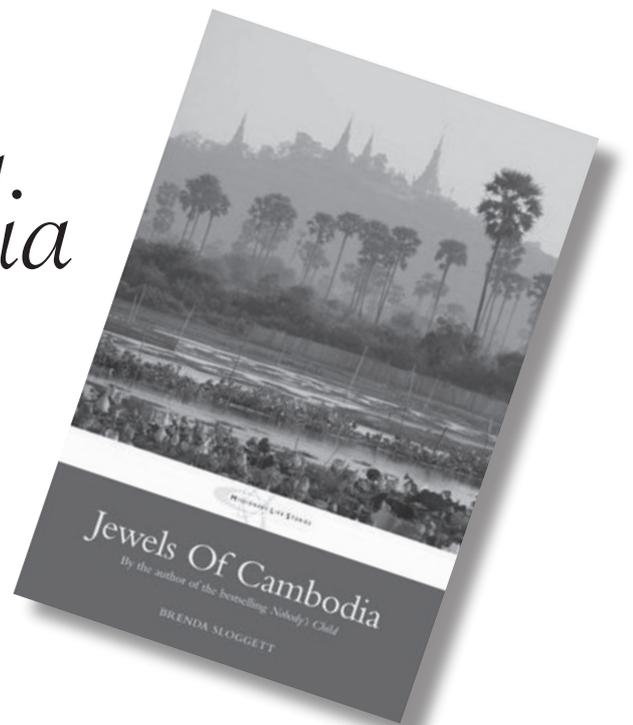
One such person is Rev Heng Cheng, born in a Chinese-Cambodian Christian home and in the 1960s worshipped in a church planted by the first missionary to Cambodia, David Ellison. From being in the Lon Nol army to selling medicine in Vietnam, Rev Heng is now the General Secretary of the Evangelical Fellowship of Cambodia (EFC) under which umbrella is 101 churches.

Other testimonies told in this book include that of Barnabas Marm, Sokreaksa Himm and Uon Seila who have become well respected leaders in the Cambodian church.

Stories of the work and lives of missionaries who arrived in the early 90s are also found in this heart-warming book. One such couple is Rev Jim and Mrs Agnes Verner who arrived in Cambodia in 1993 with the SAO (Southeast Asian Outreach) and was used by God both in planting churches, training the national leadership as well as in many development projects. The Verners even started the Khmer School of Language at which many present day missionaries were first exposed to the Khmer language.

The other beautiful life story told in this book is that of Marie Ens. Marie and her husband Norman were missionaries with the Christian Missionary Alliance and were sent to Cambodia in 1961. They, together with all missionaries, were expelled from Cambodia just before the war. After her husband went home to be with the Lord, Marie made the bold decision to return to Cambodia in 1994 to work with a local church, ministering to the AIDS patients in a military hospital. I had the privilege of meeting this petite elderly sister in Christ and she exudes the love and compassion of Christ.

For me to read through this book is not only enriching but often I smiled between the pages for the names of both the Khmers



and the missionaries are real life people I have the privilege of meeting. The places mentioned too are familiar.

There are so few books about the church and the Christians in Cambodia and sometimes it is so hard to recommend books to short term mission trippers. The only other book is Living Fields, Killing Fields by Don Cormack. And so, I would strongly recommend this book to all those who are thinking about spending time in Cambodia, even if it's for a few days.

Avoid what Rev Heng Cheng described as “many foreign missionaries want to plant churches ... they have the right and freedom to do so, but it would be more effective and wise if they work along side the nationals, ... rather than hiring a few translators and going out on their own.”

The church in Cambodia and the people there is not a clean slate as if nothing has happened before the 21st century of Asian Mission era. Read about what God has done to be a part of what He is doing!!

Note: This book is available from Amazon.com at USD12.24

- <sup>1</sup> Sloggett has another book on Cambodia : *A Voice in the Night: A Challenging True Story of Mission Work With the People of Cambodia and Vietnam*
- <sup>2</sup> Sokreaksa Himm's own book, *Tears of My Soul* is available from Amazon.com
- <sup>3</sup> Marie's own stories are told in two books, *Journey to Joy and A Time for Mercy*
- <sup>4</sup> Available also from Amazon.com and the OMF Malaysia office in KL. The Chinese translation is available from there. Contact Connie at my-admin@omf.net
- <sup>5</sup> P. 106

Lenita Tiong  
SCAC Missionary  
Cambodia

# Methodist Prayer Convention 2007



These ladies are part of the heart of the Secretariat of the MPC.

## Latest Updates!!

The MPC Secretariat has regular meetings these days to iron out and solve the many issues involved in making the Convention as smooth and effective as possible, for both the participants and the speakers and workshop leaders.

## Video Presentations

Three 10-minute videos will be presented during the plenary sessions at Sunway Convention Centre. These will depict (1) the History of the Methodist Church in Malaysia, (2) the Life of Methodist Churches Today, and (3) Missions in the Methodist church.

## Thanksgiving Celebration at Stadium Malawati

A 500 strong choir from the different Annual Conferences will be assembled under the direction of Grace Ho of CAC.

## Special worship presentations.

Each Annual Conference will present an item that is drawn from its cultural heritage and resources. Items focused on youth and children, and by Beautiful Gate Foundation will also be featured.

## Messages from Christian Politicians

31 August evening – sharing by YB Datuk Dr. Tan Kee Kwong, MP of Segambut, and YB Ngeh Koo Ham, State Assemblyman for Sitiawan.

2 September Thanksgiving Celebration – YB Datuk Dr. Maximus Ongkili J.P., Minister in the Prime Minister's Department.

## 24 Hour Prayer Chain

This prayer covering and intercession for the Convention begins the day before (30 August) at 8.00 pm. right through to 1.00 pm on 2 September, the conclusion at Stadium Malawati Shah Alam.

Teams of intercessors from all the Annual Conferences will pray through the night, in periods of four hours (8.00 pm - 8.00 am) and of two hours each during the convention sessions.

On 2 September, all the groups will pray in the Stadium from 8.00 – 11.00 am and from 11.00 am – 1.00 pm.



235. Key: F

We'll walk the land with hearts on fire  
And ev'ry step will be a prayer  
Hope is rising, new day dawning  
Sound of singing fills the air

Two thousand years and still the flame  
Is burning bright across the land  
Hearts are waiting, longing, aching  
For awakening once again

Chorus:  
Let the flame burn brighter  
In the heart of darkness  
Turning night to glorious day  
Let the song grow louder  
As our love grows stronger  
Let it shine .....let it shine

We'll walk for truth  
Speak out for love  
In Jesus name we shall be strong  
To lift the fallen, to save the children  
To fill the nation with Your song

Graham Kendrick

## Theme Song for the Convention

### "We'll Walk the Land"

This song of faith and mission commitment to the power and hope of the gospel of Jesus Christ has been selected as the theme song for the Convention.

# No Room For The Lord

During my recent visit to Butterworth, Penang, I worshipped at the Methodist Church there. The speaker that morning, Mr. Andrew Yeoh, spoke on the Holy Spirit and His presence in our lives. He requested us to make room in our hearts for the Holy Spirit. He pointed out that oftentimes when we do not have room for Him this hurts and grieves the Holy Spirit.

In the sermon he spoke about how Joseph and Mary found no room to stay in Bethlehem. There was no room for our Lord! Finally a kind inn-keeper gave room in his stable for the King to be born.

It was the call for a census by Caesar Augustus that brought so many people to Bethlehem. That town must have been really crowded, with many people coming back to register at the same time. This picture of a crowded city and the need to accommodate so many people brought my mind to another scene that prompted this sharing.

On 31 August, our country will be celebrating the golden jubilee of our independence. Indeed it will be a great event. Klang Valley will be crowded with patriotic people from different states, and from as far as Sabah, Sarawak, Brunei, Singapore and overseas. Visitors will want to come at this time to experience the best of Malaysia. What a crowded city Kuala Lumpur will be. I pity the drivers in the anticipated traffic jams!

In the midst of this hustle and bustle, let us see yet another picture - the Methodist Church holding its Prayer Convention on 31 August and 1 September and the gathering of thousands of Methodists at the Malawati Stadium, Shah Alam on 2 September.

What a time for the Methodists, so methodical in everything they do, to organize such a colossal event at this time of the year. What detailed planning will be needed!

When I think of the call for Methodists staying in the Klang Valley to open their homes to accommodate their sisters and brothers from other states, I can only say this: Mary had to be housed in a stable to



deliver our King, because there was no room in the inns for our Lord. Now, two thousand years later, history may be repeating itself. Let us not close our doors on our brothers and sisters.

Should I open our home to members of our church from East and West Malaysia during this event? This was the question I was asking myself before I heard the sermon in Butterworth. But now I am very clear: the Lord has blessed us with a humble home and I gratefully thank God for this and we will certainly open our home to share this blessing with God's people.

This is the time when we will come together, under one roof, to meet our sisters and brothers of different backgrounds. Let us not see the differences, but only the glory of the Lord who has united us.

N. Thana Ramanadan  
Wesley, Kuala Lumpur

*If anyone wishes to participate in this 'Partnering Opportunity Through Hospitality', please inquire with your church for more information.*

# Programme Officer

The Methodist Church invites applications for the position of Programme Officer. This is a contractual position renewable annually.

## Job Scope

- To help General Conference Programme Councils to implement their programmes through administrative and other support.
- To organize programmes/functions/events as decided and directed by the General Conference Executive Council from time to time.
- To facilitate training programmes in coordination with the Annual Conferences by providing administrative and other support.
- To identify resources available in the Annual Conferences which can help facilitate the Annual Conferences in their activities, programmes and/or training seminars and workshops.

- To coordinate writing of material for worship, teaching and training for the whole Methodist Church.
- To perform any other duties related to the various Programme Councils of the church as directed by the Bishop from time to time.

## Requirements

Degree or its equivalent.  
Applicants should have ministry experience.  
Have good people relationship and can work in a team.  
Possess good organizing skills and managerial abilities.  
Computer literacy.

Interested applicants can post, fax or email their application with their resume to the address below, by **15 August 2007**.

*The Executive Secretary  
The Methodist Church in Malaysia  
69, Jalan 5/31  
46000 Petaling Jaya  
Fax: 03-79541788  
Email: es@methodistchurch.org.my*



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## Boys Home in Cheras Opens for New Admission.

The LCMS Bethesda Children's Home has recently moved from Rawang. Admission is opened again for children who need the warmth and love of a home.

Children applying for admission shall be below 9-10 years of age.

To apply, contact the Matron of the Home at 03-9074 1727 or 017-6860256.

Or write to: The Chairman Management Committee  
LCMS Bethesda Children's Home  
No. 5, Taman Mas 2  
Batu 9, 43200 Cheras, Selangor





孝恩·集團  
XIAO EN GROUP

# XIAO EN GROUP AD



The MYF dinner celebration.



Honouring an earlier generation of the faithful.

## “He Has Done Marvellous Things ...” (Psalm 98:1) Two-In-One Celebration of Tamil Methodist Church, Ipoh.

**10** June 2007 was a memorable day for the Tamil Methodist Church, Ipoh as we celebrated two commemorative events in our church life.

### 111 YEARS CHURCH ANNIVERSARY

The morning worship service was graced by our President, Rev. P. Tevaraji who spoke on II Timothy 4:1-8 - THE CHURCH GOD USES - highlighting: The Church God uses must always focus on Jesus Christ who must be exalted at all times.

The Church God uses is called to preach the Word of God at all times.

The Church God uses must be aware and be warned of false teachings.

The Church God uses must serve well in its evangelistic and social mandate.

The Church God uses finishes well – faithful to God and completing its task faithfully.

A special choir for the occasion presented the song, “Oom Naamam Paadanumey” (“Your Name is to be Praised”). Mr. R. Steven then presented a brief history of our church.

Members who were seventy years and above were specially honoured and prayed for. A few were in tears that they were remembered in this very special way.

The climax of the Service was the cutting of the Anniversary cake by the oldest member of our church, Mr. A.V. Manickam (92 years) and our TAC President.

### MYF 60TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

Our young people organized a dinner cum special presentations to mark this auspicious occasion. The guest of honour was Mr. D.R. Daniel (former Conference Lay Leader) who was the first President of the MYF in 1947.

In his speech, Mr. D.R. Daniel reminisced on the early years of youth ministry in our church. Souvenirs were given to him and the TAC President. Notably present were also Mr. Anthony Row (TAC Chairman of the Board of Finance) and his wife Shellatay, Rev. James Ravindaren, the TAC Director of Youth Work, and Rev. Joseph



Mr A.V. Manickam and Rev. Tevaraji cutting the cake.

Yesupatham, Perak District Associate Youth Director.

More than 500 people, from our church as well as other churches, and from all walks of life attended this celebration. Young people and elderly alike presented items.

As the theme for both the celebrations proclaimed, surely God has been and continues to do great and marvalous things in the Tamil Methodist Church here in Ipoh!

Rev. Dr. A.E. Joseph  
TMC, Ipoh



The elderly showing their talent.



Rev. Tevaraji (second from left) and Mr D.R. Daniel (fourth from left) with present youth and church leaders.