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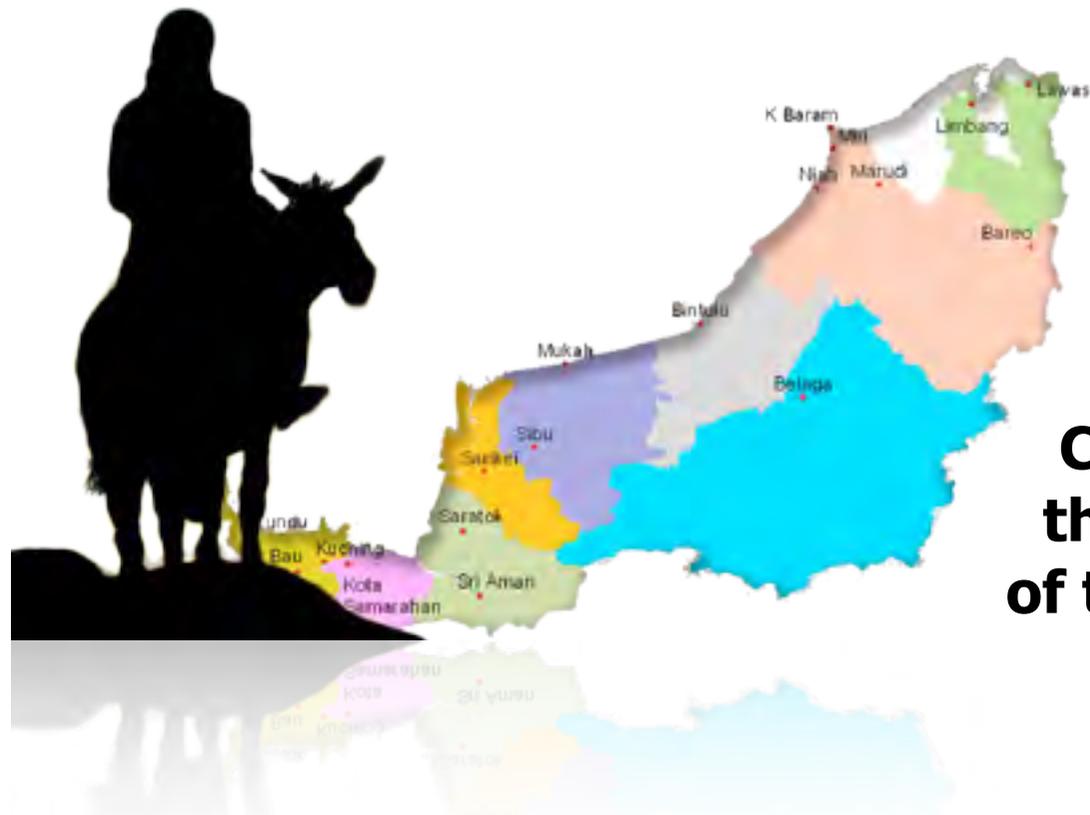
HE Lived to Die

It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery (Galatians 5:1).

BY BISHOP HWA YUNG



Moment



Blessed is He That Comes in the Name of the Lord

There were hopes and aspirations. Finally, many have awakened to the possibility of change. The situation of corruption and injustice had become too much for all and there was a very strong call for change. Spiritually, it was a real blessing to be part of the Church in Malaysia that met together for prayer and, in many cases, advocated for the plight of rural Sarawak. In these past few days, it has been a blessing to witness people coming "in the name of the Lord" and to pray and speak out against injustices in our nation.

The situation in Malaysia reminded me of Palm Sunday. On the first Palm Sunday, many people praised Jesus as they thought that he was about to bring real change to the people of Israel. They hoped that Jesus would bring them liberation from the Roman occupation. However, for Jesus that was not his mission as His Father had

other plans for him. The people had not fully grasped his coming into Jerusalem. This is similar for us in Malaysia as well. Though many thought that change would come through electoral changes, God obviously has other plans. The call therefore is for us to reflect on what is God's will for our land. And, to see how he carries out His will through the government of the day and his people. Once we are able to discern God's activities, then we as the Church can join in and be His vessels for real transformation in our country.

One good aspect that resulted from the election process was to see democracy at work. At the end of the day, the people of Sarawak chose their leaders. Ordinary citizens had every opportunity to decide the destiny of their own homeland. There may have been disagreements in the choice of leaders, but finally, the majority wins.

And that is democracy. It was remarkable to note that Christians were very participative in this election. Many issues were highlighted for the growth and development in the state and, gladly, the church's voice was heard clearly.

The message of Palm Sunday would be meaningless if we separate it from the whole story of the Passion Week. Jesus did not only speak and work miracles; he modelled total obedience to the Father's will. The challenge for us now is to build on the good work that has come from the elections. We need to now live in obedience to His command - to love our neighbours as ourselves, regardless of whatever situation that we face. Jesus died for the world. Are we willing to live in obedient sacrifice for our neighbours as well?

Blessed Good Friday and Easter to all our readers.

ILLUSTRATION BY ISSAC NG; ADAPTING SOURCE: BLOGBOT.COM & MAPSOFMALAYSIA.COM

By Michael William

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Malaysia National Prayer Network

Church (friend of Christ)

"And the LORD said to Moses, "I will do the very thing you have asked, because I am pleased with you and I know you by name." (Ex 33:17, TNIV)

Pray that men and women of God

| Will make life-long commitment to please God alone in all things.
| Will set their hearts on things above where Christ is seated at the right hand of God.

We will cry out for our brothers and sisters who face injustice and suffer for the name of Christ

| For God's glory to be revealed and Christ's name to be known and praised because of the character, deeds and words of his people.
| For the gospel to bear fruit in places that are hostile to its messengers.



1MALAYSIA

"I have seen the wicked and ruthless flourishing like a luxuriant native tree. but they soon passed away and were no more; though I looked for them, they could not be found. Consider the blameless, observe the upright; a future awaits those who seek peace. But all sinners will be destroyed; there will be no future for the wicked" (Psalm 37:35-38, TNIV)

Continue to Pray

| For God's will to be done in Malaysia, in the establishment of justice, the stewardship and care of creation, and the blessing of God's peace in our communities.
| For blessings on those who are upright and that they will continue to uphold justice and righteousness.
| For the prime minister to be bold and courageous to do what is right and just, and to be surrounded by men and women of integrity who are wise.

Inbox

Treasure in Clay Jars

Thank you for the book review in Vol 36 No 1/2. However the following info would help: the number of pages, the publisher, where the book is available, the cost. With regards to the layout, the articles in Pelita Methodist appears too wordy especially pages 7-8. A different style lay out will make it appear less cramped.

J William

Note

Prayer

We did an interview with 3 persons who gave different aspects on prayer in the previous issue, Prayer Vol. 36 No.3.; Dr. Chan Geok Oon was one of them. We apologise for the error we made as her name was printed as Dr. Chan Geok Onn, instead of Dr. Chan Geok Oon. At the same time, she is also the Prayer Coordinator of the General Conference and Founder of Lighthouse Watchmen Prayer Network (LWPN). Once again we apologise for our mistakes.

Issac Ng

EDITORIAL ASSISTANT, PELITA METHODIST

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

The Methodist Church In Malaysia



CAC Establishment of Bukit Tinggi Chinese Methodist Chapel

The chapel is located at a shophot in Taman Bukit Tinggi, Klang. The chapel took two years to be established. It started from a family meeting in the community hall nearby. Then, the lay leader of Puchong Chinese Methodist Church (PCMC), Bro Ho Kiek Soon, who is also residing at Bukit Tinggi, saw the possibilities of setting up a chapel to serve the community in that area. President of CAC, Rev Boh Chee Suan and Chairman of the CAC Mission Board, Bro Ching Pong Hua were invited to the opening ceremony held on 10 April 2011. Also present was Rev Paul Bong, Pastor of PCMC.



SCAC Short Term Mission Schools from the Methodist Theology School Graduation

Students from three Short Term Mission Schools (STMS) from the Methodist Theology School graduated on 25 March 2011. 55 students attended the 19th Mandarin STMS; 21 students attended the 2nd Musical STMS; and six students attended the Iban STMS. All schools started in January, for a duration of three months study. "In the schools, students have learned about prayer, fasting, devotion and bible study," said Pastor Guan, one of the teachers in STMS during the graduation ceremony.



SCAC A Dissertation in Remembrance of Huang Nai Shang's Contribution

Huang Nai Shang (1849-1924), a Chinese Christian reformer was active in Fuzhou between 1869 and 1919. He is best known as the founder of the overseas Chinese settlement, New Fuzhou, in Sibuan, Sarawak. Huang remained a devoted Christian from his conversion as a youth until his death. The dissertation presents Huang's life as a series of attempts to synthesise Western and Chinese ideas towards the goal of achieving a "Christianised China". Copies of the dissertation are now being sold.

Annual Conferences of Methodist Church in Malaysia

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

Vacancies: Wesley Methodist Church Johor Bahru

Staff Workers

Duties: To work alongside the Pastor in the area of missions, social concerns, Christian education, youth and children's work, and general administration.

Requirements:

- | Must be Malaysians.
- | Minimum qualification is SPM or its equivalent. (Theological training and proficiency in Chinese language will be an advantage.)
- | Computer literate.

Administration Assistant

Duties: General office administrative work.

Requirements:

- | Must be Malaysians.
- | Minimum qualification is SPM or its equivalent. (Being bi-lingual is an advantage.)
- | Computer literate.

Interested applicants are to apply in writing to: The Pastor, Rev Joshua Hong, Wesley Methodist Church Johor Bahru, 20 Jalan Ungu Tujuh, Taman Pelangi, 80400 Johor Bahru, Johor. Please give details of personal particulars, curriculum vitae, copies of relevant certificates, and references from church pastors. Please state position applied for. You could also email the Pastor at jbwesley@streamyx.com.



TRAC Spiritual Formation and Leadership Weekend

The Spiritual Formation and Leadership (SFL) Weekend is a strategic three days, two nights intensive stay-in weekend of a process-oriented training and learning in spiritual formation and leadership within the TRAC community setting. Four major themes of spiritual formation and leadership will be covered over a period of two years, beginning with the issues related to the formation of the leader and his inner life. This will then be the foundation on which all other building blocks of leadership competencies and spiritual formation are added on.



SPREADING SCRIPTURAL HOLINESS,
TRANSFORMING THE NATION

Council of Education Project Inspire: A Handbook For the Board of Governors

Malayan Christian Schools Council (MCSC) organised a roundtable conference at Methodist College Kuala Lumpur (MCKL) on 2 April 2011. It discussed the writing of a handbook for the Board of Governors to be called Project Inspire. The handbook includes the roles and responsibilities of the Board of Governors of Christian Mission Schools, as provided for in Section 53 & 54 of the Education Act, 1996; suggestions on how to establish and strengthen structures for better governance and stewardship of mission schools; and empowering Board Members to work as a team in the service of the school community. Selected School Board Chairmen will also give their input to be included in the Handbook.

Methodist Malaysia Youth Fellowship (Persaudaraan Belia Methodist Malaysia)



SIAC's Youth Revival Camp

The SIAC Youth Fellowship held its Youth Revival Camp from 14-16 March 2011. This camp was attended by 60 youths from all over Sarawak. The programme included challenges for the youths to rise above themselves for the Gospel. There were Bible expositions and also revival talks. The participants agreed that they really had a good time as they interacted with each other and learnt how could they be best used by God in Sarawak.

Death Railway

A 415 kilometers railway that was built by Empire of Japan during World War II by using forced labour.



Easter and Resurrection at the Death Railway

Christ rose from the dead to redeem everyone's life in every corner of the world.

BY BISHOP HWA YUNG

Those of my generation will remember a well known marching tune, which was the music score of the film, "The Bridge on the River Kwai".

The film featured the famous British actor, Gregory Peck, but it was actually a romanticised version of one of the most horrible episodes of World War 2 which was close to home. The Japanese Army wanted a railroad to carry troops and supplies from Thailand to Burma (now Myanmar). About 180,000 Asian labourers, including many from Malaysia (then Malaya), and 60,000 Allied prisoners of war worked on the railway. Of these, around 90,000 Asian labourers and 16,000 Allied Prisoners of War (POWs) died as a direct result of the project. For this reason, it has always been referred to as the "Death Railway"!

Ernest Gordon, then a captain in the British army and a Japanese prisoner of war, survived the "Death Railway", and had written an account of the same story in: *Miracle on the River Kwai* (Collins, 1963). It tells of the real life story of the struggles of the men who were conscripted

The morals and morale of the camp [forced labour] sank to the standards of the animal world

and the inhumanities of life in a prisoner-of-war camp under the Japanese. Even the most refined "gentlemen", in the face of the extremities of suffering, degenerated to living utterly selfishly - cheating, lying, and stealing - just to survive! The morals and morale of the camp sank to the standards of the animal world. Then, strangely, something happened and the atmosphere began to change for the better. People started caring for one another and the mood, though circumstances were still difficult and painful, began to lift. Faith and hope and life returned and, for many of

the prisoners, life was never the same again. What happened?

What sparked off the spiritual and moral regeneration of the prison camp was the initial example of a few prisoners who refused to live by the law of the jungle. One man, Angus, gave his food, his blanket and used his failing strength to care for a dying fellow prisoner. As a result, the dying man recovered, but Angus, who was so weakened in the process, died instead. In another incident, some tools went missing at the end of the day's work. The Japanese guard, assuming that one of the prisoners had stolen them, was so infuriated that he threatened to kill the whole work party. Just before the guard started shooting, one prisoner stepped forward and owned up to the crime. He was immediately and brutally beaten to death. But, when the tools were counted again later, it was found that a mistake had been made - none were missing! It was then that the truth dawned on the others - that that man was innocent and had voluntarily died to save all his friends' lives!

Ernest Gordon himself was also nursed back to life by another prisoner, Dusty, who spent his spare time cleaning, nursing, massaging and feeding him until his health and strength returned. Others began following these examples of sacrificial caring. The power of such examples of self-giving love began to touch and transform the whole camp! Gradually, but certainly, the self-seeking attitude was replaced by love and self-sacrifice. In place of death, hope and new life began to dawn.

Gordon was not a Christian when Angus died. But, as he thought about the death of Angus, his friend Dusty told him of the passage in John 15:13: "Greater love has no one than this, that someone lays down his life for his friends". As he reflected on this, Gordon went on to write: "For the first time I understood. Dusty was a Methodist ... and Dinty a Roman Catholic. Yet in each it was his faith that lent a special grace to his personality; through them both faith expressed a power, a presence greater than themselves. I was beginning to see that life was infinitely more complex, and at the same time more wonderful, than I had ever imagined ... God had not left us. He was with us, calling us to live the divine life in fellowship ... I was beginning to be aware of the miracle that God was working in the Death Camp by the River Kwai." (p.95)

God's presence had also begun touching other prisoners. Because he was an officer and had been to university, Gordon was asked to lead a regular discussion on Chris-



Confrontation

Col. Saito (starred by Sessue Hayakawa) and Col. Nicholson (starred by Alec Guinness) in the movie *The Bridge on the River Kwai*

tianity. As the men studied the Bible together, many for the first time in their lives, faith began to grow. Gordon continues: “Through our readings and discussions we gradually came to know Jesus. He was one of us. He would understand our problems, because they were the kind of problems he had faced himself ... He, too, had known bone-weariness from too much toil; the suffering, the rejection, the disappointments that make up the fabric of life. Yet he was no kill-joy.” (p.101)

He then tells of his own coming to faith in Christ. “I had to go beyond Reason — I had to go to Faith. If I had learned to trust Jesus at all, I had to trust him here. Reason said, “We live to die.” Jesus said, “I am the Resurrection and the life.”” (p.102)

“In the light of our new understanding, the Crucifixion was seen as being completely relevant to our situation. A God who remained indifferent to the suffering of His creatures was not a God whom we could accept. The Crucifixion, however, told us that God was in our midst, suffering for us. We did not know the full answer to the mystery of suffering, but we could see that so much of it was caused by ‘man’s humanity to man’, by selfishness, by greed and by all the forces of death that we readily support in the normal course of

life ... But we could see that God was not indifferent to such pain.” (p.102)

Ernest Gordon came to faith in the midst of all the suffering and death. He survived the indescribable horrors and cruelties of the “Death Railway”, and eventually became a pastor and then Dean of the Chapel at Princeton University. But what happened to Dusty, the Methodist, who nursed him back to life? They had lost touch during the war, and Gordon looked forward to meeting him again when the war ended. After some effort, Gordon finally found another man who had known of Dusty Miller. This man was reluctant to talk about what happened. When pressed, he finally said this: “He hadn’t done anything wrong. The Nip (Japanese) hated him because he couldn’t break him. You know how he was — a good man if ever there was one. That’s why he hated him.” “What did the Nip do to him?” asked Gordon. “He strung him up a tree ... Yes. He crucified him.” (p.173)

I write this as we approach Holy Week a time when we remember afresh the Cross of Christ and His resurrection. There are spiritual laws in this life that we cannot explain with Reason. Yet those who have lived through and experienced the horrors, pains, sufferings and death, like Ernest

Gordon, know only too well that these laws are true. Which of Jesus’ disciples could accept the fact that he was preparing for his crucifixion as he headed towards Jerusalem during the last few months of his life on earth? Which of them took him seriously when he told them he would rise from the dead? Which of them could understand that “unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit” (John 12:24)?

Dusty was literally crucified. But through his life and those of other fellow prisoners, new life came to Ernest Gordon and many others, and a new world was born in the midst of death in the Thai-Burmese jungles! We today also live in jungles of hate and not forgiving, of human pride and self-seeking greed, of ruthless competition and destructive consumerism, of immorality in private lives and widespread corruption in public lives, of growing ethnic and religious chauvinism, and the like. As we ponder afresh on the Cross and the Resurrection of Christ and all that he taught concerning them, should we not ask ourselves and our churches this question too: “How can new life and a new world be born in the “jungles” that we live in?”

MOVIE STILL ADAPTED FROM INTERNET MOVIE DATABASE

Features

Sarawak Chinese Annual Conference

圣经盖章：极其不当

苏慈安谈教会与政治

苏慈安会长 著

广义及狭义的政治

广义的政治定义是：“政治两字的意思，浅而言之，政就是众人之事，治就是管理。管理众人的事，便是政治。”（孙中山）以此看来，我们必须关心广义的政治，因为它与我们每一天工作和生活起居的一举一动有关。我们也可以把这种政治课题称为民生课题。这是我们百姓，社团和政府各有关部门必须要照顾，处理和解决的课题，不应该把这些民生课题政治化，交给某些政党去处理。换句话说，不管是那个政党/政府，他们的责任就是必须为百姓解决这些民生课题，而不是为了政治利益而做的。

在这种情况下，目前我们所面对的几个民生课题有下列几个：要求解除峇哥 (Bako) 红线地；土地低洼水患；阿山港大桥站收费；土地是属于百姓的，有关政府部门是被授权管理，不能从地税中牟利，合理地税是可行的；教育(包括独中)是在培育人才和领袖，是千秋大业，关乎整个国家命脉，前途和兴衰，必须受到公平对待和处理。不然，我们百姓民生的课题永远得不到妥善的解决和处理，不能惠及人民。

再说，在本国，最近，基甸会3万本马来文版本圣经在古晋和5,100本马来文版本圣经在巴生港遭扣押，只因为这些圣经中用“阿拉”字眼来称呼上帝。基本上“阿拉”课题不是一个政治课题，但很可惜被政治化了。它不是一个宗教课题，但很遗憾也被宗教化了。在本国宪法中，我们是受保护的公民——有言论的自由(用词和发表言论)和宗教的自由。因此，一旦牵涉到“阿拉”课题时，它就是触犯到宪法。内政部建议在圣经中盖上“供基督徒使用”印章和编号，是一种极其不当的作法。我们祈求政府，任何团体的领袖和国人上下齐心遵从宪法，还我们基督徒圣经！按照我们教会的《社会准则》，我们认为政治是基于基本的自由与人权：我们肯定我们一贯以来对世界的关心，因坚信世界是我们的牧区，并要谋求全人

类的福利。我们认为政府要负责保护人民下列的权利：自由公正的选举，言论、宗教、聚会和传媒的自由，无需惧怕报复的情形下作出解困的诉求；隐私权；保证有足够粮食、衣着、居所、教育和健康护理的权利。政府的形式和领袖应由全体成年公民应用所保证给他们的选择权选定。我们强烈反对执政的政府对反对者的监控与威吓，以及所有受选或受委职权的滥用。以拘留或监禁的手段来压制或除去政治对手或异议份子违反了基本人权。除此之外，政府不论基于任何理由而虐待或折磨任何人士都是违反了基督教的教训，不论在何时何地发生此类事件，都当受基督徒和教会的谴责和反对。

狭义来说，任何时候，政治都是围绕利益展开的，而利益争夺的核心就是资源的占有与分配，故，政治就是对政权的诉求或者从中谋求名、利、权力及地位的活动。基督徒所面对的挑战就是这种狭义的政治观。我们如何看待它呢？

教会立场

教会关心政治 (politics)，但，绝对不参与政党政治 (party politics)。教会作为一个属灵团体，保持中立的立场，不能偏袒或公开支持某个政党，也不能与任何政党一起认同、参与、行动或发言，免得被外界误会，看教会成为压力团体或被某些政党使用，来达成某些利益的管道。教会尊重个别会友对政党或政治的参与，但是，若教会任何活动影响到会友之间的合一和睦同心，也就是妨害教会使命的进展，这是决对不受鼓励的。

按照本会2000年执行部的决定：牧者或会友不得积极参与政党活动。圣职人员(牧师传道)及教会内或有关机构/肢体属下受薪的非圣职工作人员，则受促不要积极参加政党政治活动——不论是执政党或反对党。此外，他们也不应该接受报章或电台或电视台(或网站)或政党访问发表支持某个候选人或某个政党



的言论，以免被利用，或被人误会以为是教会的立场。更不能以教会名义行以上的事。圣职人员(牧师传道)及教会内或有关机构/肢体属下受薪的非圣职工作人员，更不能以个人名义以口头或函件(或网站或手机)支持某个政党或某个候选人。卫理公会只有会督或会长有政治发言权而且立场和原则必须是执行部通过的。同时，我们也透过砂拉越联合教会 (Association of Churches in Sarawak)，马来西亚基督教协会 (Council of Churches in Malaysia) 和马来西亚基督教联盟 (Christian Federation of Malaysia) 联合发表申明和宣告政治课题和立场，并采取行动寻求解决方案。凡在教会范围内之场所与设施，包括礼拜堂正堂、副堂、会议室、图书馆及各肢体办公室不准充作举行政治交流或座谈会的场所。这是要维持教堂的神圣与尊严。在主日崇拜礼仪中，从头到尾了，其敬拜对象是上帝，所以不适合在其中让政治人物讲话或移交款项。教会的场所、设施，包括广场、篮球场等空地也不可被允许作为政治人物主持集会/座谈会等用途，除非事先得到会长之书面批准。感谢政府和人民代议士一路走来关怀并以实际行动协助宗教/教会的发展。政府关心人民和纳税人的生活福利，这是可喜可贺的事，但为了避免政府拨款被政治化，本会议决：从提名日开始到选举日结束这段期间，本会谢绝任何政府拨款。因此，任何政府或代议士可在这段期间前后拨款。我们深信政府或代议士日常的服务和行动更为重要和实际。



歌颂我主
林鸿赐和乐队在诗歌创作比赛中献唱《寻》。

以新歌敬拜与赞美

诗歌创作为经历 神的生命表态

黄华锋 报导

华人年议会青年团契在3月25日所举办的第三届诗歌创作比赛吸引了有歌曲创作恩赐的兄弟姐妹参与，同时也让兄弟姐妹借此平台在教会里分享自己的创作。马来西亚地理处于东西方各国之间，也因着多元宗族的人文环境，本地教会所唱的诗歌不再只是单一语言而已。大会所收到的32份创作里，就有一首来自甲洞堂的英文作品。参加比赛的教会共有20，其中有一间是来自东马的新福源堂。

比赛的前序早在一个月前就开始了。参赛者先把歌曲样本邮寄或电邮的方式寄至负责人。之后大会便筛选合格入围者。12首合格入围的决赛作品便被上载到年会青团的面子书。为期一个月的时间，网民以“赞”的方式投选他们喜爱的诗歌。获得最多网民投“赞”的诗歌赢得“最受欢迎奖”。

以生命谱写诗歌

“我若能说万人的方言，并天使的话语，却没有爱，我就成了鸣的锣，响的钹一般；换句话说，我若以高深的中文造诣填词，也以复杂多层次的音韵谱曲，却没有生命，创作的诗歌就成了鸣的锣，响的钹一般”，年会青年团指导，陈志豪牧师，也是初选时的评审之一，在当晚比赛开始前引用歌林多前书的经文以表明诗歌创作是基督徒生命流露的表彰。

青少年缺乏表达能力的时代

比赛随即陈牧师证道后开始。此次比赛是由中部教区加影堂提供场地和乐器。大会邀请马来西亚基督教青年协会全国总会长，方嘉雄传



求主靠近

冠军得主艾文相信在低落时唯一可做的便是求主靠近。

道、音乐制作人汤小康和郑可恩为决赛当评判。共12组的参赛者按序把作品给演绎后，评审才开始给予一统式的讲评。

“现在的年轻人不懂得表达，有词穷问题，常常不能把想要说得都给说出来”，方嘉雄传道强调作品应该以清楚明白为准，少卖弄玄虚，即作品一开始演绎时，会众便能明白其中含义。“敬拜是 Congregational 的，会众性的，不是在推销个人意

识”，方传道补充。

此外，汤小康在讲评时说明歌曲不一定要备有着很多多样化、很复杂的编曲，就算是只有钢琴一台也能把歌曲演绎得很好。

勇敢去做

第三届诗歌创作比赛的参赛者艾文以自己填词曲的《求主靠近》夺冠。她表示她的创作灵感来自于她在以赛亚学校的学习经验而得。事故源自艾文在学校时与自己小组组员的误会。与人产生摩擦的她心情很低落，封闭自己为免受更多的伤害。可没放弃寻求 神的她坚持祷告求主靠近，更为此事谱曲填词，想以歌曲来表达当时所处的感受。面对比赛的压力，她必须自弹自唱。“我们堂会 [马口堂] 入围了3首歌，预备功夫要很多，所以不能每首歌都以全备的乐队出战，可是我坚持不放弃 [出赛]，所以便自个儿上场唱歌给上帝听”，艾文也补充道：“作音乐要敢作。”

亚军歌曲是来自甲洞堂的《Have You》，词曲：李必燊；季军是来自马口堂的《再一次》，词：谢怡芳、曲：林思明。最佳演绎奖则由来自文冬堂的《耶和華，求你》获得，词：梁孝恩、曲：郑联晨。

推介首张诗歌合集

年会青团收录过去前两届比赛入围的诗歌而推出首张合集。共花了两年的时间录制了六首均来自第一届比赛入围的诗歌。此外，专辑还收录来自南部教区2003年回音谷专辑的《祂仍在掌管》和卫理公会班达马兰堂2005年生命手册专辑的《永恒的祝福》。

Living

And Jesus answered him saying, “It is written that man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.” (Luke 4:4)

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Environmentalism From a Christian Point of View.

It is important for us to know that all things around us, and us included, have been created through our Lord Jesus Christ and for Him

BY DANIEL LEE

Writing as a proud Malaysian, I have many reasons why I love this country so much. Besides the diversity of cultures, languages, and, not forgetting the most important thing for Malaysians - food! - I am also very grateful to be in a country which is so beautiful and well known for its na-

ture and environment.

Located right in the middle of the Tropics, we have lush green rain forests which is one of the most diverse type of forests in the world, all around us, which hosts thousands of different kinds of insects, animals and plants. Besides that, we are also proud to have Mount Kinabalu in Sabah - the highest peak found in the South East Asia

region, standing at 4,095 metres. And, while we look in awe at the height of our mountains, we are also blessed with the amazing richness of life in the depths of our oceans. Malaysia is situated within an area called “The Coral Triangle”, which is an area recognised by scientists, worldwide, to be most abundant and diverse in marine life. Sipadan Island in Sabah is also

recognised by international bodies as one of the top ten dive sites in the world.

With such unimaginable luxuries in our very own backyard, how then should I, as a Christian, respond to environmental issues concerning our country? I believe that as Christians, we should go back to basics and ask ourselves what God, our Creator, had intended for us when He formed the Earth that we live in. We need to look at why the environment is important in God’s eyes in order to respond biblically to the environmental issues.

It is God’s Creation

The very first book of the Bible, Genesis, gives a very clear depiction of the earth’s creation to show that God took every effort to create earth, filled with a variety of vegeta-

The creativity and divine nature of God are clearly portrayed in the works of His hand, where the testimony of His existence is for all men of all times, regardless of race, language, location or time

tion and animals, in a specific order. This indicates that God was intentional in His creation and He even praised the works of His hands by saying that “it was very good” (Gen 1:31 - NIV). God has also been involved in sustaining His creation through His providence of water, sunshine, and food to His creation (Psa 65, 104 and 145 – NIV). It is also important to remember that all these around us (as well as ourselves), have been created by our Lord Jesus Christ and for His pleasure (Col 1:16 – NIV). It is for His enjoyment that these things were formed.

God valued His creation so much that it seems He hesitated to create the plants because there was no one to care for it (Gen 2:5 – NCV). After He created the

plants, God then created the first man with a specific role given to him – to care for the ground and work it (Gen 2:15 – NCV). Adam and Eve, the first man and woman, were also commanded to take charge and govern over the earth. As Christians, we are taught by Jesus himself in the Gospels to be good managers of God’s resources. We should, therefore, all the more play an active role in preserving the environment that God has created and treasures so much.

It is a Testimony to God’s



Existence

In this day and age of science, the teachings of the theory of evolution by Charles Darwin have been widely spread among students worldwide. New Age atheists have been trying to dismiss the existence of God and the creation story by propagating this idea of evolution, where the universe and all its living things evolved from a single source of energy through random chance. This is a result of the wickedness of men who are trying to suppress the truth, as mentioned in Romans 1:18-20. God has made it plain to mankind His existence through the display of His creation so that people are without excuse not to believe in Him.

The creativity and divine nature of God

is clearly portrayed in the work of His hands, where the testimony of His existence is for all men of all times, regardless of race, language, location or time (Psa 19:1-6 - NIV). God’s creation is still a very important testimony of His existence in many places, especially in deep rural areas where unknown tribes and communities have yet to be reached. From my personal experience, my faith in God has only increased every time I am surrounded by nature and observe the tiny little things God has made. Some people have been challenged to believe in a Creator God after seeing the intricate designs and functions of each animal or plant in the environment around them. With this in mind, it’s even more important to protect the work of God’s hands in our world today as they open up opportunities for us to speak about this amazing God that we have.

It Provides us with Important Resources

Humans depend on the natural resources found in the environment for food and shelter. From the time of Adam and Eve, our main food source comes from crops, livestock and fish. The most important resources needed for mankind to survive are also part of the environment - air and water. However, these two resources are the most affected today. Many people in different parts of the world are suffering and dying because of the lack of access to clean water, or are exposed to polluted air. Water borne diseases and respiratory related diseases are increasing every day and many of the victims are children, especially from poor, undeveloped countries.

This is because of mankind’s greed in exploiting the environment, without considering the consequences on fellow human beings. As Christians, one of the greatest commandments to us is to love your neighbour as yourself. How can we say we love our neighbours when we let them suffer the effects from the degradation of the environment?

If the environment is important because it’s God’s creation, shouldn’t we, as Christians, be more interested and involved in doing something about the environment?

There are many simple steps that can be done by any individual to help the environment, such as

bring your own reusable bags when you go shopping, bring your own water bottle instead of buying a new bottle and throwing it away every time, practice recycling, use both sides of the paper before throwing, turn off your tap while you are brushing your teeth and etc.

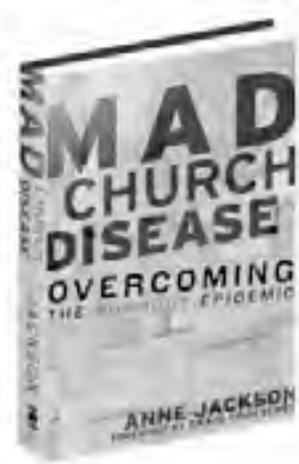


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Arts

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

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Mad Church Disease: Overcoming the Burnout Epidemic

Author: Anne Jackson

Publisher: Zondervan (January 20, 2009)

BY JOSEPH A. GOMEZ

First time authors like Anne Jackson are few and far in between. Her blog is one of the top-ranked blogs for Christian leadership. In a recent list of the top 60 of these blogs, she is number 18, and one of only three women on the list. She has an amazing heart for God's people and unity within the Church.

As unique as she may be, she is not alone in the journey that she is on. Her newly released book, *Mad Church Disease: Overcoming the Burnout Epidemic*, is both a refreshing confession and a hard look at the struggle of burnout, its symptoms, and the dangers it brings to the church and its leaders.

This book isn't just for pastors. The symptoms of burnout affect everyone - from the senior pastor, to the worship team, and to the ushers at the door.

Jackson starts by sharing her personal story in order to both introduce herself and to allow her story to be something that readers can relate to.

Anne Jackson is a pastor's daughter, and her family has been hurt by the church, over and over again. When she was sixteen, she prayed a bold prayer, telling God that she would leave the church entirely unless He gave her a way to bring unity back in the church. Fortunately for both her and us, God answered her prayer after many years of silence.

Anne dives right into the issue of burnout, or as she puts it, "mad church disease". She writes about the correlation between mad cow disease and its traits with the symptoms of burnout within the church and its leaders. She points out the gravity and real danger of ministry burn-

out, which attacks through hidden and internal methods and lies dormant until it is too late. "Cows don't have much hope when they are infected with mad cow disease," she elaborates. "Even though the process can take years, they die. There's no vaccine. We're a bit more fortunate. Satan's sole purpose in life is to ruin us - but God's sole purpose in life is to redeem us. Cows don't get a second chance - but we are promised a second chance, and more," Jackson writes.

Through an in-depth examination and reflection of "mad church disease", Anne guides the reader through the different ways that we are attacked. Our physical, mental, social, and spiritual health suffers when burnout is raging inside, she says.

At the end of each chapter, Jackson provides an opportunity for serious reflection on the risks of burnout. Supporting opinions, in the form of interviews with an "expert in the field" (such as Willow Creek's Bill Hybels) are also provided.

Thankfully, there is much healing to be found when reading the book as you are assured you are not alone on the battlefield and of the redemption that God has had for us all along. Jackson devotes a large portion of the book to preventing burnout as well as finding remedies for burnout and its subsequent attack on our bodies, minds, relationships, and souls. At the end of the book, Anne further reinforces the pursuit of restoration and forgiveness, and living life to the fullest.

There are so many factors holding back Christians, especially Christian leaders, from doing great things, one of which is burnout. *Mad Church Disease* is a wonderfully written book that contains healing and redemption on each page.



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“Therefore God exalted Him to the highest place and gave Him the name that is above every name.” (Philippians 2:9)



EASTER MORNING BY FRIEDRICH, CASPAR DAVID (1833)