

Conflicts & Opportunities

SPEAKER: JOHN NG, PH. D.

President, Meta
Chair, EMCC Board

Date : 24th - 25th September 2010

Day : Friday night & Saturday

Time : 8.00pm & 8.00am - 5.00pm

Venue : Trinity Methodist Church PJ

Come and learn together from Dr John Ng, the conflict management expert and mediation consultant, who has done much research and study in this subject.

SCHEDULE

Day 24th Sept 2010 (Friday)

08.00 Worship
08.30 Session 1

Day 25th Sept 2010 (Saturday)

08.00 Registration
09.00 Worship
09.30 Session 2
10.30 Tea Break
11.00 Session 3
12.00 Lunch
13.30 Session 4
14.30 Tea Break
15.00 Session 5
17.00 End of Seminar

Day 26th Sept 2010 (Sunday)

08.30 Preach at Worship Service (open to public)
10.45 Preach at Worship Service (open to public)



For more information, please contact us at

03-7956 5986

HOST Trinity Methodist Church, PJ
ADDRESS 6, Jalan 5/37, 46000 PJ
FAX 03-7956 9241
E-MAIL seminar@trinitypj.com
WEBSITE http://www.trinitypj.com
ORGANISER Lay Training Institute, TMC PJ



Dr John Ng is the Honorary Chair of EMCC (Eagles Mediation & Counselling Centre Singapore). He received his PhD in interpersonal Communication from Northwestern University, USA. An expert in mediation and conflict management, John is also EMCC's Mediation Consultant and provides mediation training regularly to community leaders, lawyers and mental health professionals. He is an appointed mediator with the Singapore Mediation Centre as well as Ministry of Law.

John is also the President of Meta, a leadership development and hospitality consulting company to top international corporations. He is additionally the Honorary Chair of Eagles Communications Board of Governance. John's expertise includes leadership coaching, team effectiveness and change management. He has more than 25 years of management consultancy and training experience with corporations, academic institutions and non-profit organizations. A leader and trainer, John is well-versed in the art of people motivation and his warm personality has endeared him to many. His best-selling book, *Dim Sum Leadership* has won rave review.

We Hurt the Ones We Love: Managing Conflict & Making Peace

Loving people has our heartaches, pains and betrayal. Yet, we are called to love and peace is in short supply today, whether in family or church. God calls us to be peacemakers and want us to manage conflict effectively.

- How do we create a peace-making culture to de-escalate conflicts?
- What perspectives and skill-sets must we have to manage conflicts more effectively?
- What are some destructive conflict styles that will derail relationships?
- How do we manage strong negative emotions that block our communication?

B E R I T A TRAC

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An Enriching Experience In South Africa

On 23rd May, after a long, long flight of fourteen hours from KLIA and a short stopover at Johannesburg, we finally arrived at Cape Town, South Africa (The Rainbow Nation). While the plane was nearing that beautiful city, we were greeted by that well-known Table Mountain itself. At the airport, 19 of us from the six different conferences of the Methodist Church in Malaysia were met by our fresh looking Bishop Dr. Hwa Yung who had already been in Cape Town for a week attending a Lausanne meeting. What caught my attention were the colours at the airport, multi coloured toys, t-shirts, horns, flags, representing the teams that will be playing at the FIFA World Cup. Yes, football fever had started even though the games had not begun.

We were whisked to the Indoor Sports Arena, The Bellville Velodrome where we participated, together with representatives from over 200 countries, in the **10th Anniversary Celebration of the Global Day of Prayer**. The stadium was packed with people from different nations, denominations, colour and race. All came together, answering God's call for a day of repentance and prayer on Pentecost Sunday. I felt the outpouring of God's Holy Spirit as the people called on Him in prayer and lifted their voices in praise. The music was LOUD but somehow suitable for the beat and rhythm of the choruses that were sung in English or other indigenous languages. I was not unduly bothered by the loud music although I could feel the intense palpitation of my own heart! Invited representatives



Group photo before departure by ferry for Robben Island

from some nations led in prayer and some were passionate and fervent prayers. More than ever, I had that warm feeling that we were part of this global spiritual family of Jesus Christ, especially so, when the colorful flag of each country was carried around the stadium, including the flag of Malaysia! Our living God can do great and wondrous work through a man who is totally committed and obedient to Him. It was in the city of Cape Town that Graham Power received a clear

> continue on page 2

instruction by God in 2001 to call together Christians of all the denominations for a day of repentance and prayer. As a result of his obedience the Global Day of Prayer was birthed and it has spread to every single country on the face of the earth. His second vision was the emphasis on ethics, values and clean living through the "Unashamedly Ethical" program/emphasis at www.unashamedlyethical.com. We are called to sign up and play our part to help wipe out greed and corruption at all levels of society.

The next day, we went off on a choppy boat ride to **Robben Island Museum**. That island situated 7 kilometers off the coast near Cape Town is a world heritage site and museum which once served as a place of banishment, isolation and imprisonment. All the guides there were once prisoners on that island and the one who took us around explained with passion and a deep sense of emotion the price black Africans had to pay for freedom. When Nelson Mandela was sentenced to life imprisonment during the apartheid era, he started his prison years in the notorious Robben Island prison as well, in solitary confinement. However, I could also sense that tinge of pride in the guide's voice when he spoke about how that prison failed to break their spirit. Instead, with resilience, determination and fortitude they turned the prison into a centre of learning, producing future leaders and lawyers and Mandela himself was a central figure in the organized political education classes. Robben Island Prison became known as "Robben Island University."



TRAC President and wife 'incarcerated' in a prison cell at Robben Island

The struggle to end apartheid was retold at the **Hector Pieterse Museum** in Soweto. It houses photographic and audio visual displays of the struggle of the black youths against the injustices of apartheid. Hector Pieterse, aged 13 was one of the first students to be killed

during the 1976 student uprising. White policemen had confronted the marchers and that confrontation turned violent resulting in the death of many students. What was a student march, quickly erupted into an uprising, which spread to many parts of the country. A photograph of a young man, Mbuyiswa, carrying the critically injured Hector Pieterse in his arms, captured the attention of people throughout the world and highlighted the injustices of apartheid.



In front of Hector Pieterse museum

A sad history, with so many lives wasted and lost because of man's refusal to acknowledge that whether "red, yellow, black and white, we are precious in His sight." It is indeed heart rending to be reminded how fellow human beings are capable of great evil, treating each other in such inhumane cruel ways. At the same time, I marvel and am inspired by the way how some had grown stronger, with their spirits unbroken when they were put through great indignity and adversity.

The two full days spent at the **African Enterprise Leadership Training Centre (AELTC)** at Pietermaritzburg had been a blessing to all of us. During those two days at the Training Centre, set in the midst of rolling terrain, away from the bustling city, with peace, quiet and the exhilarating crisp cool air, we felt peace and inspiration. One of its brochures states "While evangelism is the primary objective of the AE ministry, AE is committed to the 'Deed' part of its mission statement too." As such, it focuses its ministry on five major areas: - Missions, Leadership Development Projects, the Volunteer/Interns Programme and Networking. We were briefed on the projects carried out by AE and we came away with hearts impassioned by the vision of AE and the way God has responded to the prayers of the AE community. I would like to especially highlight the AE Foxfire Youth Team. It's a project to train and empower young people to be effective leaders of integrity within their communities and the nation. These Foxfire Youth

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Teams reach out to other young people through dance, drama, music, audiovisuals and workshops and one of the teams demonstrated a lively dance routine for all of us one evening. Besides youth missions, AE undertakes a variety of missions each year including city-wide missions, university missions, community missions. We were shown tapes of how teams were sent out to places where people gathered and there, they would preach and people would receive Christ. That's one form of freedom that South Africa is now enjoying and that is something we have not been able to experience in this country.

We had this wonderful privilege of meeting and interacting with the founder of AE. All of us were taken



With Michael and Carol Cassidy in their home

in by the warmth and sincere hospitality of Michael Cassidy. All successful ministry is based on relationships and I believe one of the reasons for the success of AE is Michael Cassidy's love for God, love for his staff and people around him. He's a man of prayer who exudes love and expresses it in so many ways and we're glad Bishop Hwa Yung has extended the invitation for him to visit Malaysia.

On the 6th day, we flew into Johannesburg, the football city of South Africa. We visited Methodist House, the headquarters of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa



Meeting at the Methodist HQ of S. Africa. With Presiding Bishop of Southern Africa, Ivan M. Abraham

South Africa, Mozambique, Lesoto, Namibia, Zimbabwe and Swaziland) and met with the Presiding Bishop Ivan M. Abraham, the General Secretary and other ministry staff members. There was sharing on the ministries carried out by the Methodist



TRAC President with Presiding Bishop of Southern Africa, Ivan M. Abraham

Churches of both countries. The Methodist Church in Southern Africa's vision statement is "A Christ-healed Africa" and the mission statement is "To Proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ for healing and transformation" This is supported by the four pillars of spirituality, evangelism and church growth, justice and service, human and economic empowerment. The connexional desks in mission work are the childcare ministry and the HIV/AIDS ministry. The church is playing an active role in prevention, care and treatment of HIV/AIDS through the setting up of resource centres and testing centres. Churches set up clinics, promote abstinence and campaign against stigmatization. The social problems connected with HIV/AIDS are many and varied and they include poverty and unemployment. Many children in villages are forced to be heads of households when parents die of AIDS, leaving their young children to fend for themselves and in some cases to take care of their old, ailing grandparents. Young children who are infected believe their lives will be short and as such, many resort to criminal activities for short term gratification through drugs. There is so much to be done and the magnitude of their social problems boggles the mind. There was the discussion on the possibility of starting an exchange seminary students program and that of sending missionaries to help reach out to the Chinese communities in S. Africa.

"You must experience worship in a black African church. These people express so much joy when they worship the Lord!" Bishop Hwa Yung announced. That's exactly what we witnessed when we had the privilege of worshipping in Bethesda Methodist Mission on Sunday 30th May. The pastors warmly welcomed us and the congregation sang a song of welcome (in the Zulu language, I think) The people sang beautifully with great joy and swayed to the rhythm as they focused their hearts on worshipping God with great joy.

In the afternoon, we headed for the town of Soweto, a black African township, to participate in worship with



Members of the "Believers in Christ" congregation

the "Believers in Christ" congregation, an independent indigenous church. "Believers in Christ" has a total of 58 branches with a total membership of 5,000. (There are other independent indigenous churches in Africa and they are the fastest growing churches in terms of membership). We were surprised by the uniforms

(green) they wore to church and that some of the men carried sticks which represented the staff of Moses. Healing ministry is carried out before each worship service for they believe that all worshipers must be cleansed of sickness, evil spirits and family breakdown before they worship God. Such is an example of an indigenous Church that believes that Jesus can fulfill African tradition and can be worshiped in terms of African culture. The Good News of Jesus Christ can and does bring holistic deliverance from evil which Africans long for and this is an aspect which the independent



At African Enterprise Retreat Centre

indigenous churches are stressing on, thus attracting the indigenous tribal people of Africa.

I thank the Lord for this opportunity to participate in this South African trip led by our Bishop Dr. Hwa Yung. The trip gave the leaders of the 6 Annual Conferences the opportunity to interact in a more relaxed and informal atmosphere, thus forging even greater unity, camaraderie and understanding.

As the world goes into "FIFA football frenzy" and South Africa becomes the centre of attention through the media, I can only recall the many varied and seemingly insurmountable problems that South Africa encounters. Racism has not disappeared with a democratic government and the people are still divided. Certain residential areas are divided according to colour – white, black, Indian and brown. While big cities like Cape Town and Johannesburg look developed and modern, there are areas where the poor black Africans stay in shacks using corrugated zinc sheets and planks. That Rainbow Nation not only has its multi-ethnic groups, it has the great divide of inequality between the haves and the have-not.

Churches and NGOs are working hand in hand with the government to help ameliorate the social problems of poverty, corruption,



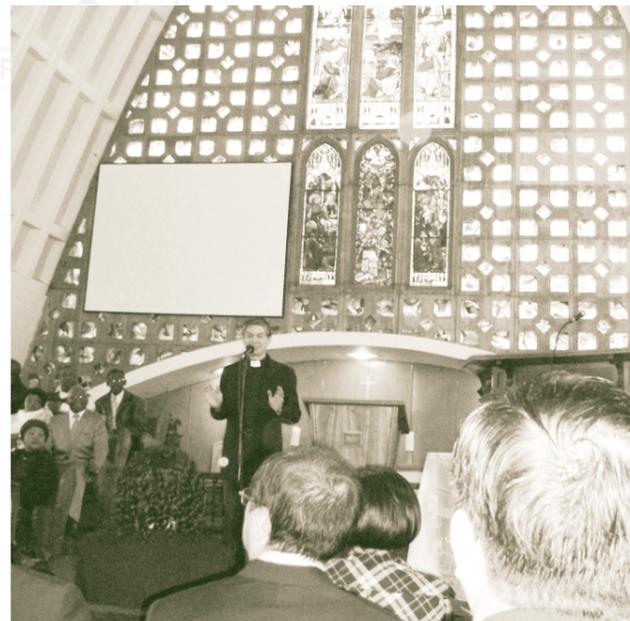
GDOP: Representatives from different countries leading in prayer

problems with orphans, illegal immigrants, HIV / AIDS etc. Organizations like GDOP and African Enterprise reach out to people of different colours and making a difference with their ministries. Throughout the country the emphasis is on RECONCILIATION! With hearts turned to God, prayer and intentional efforts for good there is hope yet for that Rainbow Nation which is blessed by God through its rich natural resources and colourful human resources of red, yellow, black and white.

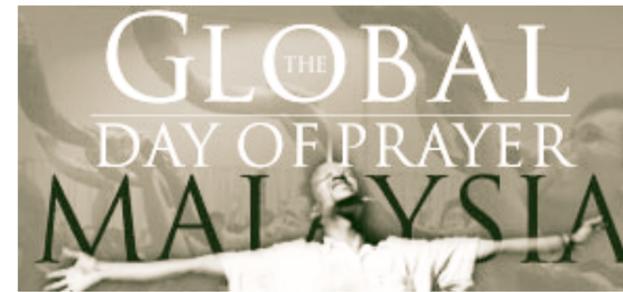
By Mrs Lily Ch'ng



GDOP: Flags of different nations carried around the stadium



Bishop Dr. Hwa Yung in Bethesda Methodist Church



MALAWATI STADIUM • 6.30 PM, MAY 23, 2010

The Global Day of Prayer is a call to encounter God with many others so that He can change us and bring forth all that He desires among the nations. If you are reading this, you have probably heard God calling you, too. And He's put hope in your heart, a kind of yearning that He's not going to leave things as they are. Instead, He's going to make us like Jesus. Despite the gloom of mounting evil, He's going to heal so many families, lands and peoples that the earth will be covered with the sparkle and laughter of glory, right in the face of darkness.

The programme for the evening:-

- 1) Sound the Trumpet
- 2) Celebration in the Presence of God
- 3) Repentance and Healing
- 4) Praying for Transformation
- 5) Praying for the Tsunami of Revival
- 6) Benediction

For the first time in the history of Malaysia, nearly twelve thousand believers from every denomination gathered for worship and prayer. 150 of us from Trinity Methodist church, Petaling Jaya attended and were blessed.

There was just one desire for this gathering and that was to plead with God for the city and the nation. Believers ranging from children, teenagers, middle-aged and the elderly came in a few hundred cars and a large number of buses for that great event. We thank the Lord for fine weather on that day.

Among the programmes listed above, repentance and healing impacted me. The key verse is found in the book of Joel 2: 12-13, 16 :- "Even now," declares the Lord, "return to me with all your heart, with fasting and weeping and mourning. Return to the LORD your God for He is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love, and He relents from sending calamity...Gather the people, consecrate the assembly, bring together the elders, gather the children..."

Dr Daniel Ho from Damansara Utama Methodist Church led all believers in a "Prayer of Repentance". He directed the crowd back to the saving grace of the Lord Jesus Christ. He knelt down on the floor of the stage to pray, setting an example. He invited all of us to join him in prayer for personal repentance and for the nation's repentance. All of us knelt down to pray for God's forgiveness and grace.

The main issues that were prayed for on that day included the following:

- That the central government leaders and the Mentri Besar of every state in Malaysia, would run this country in a God fearing way and that they will take bold measures in efforts to fight crime, drug abuse, violence and gangsterism.
- That the problems associated with the economic crisis would be resolved.
- That the different races will live peacefully with one another on this land.

- That the judiciary would settle each case in a fair and just manner.
- That every citizen from all strata of society would say "no" to bribery and corruption,
- That all Christians in this nation would rise up to be the salt and light in this land.

As each prayer item came to my mind, the Lord touched me and I wept uncontrollably for spiritual revival and transformation in every state in Malaysia. Later, we were told to hold each other's hands in groups of 2-3 to pray and plead with God for grace and mercy that He would heal our land, Malaysia.

I strongly believe that with twelve thousand people praying together in unity with faith and confidence, God will change the situation of our nation. He had promised that in 2 Chronicles 7:14 – "If my people who are called by my name would 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."

It was an act of obedience asking God to heal our land.

There was a testimony by Rev Ong Sek Leang from the Metro Tabernacle church. He testified about God's act of kindness when the church received a token sum from the government to rebuild when the church was burnt down by vandals at the beginning of this year.

Lastly, we were led by church leaders to pray for our own pastors in our own church. It ended with a benediction at 10 pm.

Twelve thousand people quickly cleared the seats and they were encouraged to take their bulletins and garbage with them so that it was litter free in the stadium. Heading back to their respective buses and cars, men, women and children walked hand-in-hand, singing and rejoicing.

There was such an overwhelming sense of satisfaction, knowing that it was not the end, but just the beginning of something great for we believe that God will be doing great things in our midst.

Giving all praise and glory to God for a successful event.

By Mrs Janice Leong



Hearing It Over and Over

By Mr. Wong Choong Meng

This March/April, I received an email with the subject *“Urgent Prayer”* about half a dozen times from different sources. One was sent to my wife, who forwarded it to me. Another was sent to my cousin in Australia, who sent it to me. Yet others came from friends and church members. A brother printed the message and shared it during an FGB (Full Gospel Businessmen) meeting.

The email apparently originated from someone who attended the Lighthouse Watchmen’s Prayer School in Trinity Methodist Church, Penang that was led by Pastor Julius Suubi and Pastor Francis Ameta in mid-March. The message will not be re-produced here as it is likely that readers of this article would have seen it already.

Pastor Julius Suubi, a Pentecostal pastor from Uganda, also led the 5th TRAC Prayer Convention held on 19th & 20th March 2010 in the Chefoo Methodist Centre, Cameron Highlands. At that conference, the message that was shared was the same as the one in Penang.

The message in summary:

- God has been protecting us in three ways:
- Even though the principalities over Malaysia have been fomenting tension in the nation, God has prevented conflict and destruction from taking place.
- God has protected Malaysia from natural disasters even as surrounding nations have been impacted time and again.

- God has protected the church with a high measure of freedom of worship in this land.
- God’s faithfulness towards us is not because the church has been praying. On the contrary, the church in Malaysia has entered into a state of slumber with most prayers being self-centred or personal in nature. Indeed, the church has not been carrying the burden for the nation nor for its unsaved peoples.
- The Lord is warning that the enemy is slowly covering the nation with a veil and that the recent events that the church experienced are only the beginning.
- God is calling the church to come back to repentance and prayer and to look beyond her own needs. The church in Malaysia is matured enough to take up spiritual responsibility for the nation and not depend on others. Foreign intercessors cannot do it for Malaysia.
- Pastor Suubi used the example from Genesis 18 where Abraham’s intercession could not deliver the people of Sodom and Gomorrah. Judgment came because no one in the land took up the burden to pray for their cities and so they were destroyed.
- The lesson for Malaysia is that the burden for interceding for the nation and for the unsaved majority can only be taken up by its own people. Christians need to rise up and pray so that **“On this mountain he will destroy the shroud that enfolds all peoples, the sheet that covers all nations; - Isaiah 25:7”**.



On the following weekend, Graham Power and his pastor, Dion Foster, were invited by Bishop Hwa Yung to speak in Wesley Church, KL. The former is the man to whom God gave a vision to birth the Global Day of Prayer (GDOP) 10 years ago in South Africa. Those who attended the Methodist Prayer Convention in 2007 might remember Pastor Dion Forster as one of the speakers.

At the KL Wesley meeting, Graham Power shared a powerful testimony of God’s impartation of a vision. He too shared a message of warning, repentance and intercession for the nation. The message of the GDOP is **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 praise God that this year, the Global Day of Prayer event for Malaysia will be held in Malawati Stadium in Shah Alam on Pentecost Sunday, 23rd May 2010 where more than 13,000 are expected to attend.

The week following the meeting at KL Wesley was Holy Week. As is tradition in Trinity Methodist Church, PJ, a preacher was invited to give evening teaching sessions from Monday to Wednesday. This year, Pastor Thomas Chung from SIB Church, Sabah, was the speaker and on the final evening, he was prompted by the Holy Spirit to speak also on intercession for the nation and he did so; carrying the same message of warning and turning to God in prayer. Bishop Hwa Yung was invited to give the dismissal and, uncharacteristically for him, spoke before giving the blessing. He spoke of hearing, these last few years, a consistent call from various messengers to intercede for the church and nation. Bishop urged the church to do so.

You think God might be trying to tell us something?



First of all, I thank God and also TRAC MW for giving me the opportunity to expand my horizon through this training program. Joining MW and being a MW local president had not prepared me for this and I certainly did not dream of having firsthand experience with representatives of the World Federation of Methodist and Uniting Church Women.(WFM & UCW). Representatives from 7 countries were present: Korea, Philippines, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Indonesia, Singapore and Malaysia.

There were 4 Sessions of Spiritual Praise led by Mrs. Hyun Soon Kim where we revisited the rich heritage of hymns in worship. There were various Worship sessions led by teams from other nations too and they gave us the opportunity to experience the diverse and rich tapestry of worship in other parts of the world. Mrs. Milan Choi conducted a 5 session workshop on worship through body movements and hand gestures. Indeed I learned that action songs are not just for Sunday school children; adults are not too old to do it as well.

Bible Study was led by Rev Heasun Kim. We studied *Mark 14: 1 – 11 (The woman who anointed Jesus with oil)* and *Galatians 5: 22 – 26, 6: 3 – 4 (Fruit of the Spirit; and 'being' verses 'doing')*. We were divided into groups of 4 or 5 and had interactive bible study which involved 100% participation. There were fruitful discussions and we discovered new insights for application.

Mrs. Myunrae led in the session on **Mission** where we focussed our attention on the inter-relationship of God-Neighbour-I. Mrs. Myunrae informed us how in 1869, six ladies in Boston founded the "United Methodist Women" and started mission work in India and then in Korea (1884). Mission work by United Methodist Women in Korea & USA have spread to China, Vietnam, the Philippines and also Indonesia. Currently there are 9 conferences in USA. It is very encouraging to learn of the work God is doing through them.

Ms Emma Canton led in the **leadership workshop**. She dealt on the characteristics of a leader and the relational aspects of it as exemplified by Jesus. We also looked at organisational leadership.



The Environmental Justice session was conducted by Dr. Jason Lim. The session dealt with the various aspects of environmental injustice, the chaotic world of today, the awareness and actions that we should take.

We went on a field trip where we visited a camp with more than a 100 child refugees from Myanmar. It was run by Malaysian Care. The general feedback and impression we received from the children and their teachers was that those children were happy despite their refugees' status. Delegates from Philippines and Indonesia commented that those children were much better off compared to the street children in their own countries.

I hope to be able to implement what I have learned at EAA in our church:

- i. Spiritual worship through hymns will be incorporated into MW monthly meetings, CG meetings and the church choir.
- ii. Interactive Bible Study. This is already carried out in small group meetings (CG)
- iii. Body worship will be introduced at MW meetings and also Sunday School.
- iv. Environmental Justice workshop has challenged us to continue promoting and creating awareness among

Christians on environmental issues and to continue the recycling program in our church.

- v. Mission and Leadership workshop helped to create awareness of the ministries carried out by UFMW and UCW. We should intentionally encourage younger women in church to take up leadership in the various ministries especially in the Methodist Women organization.
- vi. The field trip helped to create awareness of the plight of migrant workers and refugees in our society and we should identify ways to assist them

Again, I thank God and also the church for the opportunity to attend this leadership training programme. The experiences are invaluable. The training has benefitted me spiritually and through that exposure, I have now more courage and am less fearful of facing challenges in life.

I have benefitted from the study on the woman who anointed Jesus with oil. I learnt about her love and devotion for Jesus, her sacrifice and her courage to take risks. She was focused, acted bravely and silently because she loved the Lord.

*Reported by Ng Loo Ee
Wesley Methodist Kuantan, March 6, 2010*

EAA Young Women Leadership Training & Development Program "WOMEN MAKING A DIFFERENCE" (WFM & UCW)

Date : March 1 – 5, 2010 Venue: Kuala Lumpur



Clarity in the midst of Tranquillity

A Week-end of Reflection and Discernment in the quiet of Frasers Hill

The week-end of silence and solitude for reflection and discernment, on 16-18 April 2010 in the quiet of Rumah Methodist in Frasers Hill, is the third of four Spiritual Formation and Leadership (SFL) Weekends organised by the Institute of Christian Ministry (ICM) of TRAC. This SFL 3 is on the aspect of "Discernment: The Heart of Spiritual Leadership". The Retreat started after dinner on Friday and ended about noon on Sunday. It was attended by 16 participants and led by Ms Ng Wai Ling, the Director of ICM, and assisted by a team of four facilitators and spiritual companions.

The first session in the evening was on "Discernment in Everyday Life" by Dr Voon Choon Khing. She talked about discovering the living presence and activity of God in daily events, our new emerging nature in Christ and our faithfulness to God's call in daily living. To discern the activities of the Invisible God we need to intentionally develop holy habits by spending time with Him, reflecting on the daily events and circumstances of life and engaging in the rhythm of little sabbaths. God speaks to us through creation, through our spiritual encounters with Christ in our life and through the ordinary things of life. We need to create an inner space and silence in the midst of all the surrounding noise so as to be in a receptive mode and be attentive to what is happening before talking to God and responding appropriately as beloved sons or daughters of God. The teaching session was followed by a prayer exercise known as "Examination of Consciousness" and we were encouraged to keep a spiritual journal of our daily reflective prayers.

Then, into the first night (and also the following night), we experienced the great silence except for those who were unprepared for the mosquitoes! Early next morning we spent our time in quiet prayer before having breakfast together as a community in silence - with only the voice of Kim Guat reading a passage of Scripture followed by a prayer of thanksgiving. It was a very meaningful

retreat experience for us at each meal!

Session 2 was on "Discernment in Decision-making Process" by Dr Voon. Christian discernment is about making creative choices in line with God's will through the discipline of prayerful reflection and living a Spirit-filled life, being obedient to the Gospel and knowing that we are sons or daughters of God. The affective movements of consolation and desolation in prayer can help in the decision-making. Good discernment requires openness and honesty together with an attitude of trust that a gracious God will lead us to right choices. As a Prayer exercise we were to reflect on God's unfolding revelation in the past and the present and to use these experiences in personal discernment. We were to respond by talking to God over what we have noticed and wait for His answer to us in due time!

After a brief period of solitude and rest, following lunch as a community in silence, Dr Lillian Koh began her session on "The Role of Community in Discernment". Basically it is about how we can help each other hear God's voice and follow where God leads. The community, with a common faith and grounded in prayer and discernment, serves as a valuable objective check against self-deception! We listen to one another and to God with open hearts and minds. We keep confidentiality and trust in each other's sincerity and honesty and in a God who is present with us and desires to guide us. This session is about the role of members of a group helping another person in personal discernment. After her input, we were then shown a short video about the Quaker "Clearness Committee" in which some individuals serve as channels of God's guidance to help a "focus person" listen to God and to reach clarity about a decision. These individuals listen, help clarify alternatives and provide emotional support without giving advice or "fixing" a particular situation. As a prayer exercise we were to reflect on our faith community, our relationship in a community and

the elements that have or have not been life-giving in the community or to reflect on our responses after listening through the input and video and on our roles either as a focus person or as discerners in a discernment group.

In the evening there was a one-to-one 30-minute session with the Spiritual director/companion who would co-discern with us on the work and movements of God in our life and also hear our individual experiences concerning the retreat.

The fourth session on the third day of Retreat was on "Community and Corporate Discernment" by Mr Cheong Seng Gee who also shared with us his personal experiences of corporate discernment. The session seemed very apt for some of the situations faced by different churches today! Corporate discernment on important issues in a church or organisation would need a leadership team that is spiritually mature rather than comprising largely of members who are prominent in their particular secular fields. In discernment we are seeking God's will on certain matters and it is necessary that members in committees for corporate discernment must be individuals who are Spirit-led and committed to personal transformation. We need to pray for indifference to everything but the will of God so that leaders may be driven to move beyond manoeuvring due to vested interest. For any discernment situation, there may be more than one good option. It is important to listen at many levels (both within and outside the decision-making group). To quote Ruth Haley Barton (*Strengthening the Soul of your Leadership*): "In the Quaker Friends tradition, what is more important than the decision itself is the quality of life together and a sense that they have found the decision that is best for the group." Unity is of fundamental importance!

Just before lunch there was the Closing Gathering with Community Sharing of individual experience and expectations of the Retreat. Finally we prayed in pairs for our neighbours sitting beside us.

It has been a meaningful retreat for most of us and we take this opportunity to express our thanks and appreciation to the team of facilitators/spiritual directors/companions comprising Ms Ng Wai Ling (ICM Director), Ms Goh

Kim Guat (Chairman, Board of ICM), Dr Voon Choon Khing (Lecturer in STM), Dr Lillian Koh (Medical Practitioner) and Mr Cheong Seng Gee (HR Consultant and Church leader) for sharing with us their experiences and insights on discernment. It is our prayer that more people in leadership roles within the churches will participate in the Spiritual Formation and Leadership Weekends, in particular SFL 3 on Discernment, for greater effectiveness and unity in their decision making.

The retreat seemed so brief! We enjoyed our time together as a community in the peace and solitude in the hills. Having said farewell to one another we left Rumah Methodist to catch the 2 pm, even-hour Gap time to drive down the Hill.

By Dr Khoo Soo Ghee & Coleen



Trac Methodist Seniors Fellowship Camp 2010

“Life Long Discipleship - Growing in Spirituality”

The 19th TRAC-MSF Annual Camp was held from 9th to 12th March 2010 in Penang at the Copthorne Orchid Hotel. The theme for this year's Camp was “Life-long Discipleship – Growing in Spirituality”. It was organized by the MSFers of the Wesley Methodist Church and the Trinity Methodist Church of Penang. About 190 participants attended the Camp, including 15 seniors from the Glowing Years Ministry of Singapore. The largest contingent, with 40 participants, was from the Trinity Methodist Church, Petaling Jaya.

As always, the Seniors looked forward to this annual gathering as it provided them the opportunity to meet old friends from other Chapters and to make new ones. The general consensus was that it was an enjoyable Camp and spiritually uplifting. The well- balanced programme of worship led by different Chapters; the theme messages; the Fellowship Night and social activities, all contributed to the good fellowship and renewal of spirit of all who attended the Camp.

The theme speaker was Rev. Dr. Simon Chan from the Trinity Theological

College, Singapore. He is in fact a world-renowned Asian theologian. We were indeed very privileged to have him as our Camp speaker. Dr. Chan gave 3 messages. The first message was on “Pressing Ahead To Know Christ Better”. He stressed that knowing Christ is the very foundation of our spiritual life. If we desire to grow spiritually we must know Christ personally. This involves a “radical” change in our basic values and a commitment to a life that is true. Knowing Christ also means knowing Him both in power and in suffering. Knowing Christ is a continuing, never ending process of self discovery.

His second message was on “Spiritual Discipline”. Spiritual growth like physical growth calls for regular and constant training. It requires perseverance to form good habits in daily devotion, in praying, in reading the Bible and in worship. These activities will develop a new pattern of living towards holiness and righteousness.

Dr Chan's third message was on “Spiritual Direction”. It calls for following Jesus' way of life, His footsteps and His values. Spiritual Direction requires us to enter into a certain kind of relationship

with God and with one another. It also encourages us to form “holy friendship” which can meet the unique spiritual needs of elderly Christians.

Participants all found Dr Chan's messages very spiritually inspiring and challenging particularly in our daily walk with God.

The Camp was also privileged to have Mrs. Simon Chan give a session on “Music with Meditation” with readings and hymns based on various Psalms. It was both moving and enjoyable as its presentation was rather unique.

The Closing Worship and Holy Communion Service also saw the Installation of the MSF Board of Management for the term 2010-2011. The Sermon was given by our TRAC President, Rev. Dr. Ong Hwai Teik. His message on “Longevity and Discipleship” was based on *Joshua 14: 5-15, reflecting Caleb's fearlessness and faith in God and the promised personal inheritance of land which was given to Caleb 45 years earlier, which he later claimed when he was 85!*

Rev. Ong alluded to the “Caleb Factor” in Senior Spirituality and encouraged seniors to follow the spirit of Caleb and to continue doing great things for God even in their advancing years. He impressed on the seniors to embrace personal response to faith without bitterness; aging without regretting; and also to embrace Ministry without boundaries. Like Caleb seniors are to follow the Lord our God wholeheartedly and be faithful to Him throughout their lives, choosing always to serve God regardless of age and boundaries.

Besides the theme messages, participants were treated to some fun and entertainment. These included a sumptuous Welcome Banquet which enabled participants to have not only good food but also good fellowship; line dancing to relax their taut muscles; and two optional tours:(a) Penang City Highlights Tour which showcased the heritage, culture, hawker food and delicacies (especially Penang's famous Tambun Biscuits); and (b) Penang Round-Island Tour to see the beautiful beaches and lush rural scenery.

What must be the high point in entertainment was the much looked forward to Fellowship Night! Presentations by various Chapters enthralled the audience with their delightful performances of sketches and singing such as the skilful playing of the bamboo instruments by the Wesley MC Sungei Petani Chapter and the interesting dance exercise performance by GYM Singapore. As expected, the presentation by TMC PJ took top billing with their elaborate and creative costumes and amusing performance of the Black and White Minstrel show.

On the whole, everyone present had an enjoyable and meaningful time at this year's Camp. Congratulations and a vote of thanks are hereby extended to the Organizing Chairman, Mr. Roland Chan and all the Members of his Committee for the smooth running of the Camp and for the time and untiring efforts put in to make the 2010 Camp a resounding success.

The TRAC MSF AGM was held on 10th March 2010. It proceeded smoothly with the President, Mr. Daniel Chan setting the tone of the Meeting with his informative and challenging address. He enumerated 5 areas of needs that MSF would be looking into in the coming years namely: (i) Training and Development of members for life-long discipleship; (ii) Growth Target for the MSF to establish two new Chapters a year and to increase general membership by 10 % per year (iii) Inter-Conference Relationship: to work towards a General Conference MSF of Methodist Church Malaysia; (iv) Missions: where local Chapters are encouraged to get their members to be more involved in mission work ; and (v) Christian Retirement Communities: to inculcate awareness of senior citizen issues and needs, and to work towards establishing retirement communities, day-care centres and nursing homes for seniors.



Installation of Board Members by Rev. Dr. Ong Hwai Teik



Rev. Dr. Simon Chan & Rev. Hwa Jen

The President also pointed out that there are other areas of concern that we need to be aware of, namely (i) Constitution of MSF and its proposed amendments; (ii) Rights of Members over 70 years old so that all full members of the Methodist Church of Malaysia will be treated equally without age-discrimination; (iii) Spreading Scriptural Holiness, Transforming the Nation in line with the TRAC Quadrennium Theme for 2009-2012.

The President thanked his Board Members for their service to MSF and especially the Hon Secretary, Dr. Khoo Soo Ghee and the TRAC Director of Seniors Ministry, Rev. Hwa Jen for their unstinting support and encouragement.

The Members elected at this AGM were installed during the Holy Communion Service led by Rev. Dr. Ong Hwai Teik on the final day of the Camp.

MSF Board of Management 2010 - 2011

President:	Mr. Daniel Chan Weng Kay	EMC PJ
Vice-President:	Mr. Tham Leong	WMC Kampar
Hon. Secretary:	Dr. Khoo Soo Ghee	TMC PJ
Hon. Treasurer:	Mr. Toa Kim Meng	WMC Ipoh

Board Members:	1. Mdm. Coleen See Toh	TMC PJ
	2. Mr. Tan Kok Huat	TMC Penang
	3. Mr. Tung Kam Seng	WMC KL
	4. Mr. Michael Goh	WMC Seremban

District Co-ordinators:		
1. Northern:	Mr. Khoo Cheok Sin	TMC Penang
2. Perak:	Mr. Tham Leong (also Vice President)	WMC Kampar
3. Fed. Territory:	Miss Winnie Ng Swee Wan	WMC KL
4. Selangor:	Mdm. Coleen See Toh (also Board Member)	TMC PJ
5. Southern:	Mr. Jimmy Tan	WMC Melaka
6. Eastern:	To be appointed.	

Auditors:	Dr. Chan Chee Yan	EMC PJ
	Mr. Chew Teik Hock	CGMC Ipoh

Submitted by: Winnie Ng Swee Wan



19th TRAC METHODIST SENIORS FELLOWSHIP ANNUAL CAMP



9th - 12th MARCH 2010
PULAU PINANG

INVALUABLE LESSONS LEARNT AT JEREMIAH SCHOOL (JS)

At the Jeremiah School (JS), I learnt so many things that have really been beneficial. For example, I learnt that my relationship with my Heavenly Father is closely related to my relationship with my earthly father. How I look and respond to my earthly father affects how I respond to my Heavenly Father.

In witnessing, I've learnt new tools that can help enhance the sharing of the gospel like using a simple piece of A4 paper. With a few folds and cuts of the paper a cross comes out. I think it is a real eye catcher especially when sharing with youngsters. Another lesson I've learnt is how to read and interpret the Bible effectively. This helps me fully understand God's Word and what is close to His heart. This also helps me know God's will better.

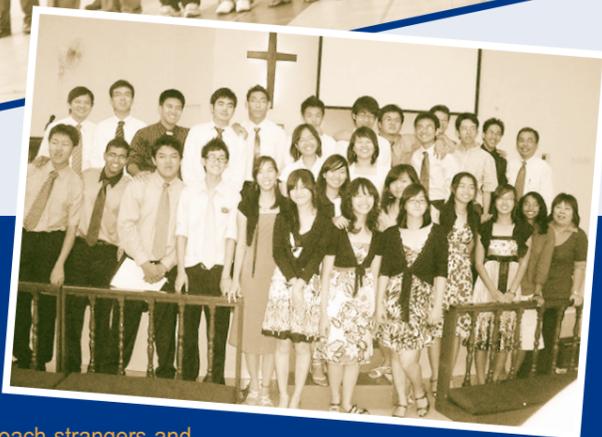
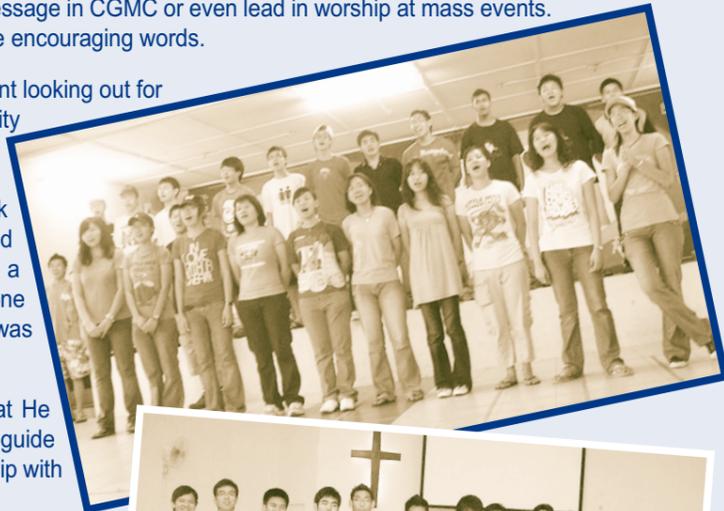
I've grown to see things from a different perspective: that it doesn't just involve my feelings but that of others as well. This helps me understand others better. Besides, I understand the true meaning and significance of Christ dying on the cross for me. Before this, it was always just a story which I heard again and again but now it really leaves a deep impression on me. Watching a video clip from "Passion of Christ" gave our partaking of Holy Communion a whole new meaning.

I've also learnt that in all things God is to be glorified. I used to unknowingly do things for my own gain but now I choose to exalt God in all circumstances. Even when everything around seems really dark, God will always bring some light into our midst. I've also learnt to find courage in God when I have to give a message in CGMC or even lead in worship at mass events. Somehow God brings along people to comfort me and give encouraging words.

Being in this community has also shown me how important looking out for each other is. The people who are part of this community play an important role in making JS 2010 as special as it is. Losing anyone or even adding in someone else would make it really different. Going out for prayer profiling and field work also were new experiences. I really enjoyed walking around and being able to talk to people. For example, I talked to a beggar and felt really blessed. Sometimes there was no one around to talk to, but I felt it was alright for I believed there was a reason for it.

I want to trust God in my service to Him, believing that He knows me and what is best for me. He is always there to guide and lead me and all that I need to do is to be in a relationship with Him and be sensitive to His will for my life.

Kristie Cheng, WMC, Sitiawan



WONDERFULLY CHANGED!

Jeremiah School was such a blessing to me as the lessons learnt at that School (JS) were invaluable. First of all, I have learnt to live in a close Christian community. I didn't socialize with other people before this but at JS I learnt to share my belongings, my feelings and opinions.

I also learnt to take initiative to do things such as worship lead, approach strangers and start conversations. I have also become more independent. At JS I did things that I didn't usually do at home such as washing clothes by hand, washing plates, and washing the toilet.

The change that I have obviously seen in myself is the way I think. In the past, although I didn't mix around much yet I adopted the culture and values of non-believers. I dishonored my parents especially my mother by speaking to her harshly. I also started to doubt the existence of God at that time. At JS the 1st session was "Knowing God the Father". That session opened my eyes to see who God really is. Now I am sure that God is my Creator, Maker of heaven and earth and He has forgiven all of my sins. I am now free from the guilt that holds and grips me because of my actions in the past. Besides that, I also worried about the future before I came to JS. I worried about everything, like what my future would be like and my negative attitude made situations worse. At JS I learnt about how much God loves me and He will lead me and guide me through my life. Even if I face difficulties, I know that God allows those things to happen so that I will grow. Now I learn to place my trust in God and I don't have to worry about the future.

Before I attended JS, I actually planned to study accountancy. However, at JS God placed a burden on my heart to serve Him. At a silent retreat, I decided to continue with my plans to study accountancy and follow His calling after I have finished my studies and go for full time ministry. During the Chinese New Year break, my parents told me the exact same thing. Now I trust God, that He will guide me along the way He has prepared for me.

Daniel Hiew, WMC, Kuantan

My First Youth Prayer Conference (YPC), 2010

YPC 2010 was my first prayer conference. I did not expect much as I did not know what to expect from a prayer conference. My first thought was, that we were going to pray for at least half the day. But you know what? It was nothing like that at all! We did not pray 5 hours straight, but instead, we prayed according to the time frame given or until we got the answers that we were looking for. In short, that experience gave me a totally different outlook on what a prayer conference is all about.

During this year's YPC, I had the opportunity to reflect on my relationship with each of my family members, which includes, father, mother, an older brother and an older sister. Even though I do spend time praying for them, but it's a formatted prayer that involves their health and protection. During my time with God in prayer in YPC, I realised that I had not paid much attention to my family's spiritual life, especially my siblings who are away from home furthering their studies. I realised that it is very important for them to keep close to God especially in a foreign land or country, to find someone to be accountable to and to share thoughts with, including finding a church that will provide spiritual food and help make them feel at home. I reflected on my siblings' lives in their campuses and I realise that I should pray for them, that they will be able to sustain a good spiritual life as they had back in their hometown. It is my prayer that they will find a prayer group or Christian friends whom they can relate to, and as a community, shine together as one to those around them.

In conclusion, I've changed the way I pray for my family each day. I reflect on their needs and I do not just sweep through each prayer in a perfunctory manner. I would not have realised this important detail if I had not attended YPC 2010. Hence, I would like to encourage all those who are able to attend prayer conferences, whether it is for the youths or adults, to give yourselves the chance and spend some time learning about going deeper in prayer and to listen to God.

Tiffany Kovalan, WMC, Seremban

Youth Prayer Conference, 2010

When I decided to attend YPC 2010, I did not know what to expect. At the first session, I got to know that the theme was about **'Remaking our Homes'**. I thank God for sending me to this conference because back at home, my family was having a tough time. One of the important things that I learnt from this conference is the importance of praying daily for my family. When I began to pray for my family daily and had faith that God would heal my family, things really got better. Just within a week after the prayer conference, I witnessed the changes that my family went through. We started affirming our love for one another and made efforts to understand each other better. Furthermore, we started our family devotions again which we had stopped doing. Previously, we observed family devotions just as a formality but God has blessed us by helping us understand the importance of family devotions. My dad has even bought some books regarding family and prayer to help strengthen this family spiritually once again. All these changes that are happening in my family truly amaze me and prove to me what God can do when we pray. Unless we ask God to build our family, we build in vain.

Other than that, I was struggling with what to do after I had received my SPM results. I thought of pursuing in a certain field of study but was not really sure of my decision. So, during the prayer conference, there was a time when we prayed for each other in groups, to know what God is saying to us. Then when my group members prayed for me about this matter, God confirmed through them that I should continue with what I had planned to do. I thank God for speaking to me through others and I thank those who prayed for me too.

God has truly blessed me through this prayer conference as He has healed my family and has helped me to take a step forward in my life.

*Noah Nhanam
Sg Way Subang Methodist Church*



Healing Found At The Conference

When I first signed up for Youth Prayer Conference (YPC), all I thought about was to go and have fellowship with other youths from our church and other churches. Just one week before the camp, I suffered from a backache and was debating on my next step after STPM. I needed prayer support and knew I could rely on YPC campers. That helped me to make up my mind to attend.

On arrival at the camp site, I found out that the theme of the camp was **"Remaking Our Homes"** as in our own home-->family. I was shocked about the theme because I've never really paid much attention to my family. Whenever I prayed for them, it was usually rather monotonous, I prayed like a tape recorder at times. The first person that came to mind was my dad. He was very disappointed with my STPM result because he knew that I could have done better if I had been more focused. That upset me because to me, he hardly knew about things going on in my life, in school and in my mind. All he ever did was to tell us what he wanted us to do and scolded us when we didn't do well. I had always gone against him by doing things that he didn't like. But at the camp, God made me realise that it was wrong to hold grudges against him and that my dad did love me. When I prayed on the second night, I saw images of my dad having sleepless nights over me and those images pained me. That made me feel bad about the way I had treated him. God helped me see things from a different perspective, teaching me to love and forgive.

Besides that, God drew my attention to other family members, my mom, my brother and my sister. I know that I've always taken them for granted, I've always put my friends above them. God made me realise that I had been inconsiderate because I had lost my temper with my family members over arguments regarding my friends. All my selfishness had caused my siblings to think that I didn't care for them. I do care for them but I've always failed to put it in words.

I wanna thank God for leading me to this camp. I was able to see myself in a transparent frame and now I am able to appreciate my family better. We're all there for a reason, and God knew that my appreciation for my family members is long overdue. He guides me and assists me to the right path. Thanks and praise be to you, Lord.

Eunice Ong, Subang Methodist Church