

# B E R I T A TRAC



For Internal Circulation Only

2007 • VOL 29 - No.3

President's Desk

TRAC Events

Golden Anniversary Celebration



## Content

### TRAC Event

- 01 Golden Anniversary Celebration
- 03 A Groundbreaking Event

The Feelings of a Worshipper at the new sanctuary in Bercham Methodist Church, Ipoh. Perak

### President's Desk

- 04 "But seek first His Kingdom and His righteousness and all these things shall be added to you as well." Matthew 6:33

### Christian Education

- 06 "How to Study God's Word for Yourself"

### Community Building

- 08 Bringing Hope To The Disabled – Daybreak

### Evangelism

- 10 The Changing World of Church Growth

### Seniors

- 12 To God Be The Glory

# Golden Anniversary Celebration

As the country turns 50 years old, Trinity Methodist Church Penang also rejoices as we celebrate our 50th Golden Anniversary this year. In conjunction with this auspicious event, we had a dinner celebration on the 28th April 2007 at the Gurney Hotel in Penang. The Malaysian Elvis Presley and Mr Golden Voice, HT Long, entertained the crowd of over 450 guests from the church as well as corporate sponsors. The dinner was also attended by Rev Ong Hwai Teik and Rev Ng Ee Lin, current President

and former President respectively, of TRAC Methodist Church in Malaysia.

This dinner was also organized as a fund-raising event to support Trinity's latest project, ie: the Golden Years Ministry (GYM) which is set to operate a Retirement Home for the elderly members of the church. This project is aimed at reaching out to the elderly, to help them stay mentally alert, spiritually alive and physically agile.

> continue to page 2

### Youth

- 16 A Gathering of Youths

### Special Features

- 17 Mobilising the Malaysia Church to respond to HIV/AIDS

### Testimonies

- 20 My Testimony

- 21 From Government Service to God's Full Time Service

- 22 Life Beyond Seventy

### Prayer

- 24 What I learned at SFI #4

- i. Jacey Choong

- ii. Mrs Caroline Lim



**> continue from page 1**

The GYM intends to woo elderly folks to step out of their homes to interact with other elderly persons. With good company and healthy programs, the spiritual, mental, emotional and physical needs can be met daily.

“Our primary focus for now is to set up a day ministry for the elderly persons, who are mobile” says Rev T. Jeyakumar, Pastor in charge who first mooted the idea. “We’ll bring in Astro and local TV Channels, Broadband connection for those who would like to access the internet, games,

organize line dancing and gardening programs. Most importantly, we would like to provide emotional support” he adds.

The GYM is located at 15 Jalan Kennedy, Penang and will be open on weekdays from 9am to 5pm. The RM2.2million-property was renovated & furnished at a cost of RM150,000. We are deeply grateful to all who have given outright gifts and loans in support of this ministry.

The very next morning after the dinner, the dedication of the GYM building was held. It was led by our TRAC President, Rev Ong Hwai Teik.

Enclosed are numerous photos taken during the dinner as well as the dedication of the GYM building.

Let us all pray that this worthwhile ministry of meeting the needs of the elderly will become a reality soon.

*Sharon Chew*  
Trinity Methodist Church, Penang ✨



# A GROUNDBREAKING EVENT

It was late Sunday morning on May 13th 2007 in Segamat. A crowd had gathered at an empty lot at the fringe of the housing estate. All eyes were on a backhoe excavator and the man in the driver's seat. It was our TRAC President, Rev. Ong Hwai Teik!

Immediately after the church service that morning the congregation had proceeded to the new site about 5-minutes drive away. The triangular plot of land had been approved for the new building of Segamat Wesley Methodist Church by the Johor State Exco eight years after application. The building

plans had finally been approved by the authorities and the gathering that morning signals that the building is about to become a reality. The Church was honoured that the President could officiate the groundbreaking ceremony.

The highpoint in the ceremony was when Rev. Ong pulled the lever to bring the backhoe hard on the ground. Five others, representing various groups in the church accompanied him by wielding changkuls (hoes). Mr. See Teck Yuen, Mdm. Chia Lai Hoong, Jeremy Low and Lee Pei Pei, representing the

men, women, youth and children, respectively, and Pastor Ngoh did their bit in the conventional way.

The occasion concluded with a march around the site while singing "We'll Walk The Land" and a group photograph taken under a banner with the words which aptly sums up everything: "To God Be The Glory"!

*Ngoh Peng Teck  
Segamat Wesley* ✨

## Experiencing The Presence of God in the New Sanctuary

- Bercham Methodist Church, Ipoh. Perak.



**W**e moved into the new sanctuary at 21-23 Persiaran Bercham Selatan 19, Taman Bercham Jaya, Ipoh for our first Sunday Service on the 11th of February 2007.

The first impression one gets when approaching the church is a warm joyous welcome. The warm and inviting façade with its open concept of glass doors (without any metal shutters) and soothing colours beckon people to come and join the church. Ms. Andrea Loke helped in the design and renovation of the church. The dove and cross on the two pieces of stained glass at the

altar lends the sanctuary a serene and peaceful feel as we sit quietly in this place of worship.

At our first service here four Nepalese workers from the nearby construction project came to join us for worship. Since then we have had quite a number of other visitors including residents in the neighbourhood who came to join us to worship God.

Yes, indeed I find Bercham Methodist Church a very welcoming Church. Whenever I enter the Sanctuary, I feel completely at peace. It is in this Church that I can find not only

care, peace and comfort but also experience the presence of God's beloved Son, Jesus Christ and the Comforter, the Counsellor, the Holy Spirit... truly God has blessed us with a beautiful serene refuge here in His house.

***May God continue to bless  
Bercham Methodist Church.***

*Mrs. Vimala Thambyrajah* ✨



“But seek first **His Kingdom** and **His righteousness** and all these things shall be **added** to you as well.” *Matthew 6:33*

In the last issue I shared about “Core Values that ‘open’ heaven.” Let me continue to share along this theme of how we as God’s people can experience the reality of the Lord in the down-to-earth level of our daily living.

Matthew 6:33 is a significant promise that points the way to “Open Heavens”. It is situated in the first of five discourses in Matthew’s Gospel – the Sermon on the Mount, coming from the lips of the Lord Jesus

Himself. Right among His first sermons, the Lord Jesus made its importance very clear. He gave this “underpinning commandment” on a mountain, which is reminiscent of the scene of another time in the history of Israel, when Moses received and handed on to the people the authoritative “ten words” of God - the Ten Commandments which he received at Mt. Sinai. In fact some would say that the Gospel of Matthew is structured after the first five books of the Bible – effecting a powerful resemblance to the divine authority



centred person will instead throw his acts of piety to impress people (v 2). There appears to be “open heaven” behaviour – but which has no reality. The first of the three examples of “spiritually coated self-centred piety” given is trumpeting one’s alms giving so as to be seen and noticed by others and be praised by them. Praying can also be a conduit for self-display albeit it is a most spiritual activity. The symptoms of loving to “be seen by others” and impressing by length and empty language (v 6 - “heap up empty phrases”) give away the false-hearted prayer. The self-absorbed will also not forgive others (vv 14-15) because it is too wrapped with the self to release gracious mercy to others. Self-centred piety when undertaking fasting ensure others will notice this by appropriate “body and facial” language and signs! The genuine and sincere God-centred piety will practice “secrecy” in performing and practicing the spiritual acts and disciplines – wholly devoted to and acknowledged by God first and foremost (vv 4, 6 and 18). It is not man-centred and publicity conscious.

God’s demands, is not for us to do heroic deeds or to make sacrifices, but to obey.” King Saul was a man “head and shoulders” above others in physique, but whose heart was not “head and shoulders” above his subjects. The saving grace of the “man after God’s own heart” (1 Sam 13:14), David, was that he had a teachable and humbly responsive heart. He could speak from the authority of first hand experience of restoration from a wicked adulterous affair; that “The sacrifice acceptable to God is a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.” (Ps 51:17). The touching love of Hosea, the 8th century prophet, for an unfaithful wife, incarnationally depicted the faithful love of Yahweh for His people Israel and Judah. Hosea in turn speaks of God’s desire for “mercy not sacrifice, and acknowledgement of God rather than burnt offerings” (twice quoted by the Lord Jesus in Matt 9:13 and 12:7).

May God grant His grace to us to both personally “seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness” and reflect total obedience, a teachable spirit and a compassionate heart full of mercy, and reflect this in the “culture” of the Trinity Annual Conference (TRAC). May the various ministries in our local churches reflect a God-centred reality that as we continue to touch “the last, the least and the lost” in local and global missions – “...others... may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven” (Matt 5:16).

To this end we shall gather from 31 Aug – 2 Sept 2007 – to seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness – in the Methodist Prayer Convention 07. Amen.

*by Rev Ong Hwai Teik,  
President, TRAC ✨*

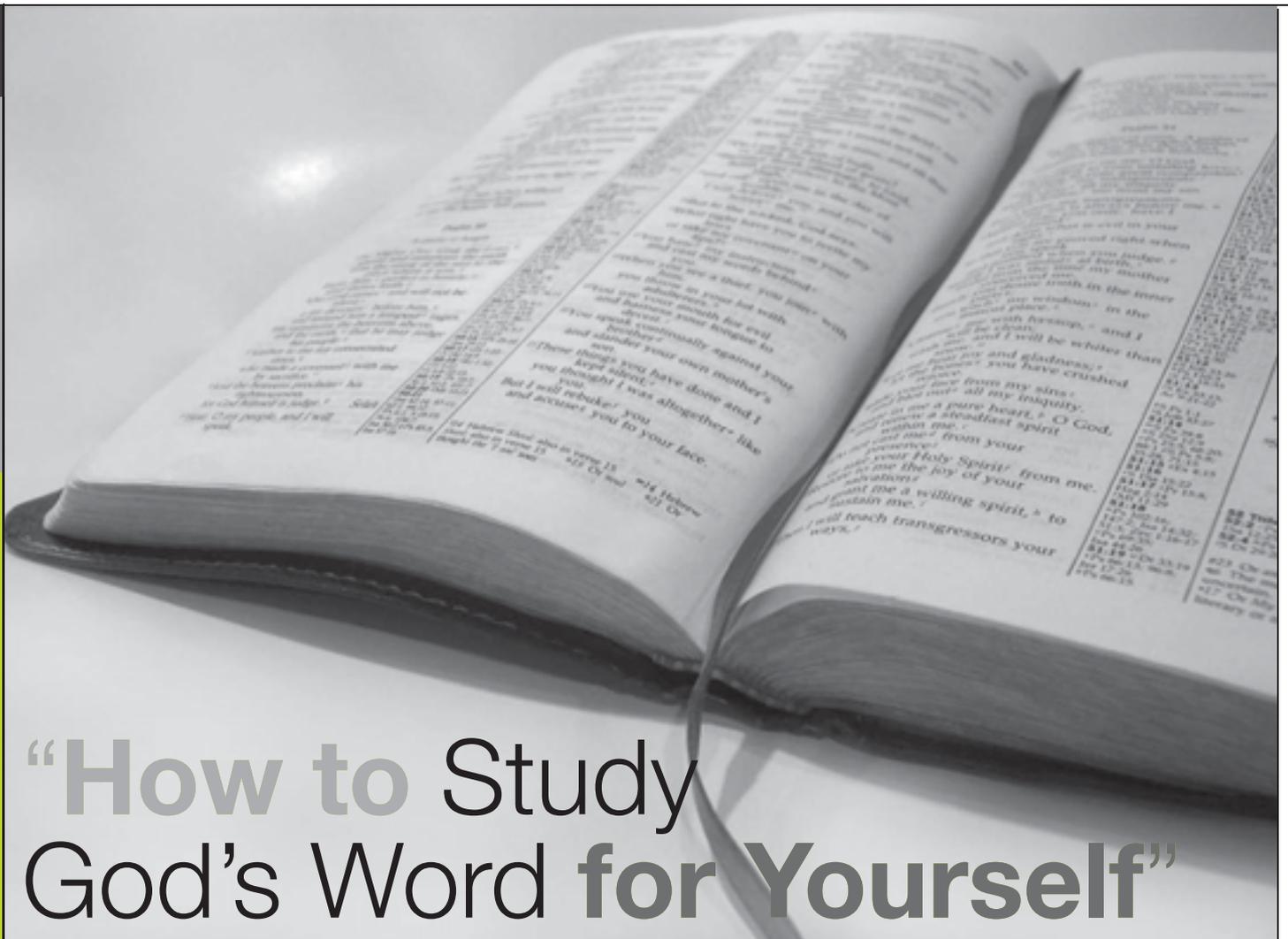


behind the giving of these words by Christ.

Jesus began by laying the back ground of false religion in chapter 6: 1-18 that is rooted in self-absorbed piety which naturally results in hypocrisy and empty testimony. Instead of flaunting material gains and wealth before men, the religiously self-

In contrast to the above, the Lord Jesus commands true religion which is God-centred in its perspective, using another three metaphors. The unswerving loyalty that the Savior calls for is for one to tear away from laying treasures on earth and invest in eternal treasures of heaven (v 20). It is to be wholly committed to knowing and living out spiritual truth and light, letting light occupy our whole being (v 22). It is to choose to be a slave of Christ, and not to be the slave of mammon (v 24). In the final analysis, the heart of the matter (the Kingdom of God) is a ... matter of the heart (our response)!

In the Bible, the Lord is clear about what He wants from “our heart” – more than what our hands can offer Him as sacrifices. In the words of Richard J Foster – “The greatest of



# “How to Study God’s Word for Yourself”

One of the goals of TRAC Board of Christian Education for this quadrennium is to encourage church members to go back to the fundamentals of the Christian life – to know God. The following is the third article in a 4-part series titled “Know Your God”.

The first two articles published in previous issues of Berita TRAC were “Growing in God’s Word” and “How to Spend Time Daily with God”. The last article will be on “How to Pray”.

Have you ever wondered about how you can benefit from reading the Bible? Or, have you felt inadequate or untrained to ‘handle’ the written Word of God? How are Christians to study God’s Word? Is it so difficult to comprehend?

2 Timothy 2:15, “Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth.” In the Bible, Timothy was told that he must be responsible with diligence (his best) present himself approved to God. How can he do that? By being a workman who doesn’t need to be ashamed. How can he accomplish

that? By correctly handling the Word of truth.

God’s Word contains all the truth necessary for our salvation and maturing in Christ. The knowledge of the Word of God is where everything begins. That knowledge is available to the one who desires it and who comes to the truth of Scripture. A workman of God must handle His Word carefully, proclaim it accurately. But it’s not just the pastor alone who is responsible to study the Word of God, not just the pastor to discern its truths.

2 Tim 3:16, “All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching,

rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.”. The Scripture is not limited to devotional reading, or preparation for sermon or preaching. It has application for ‘every good work’. We cannot also look into the Scripture to correct others or for rebuking. God’s Word has more than that for Christians.

## Read Carefully and Consistently

Studying the Word of God is something that demands diligence. It calls for craftsmanship but it starts with basic knowledge. We begin with knowing the content of



“Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth.”

2 Timothy 2:15

the Scripture. This calls for a faithful, careful and consistent reading of God's Word. We must begin with a high view of the Scripture. It is not merely a piece of classical literature or a product of human scholarly editing. God's Word gives life to us. In John 6:63 The Lord Jesus said, “The Spirit gives life; the flesh counts for nothing. The words I have spoken to you are spirit and they are life.”

### **Be Sensitive to the Holy Spirit's Guidance**

When God's Word is read and studied, one of our experiences would be that of encountering the life-giving words of Jesus. When Jesus by His Spirit speaks to us through the Bible, those words give spirit and life to you. The Holy Spirit gives to us a wonderful sense of God's presence, love and truth to us. While we are reading God's Word, we ask “Is my heart being blessed by the Word I am reading?” The Holy Spirit, our inner witness will reveal to us the truth in God's Written Word. The Bible can ‘speak’ to us although it was recorded a long time ago.

### **Do It Daily**

When we spend time daily with God's

written word, we can become familiar with the ways of God and recognize God's voice. The Bible helps us to separate what is of fleshly origin and that which is spiritual in origin. Hebrews 4:12, says, “For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing of soul and spirit, joint and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.”

When we study and learn from the Bible, we learn to set ourselves apart the different voices that dictate to us daily - our instincts, the sinful human nature, the enemy's temptations or the still small voice of God. The more we spend time with God's Word, the more we can discern the purposes and intentions of God as He works in us by His Holy Spirit. The truth of the Scripture is not locked but available, it is not hidden so there is no real reason to be ignorant about it. It is not for those who know secret codes or hidden cryptic mysteries. It is readily available for everybody as God even promises that He'll assist in the process, pouring out His Spirit so that His words can be known.

In the book of Acts there is a great testimony given with regards to a group of people called the Bereans because they lived in a town called

Berea. When Paul went there and preached God's Word to them (Acts 17:11), they went back and diligently examined the Scriptures to make sure that what Paul preached was true.

### **Understand What It Says and Live It Out**

Christians are not called only to know God's Word, but we are called to know it and put it into practice through obedience. James 1:21, “Therefore, get rid of all moral filth and the evil that is so prevalent and humbly accept the word planted in you, which can save you. Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says.”

In Joshua 1:8, the promise from God was to make our ways prosperous and lead us to good success when we put into practice God's Word. But in order to do that, we have to know its content and understand what it says. Thus we return to the point that we must read the Scriptures faithfully and carefully so that we can absorb what it says and then begin to work on what it means by what it says.

*Rev. Timothy Lam  
Wesley Methodist Church, Johor Baru ✨*

# BRINGING HOPE TO THE DISABLED

Victor Hugo wrote in his famous novel, *Les Misérables*, "There is nothing like dream to create the future". In 1992, there was a dream to provide job skills training to empower people with disabilities regardless of race or creed, to become self-reliant, independent and

integrated members of society. That dream came true in the form and function of Daybreak.

Since then, Daybreak has embarked on building its own centre to house all its department under one roof when an acre of land in Pengkalan,

Perak was donated in 1998. Officially opened by the Sultan of Perak, His Royal Highness Sultan Azlan Shah on 24th April 2003, Persatuan Daybreak has provided opportunities of learning job skills to 500 people with disabilities in Kinta through the following 5 tasks:



**PLANT  
NURSERY**



**HANDICRAFTS  
PRODUCTION**



**SOCKS  
MANUFACTURING**



**CONTRACT PACKAGING  
& ASSEMBLY**



**CONTRACT  
CLEANING**

## DAYBREAK'S MAJOR PROJECTS: 2006 TO 2007



*Daybreak Landscape Gallery during construction.*

### 2006: DAYBREAK LANDSCAPE GALLERY

The plant nursery project which began in 2002 was so successful that in January 2006, Persatuan Daybreak expanded this particular area of training to a 1.8 acre land next to the centre

Currently, the "Daybreak Landscape Gallery" has completed construction on its fencing, walkways, shop building and installed its irrigation system.

Completion of the entire project is expected end of 2007, which in turn will provide gardening job skills training such as bagging, weeding, fertilizing and watering amongst

others for Daybreak's growing number of trainees.

### 2006: PHOENIX SOCIETY EXCHANGE PROGRAM

In 2006, Daybreak and the Special Education Unit from the Perak State Education Department sent two staff members each to visit Phoenix Society Incorporated (Phoenix) in Adelaide, Australia for a fortnight to gain an insight on how Phoenix provides training and employment to people with disabilities.

Phoenix is a non-profit organization which employs, trains and develops people with disabilities through employment settings. Founded in 1958, Phoenix operates commercial operations to undertake a diverse range of employment options to cater for the specific needs of its 500 employees with disabilities.

### 2007: SPECIAL SCHOOLS PILOT PROJECT

In January 2007, resulting from Daybreak's visit to Australia, a pilot



*Linda, Daybreak's Administration Executive, making new friends in Australia.*

"Transition from Integrated Special Education Program to Supported Employment" program was implemented with 10 pupils from 2 special schools within the Kinta area. In partnership with the Perak State Welfare Department and the Special Education Unit from the Perak State Education Department, these pupils come to Daybreak every Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from 8:45am to 12:30noon and are taught vocational skills through 5 main tasks of socks manufacturing, general cleaning, contract packaging & assembly, plant nursery skills and handicraft production.



*A pilot project trainee at Daybreak learning vocational skills and at school learning academic skills.*

Selected teachers from each school are also trained at Daybreak under the supervision of Daybreak's Occupational Therapist and facilitated by a retired teacher with 25 years teaching experience with special needs children.

This enabled the teachers to extend the vocational skills taught at Daybreak into their own academic classrooms giving other special needs children the hope of gainful supported employment after completing their academic studies. The program kicked off to a good start as positive behavioral and attitudinal changes such as better punctuality and discipline in the pupils were noted by their trainers within 6 months of joining the program. All parties involved in this pilot project are optimistic about the success of this pilot project which will provide vocational skills training to more disabled pupils within schools in Kinta, enabling them to secure a brighter tomorrow.



*A trainee hard at work during one of the cleaning sessions.*

## MOBILE CLEANING TEAM

In 2007, Daybreak launched its very own mobile cleaning team. Currently contracted to provide cleaning services to clients such as Takashima Woodwork Sdn. Bhd., Sky Online and R&S Tools and Engineering, Daybreak's mobile cleaning team comprises a supervisor and seven trainees. Each trainee is given in-house training daily with the everyday upkeep and maintenance of Daybreak. Their progress is monitored by their trainer and reviewed by an occupational therapist.

Daybreak's cleaning service comprises two packages of either a complete and thorough cleanup or general cleaning/maintenance. Depending on the package, the main duties involved are dusting, sweeping, vacuuming, washing up, cleaning and disinfecting, waxing, polishing and the removal of stains.

In early July 2007, Mr. Robert Styling, General Manager of Human Resources and Mr. Peter Alderson, Training Manager from Phoenix visited Daybreak.

In the week that they were here, ideas were exchanged on how to improve on various aspects of Daybreak's operations including the production and business division and Daybreak's vocational training program.

In mid-August of this year, 3 staff members from Daybreak will be visiting Phoenix as part of the exchange program, with the aim of further developing Daybreak's vocational training program. Persatuan Daybreak hopes to establish a productive long-term relationship with both Phoenix and AMI to enable Daybreak to achieve its vision of empowering the disabled regardless of race or creed, to become self reliant, independent and integrated members of society. ✱



*Daybreak staff and committee members with Mr. Robert Styling (left) and Mr. Peter Alderson (right).*

## ... MORE FROM THE LAND DOWN UNDER

Professor Tan Hock Lim, a member of Australia-Malaysia Institute (AMI), noted the successful outcome of Daybreak's visit to Phoenix in 2006. He suggested further work in this area be supported by AMI. As a result, AMI has generously provided Daybreak and Phoenix with AUD\$10,000 to begin a staff exchange program.

# The Changing World of Church Growth Through New Congregations

TRAC Church Planting Conference  
25-26 May 2007



Dr. George Hunter III



This conference 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 the “called out” people, it has an apostolic mission to the world. And part of this mission is to 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”, are largely shaped by the diversity of target populations that now need to be reached. He notes six characteristics that growing churches have.

### 1. Cultural relevance –

There is an indigenous policy not to impose foreign cultural forms on anybody.

### 2. 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.

### 3. Small groups –

Enabling a communal faith, where people minister to each other and deep needs are met.

### 4. Lay ministries –

Where lay people are involved in teams working together.

### 5. Outreach ministries –

Go to where the people are thus involving a variety of forms and programmes. These increasingly are the “side doors” by which people enter the church.

### 6. World mission involvement -

Not necessarily going beyond the borders but to have a world perspective, and welcoming people across the cultural and language barrier.

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:

- 1. 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?**
- 2. 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. Lawrence Chen, Group Executive Pastor of New Life Restoration Centre Churches were invited to share their experience, 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 ✨



*Rev. Ong Hwai Teik welcoming the participants.*



*Rev. Ong Sek Leang*



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



16th TRAC MSF CAMP 2007 (27th March – 30th March 2007) (Berjaya Hill Resorts, Pahang)

# TO GOD BE THE GLORY

By Chan Chee Yan

**The 16th TRAC MSF annual camp** was held on the dates and venue stated above and the camp theme was “To God Be The Glory”. It was very well attended, as 309 participants had registered for the 3 nights’ stay in this holiday resort that was built with a French theme. There was a large contingent from our Singapore counterparts. There were also a few members from EMC P.J. who came only for the first day service and dinner. The following table gives a breakdown of the participation from the various chapters.

|   | MSF Chapter       | No. of Participants |    | MSF Chapter              | No. of Participants |
|---|-------------------|---------------------|----|--------------------------|---------------------|
| 1 | WMC, Sg. Petani   | 11                  | 10 | WMC Kuala Lumpur         | 21                  |
| 2 | TMC Penang        | 10                  | 11 | CMC Ampang               | 0                   |
| 3 | WMC Penang        | 19                  | 12 | WMC Seremban             | 30                  |
| 4 | WMC Taiping       | 1                   | 13 | WMC Melaka               | 8                   |
| 5 | CGMC Ipoh         | 18                  | 14 | WMC Kuantan              | 14                  |
| 6 | WMC Ipoh          | 30                  | 15 | Seniors from Bentong     | 2                   |
| 7 | WMC Kampar        | 6                   | 16 | Seniors from Johor       | 16                  |
| 8 | TMC Petaling Jaya | 44                  | 17 | GYM Singapore            | 43                  |
| 9 | EMC Petaling Jaya | 32                  | 18 | Speakers & their spouses | 4                   |

## Day 1 Highlights

The Opening Worship was organized and led by MSF of EMC. The worship session began at about 4.30 pm with the MSF EMC choir and musician in attendance. The first message in the camp sermon series was delivered by Bishop Dr. Robert Solomon, Bishop of the Singapore Methodist Church and it was entitled "The Glory of God and our Worship" with reference to the Scripture read, Hebrews 1:1-3. The good Bishop had given a summary of each of his 3 sermons in handouts in advance and also allowed his talk to be recorded. He concluded his first sermon by saying that Christ reflected God's Glory perfectly, and asked "What is your motive for the worship of God?", among other questions. After the Benediction by Bishop Solomon and the Postlude sung by the choir, service ended at around 6.00 pm.

## Day 2 Highlights

The second day's activities began with buffet breakfast, followed by the morning's worship session which was organized and led by the members from MSF Canning Garden Methodist Church, Ipoh. Bishop Solomon delivered his second sermon in the series, speaking on "The Glory of God and Our Transformation", with reference to John 17:1-5. He concluded that loving God and the Glory of God should be our primary motive, and that our means is by the cross of Christ. The morning's offertory collection was for TRAC MSF fund.

## TRAC MSF Annual General Meeting 2007

The AGM saw the re-election of most of last year's Executive Committee and Board members, except that Ms. Pauline Looi of WMC Penang was elected as the new Vice President, and Mr. Bobby Lee and Mr. Roland Chan replaced Mr. Tan Kee Chaw and Mr. Michael Goh as the new Board Members for 2007/2008. There were also changes in co-ordinators for the Eastern, Northern, Perak and Southern districts. Mr. Toa Kim Meng replaced Pauline Looi as one of the auditors while Mr. Chew Teik Hock remained as the other. The date and venue for the next AGM & Camp are to be decided by the new Board though Ipoh and Seremban were suggested as favourable venues.



The TRAC MSF President Bro. Daniel Chan gave the welcoming address at the buffet dinner.

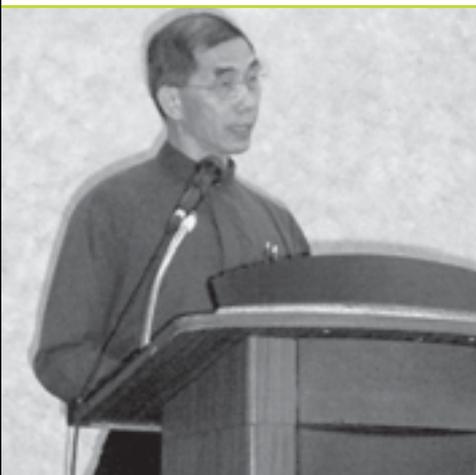




**Health Talk**

The very entertaining and knowledgeable speaker was Dr. Samuel Ong, a well-known cardiologist who is attached to both the Subang Jaya Medical Centre and the Sunway Medical Centre. Dr. Ong, who is also the present TRAC Lay Leader, led in the opening Prayer for the session. He then gave a very interesting and timely talk on "A Matter of the Heart", in which he expounded on the causes of heart diseases, heart failures and how these could be prevented by leading healthy lifestyles. His delivery, which included many graphic pictures, generated much interest and anxiety amongst the Seniors. That was evident from the many questions that were asked during the Q&A session which spilled into the afternoon tea room.

Thank you, Dr. Sam Ong.



**TRAC & Mission Talk**

As TRAC President Rev. Ong Hwa Teik, was unable to attend the Camp, his talk was read out by Rev. Hwa Jen, who was also the collaborating author of the report. Based on the TRAC Vision of "Open Heavens, Global Missions". It is Rev. Ong's prayer and hope that every senior member in TRAC would:

- Experience a purposeful and meaningful life of ministry as God's people
- Be actively involved in a caring and loving community
- United and rejoicing with one another in fellowship, worship and service in TRAC
- Leave a legacy of faith, hope and love for future generations.

**Dinner & Fellowship**

The buffet dinner was followed by a concert of sorts with WMC Penang in charge of the night. Entertaining items, both singing and skits, for the fellowship night were presented by WMC Sungei Petani, WMC Penang, TMC Penang, CGMC Ipoh, WMC Ipoh, WMC Kuantan, Wesley Kampar and Wesley Taiping. All present enjoyed themselves.

**Vespers**

Vespers followed the concert. WMC Melaka conducted this last session for the day.

**Day 3 Highlights**

The third day's morning worship session, which followed after another buffet breakfast, was organized and led by the members from MSF Wesley Methodist Church, Ipoh. Bishop Solomon delivered his third and final sermon in the series, speaking on "The Glory of God and Our Service" and the bible reading was from Isaiah 6:1-8. The message was: I SAW (with Deeper Comprehension of the Glory of God); I CRIED (with Deeper Confession and Comprehension); I HEARD (the Deeper Challenge and Call) and I SAID (with Deeper Commitment). He thanked TRAC MSF and all present for a wonderful time of fellowship in such a nice and tranquil environment and bade farewell as he had to return to Singapore the same day. The morning's offertory collection was to be presented to Wesley Methodist Church, Johor Baru in aid of their building fund.

**Free Time to enjoy the Resort's Gardens, Sports and other Facilities.**

Some members took part in the golf tournament. Some went for bowling and garden walks. Most played or watched the table-tennis tournament and later took part in line-dancing because those were indoors and the rain had begun to affect all the outdoor activities. In fact, only 2 flights managed to complete the 18-holes for golf. The heavy rain stopped the rest from continuing and the winner's price (a free stay and 1 free golf flight in Clear Water Resort, Ipoh) had to be determined by lottery.

After the tea Break at 4pm, the camp went back to the more serious stuff.



**SENIORS MINISTRY Talk**

Rev. Peter Goh, Director of Glowing Years Ministry of Singapore, spoke on what his ministry had been doing for the Seniors in Singapore with a Power-Point presentation and many nice and telling pictures. Rev. Hwa Jen, Director of the TRAC Seniors Ministry, then gave his version for the Malaysian counterpart. Both talks were most illuminating and inspiring. The TRAC MSF President Bro. Daniel was the chairman for this session.



**Dinner & Fellowship**

The buffet dinner was followed by the second fellowship night's concert with WMC Seremban incharge.

The Entertainers (singing, skits and dancing) were from TMC PJ, EMC PJ, WMC KL, WMC Seremban, WMC Melaka, CMC Ampang, and JB Seniors. The colorful and elaborate costumes of the TMC PJ group and their play stood out in the night's concert. The performance from the Chicken Dancers of MSF EMC also received much applause, especially when everyone in the audience joined in the final dance.

**Vespers:**

Vespers followed the concert. WMC Kuantan conducted this last session for the day.

**Day 4 Highlights**

**Camp Evaluation**

After breakfast, Bro. Tan Kee Chaw gave a most entertaining summary of the evaluation of the 2007 Camp, based on the written feedback from the camp participants, at least from those who submitted their comments. The plusses: All agreed that the camp was most enjoyable in terms of fellowship and the environment, and that the sermons and talks were very good, and relevant. The worship sessions were spiritually fulfilling. Most were satisfied that the accommodation was value for the money paid. Food standard and service were reasonably good for the price offered. God had blessed the camp with good weather most of the time, except when it was time to play golf on Thursday. The minusses: The Resort facilities are not quite friendly to older Seniors, especially those who needed to use wheelchairs and those who walked with difficulty because the roads were paved with cobble stones. The dining and meeting halls were too far away from the hotel rooms and the walkways between rooms and halls were not sheltered. The Resort is too far away from town. There was not enough time provided for discussions and group Q&A with the speakers.

.....

**Closing Worship & Holy Communion and Installation of TRAC MSF Board for 2007/2008**

The camp closing worship and holy communion were organized and led by the members from MSF Trinity Methodist Church, P.J. with their well-trained choir in attendance.

.....

**Checking out, Lunch and Dispersal**

After the closing service, everyone went back to their rooms to pack and to check out.

After lunch and the goodbyes said, the various chapters went their separate ways, having had a most fulfilling 4 days of Camp fellowship and probably looking forward to next year's meeting again. ✨



*Holy Communion with Rev. Hwa Jen, Rev. Won, and Rev. Peter Goh.*



*Worship was followed by the installation of the TRAC MSFBoard conducted by Rev. Hwa Jen.*

# A Gathering of Youths



Every year we have youths from all other towns outside of Klang Valley who come here to study. We wrote to ask counselors to give us the contacts of their youths who are studying here. From their lists and also our contacts, we have about 70 names but I am sure that there are many, many more that we have missed out. There was a concern of where these youths have gone. So with this concern in mind the BOYW set out to organize gatherings to maintain contact with the outstation students.

The first of these events was a gathering at Rev. Christopher Rao's residence, called "Party @ Pastopher's Place" on the 4th of May. Around 30 people attended, including local youths and a few adults to provide a wider network of contacts. It was a time of fellowship and getting to know what has happened to each student as they made the transition from outstation to the Klang Valley.

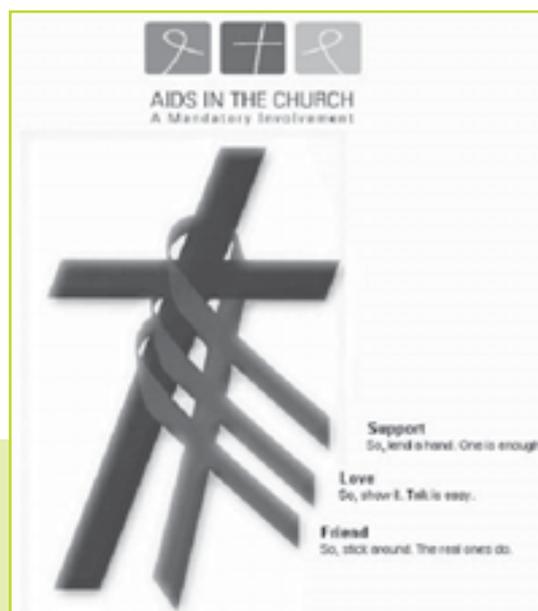
A survey was given out to the youths to fill in. We asked them what church were they attending

and it was sad to notice that some of them were not attending the Methodist church. Some were also not attending any church.

How can we bring these youths into our community? How can we partner with one another to look into their needs? How do we care for them? Is there any place that they can go to just 'chill out'?

**Are we concerned that we are losing our youths? \***

# Mobilising the Malaysian Church to respond to HIV/AIDS



THE INCREASING HIV/AIDS crisis remains one of the greatest threats to the lives of people around the world, regardless of age, ethnicity, gender or class. According to a 2006 estimate from UNAIDS, some 39.5 million people are now living with HIV worldwide. Of that total, 4.3 million became infected and 2.9 million died as a result of AIDS, the highest number reported in any year.

More than a year ago, toward the end of 2005, an ecumenical AIDS consultation held in Bangkok, Thailand brought together some 40 individuals representing church bodies as well as people living with HIV/AIDS (PWLAs) to promote dialogue and commitment among Christian communities to combat the crisis in the region. At the height of the consultation, the participants affirmed that churches in the region could achieve much more than it has done in areas of awareness building, training, networking and advocacy.

## Malaysian churches get their act together

Fast forward a year later. On March 5-7, 2007, more than 150 Christians joined a national-level consultation themed, 'AIDS in the Church: A Mandatory Involvement' held at the Full Gospel Assembly in Kuala Lumpur.

Cognisant of a real need in bringing greater awareness among churches and in mobilising a coordinated national response, ten local Christian non-governmental organisations have taken the initiative to organise a consultation with the purpose to engage local churches on the HIV/AIDS issue.

According to organising chairman, Pastor Pax Tan, the consultation was the country's first ever national-level effort taken by Christian groups in fighting HIV/AIDS. He also said that even though Christians have been involved in the HIV/AIDS issue since the early 1990s, they never had the opportunity to really come together to impact the Christian community at large.

Pax is a Senior Director in Malaysian Care who oversees a ministry to prisons, drugs, and AIDS since the 1990s. Malaysian Care is one of the ten Christian NGOs who organised the consultation. The other NGOs involved in the organizing of the consultation includes World Vision, Youth With A Mission, Faith Centre, Grace Community Services, HIV Hope, Kenosis Home, Persatuan Kebajikan Kalvari, Shekinah Home and Welcome Community Home.

Jointly held in collaboration with the Christian Federation of Malaysia

(CFM), the consultation engaged more than 150 participants from Catholic, mainline Protestant and Evangelical churches to be more involved in dealing with the issue. They comprised mainly church leaders, pastors, fulltime workers and lay Christians from various churches and groups. Many have been faithfully ministering to people infected and affected by HIV/AIDS over the years. A few even came from Singapore and Thailand including Rev Sam Kisolo from Uganda, one of the speakers at the plenary sessions.

> continue to page 16

The Ecumenical AIDS Consultation was held from Oct 28–Nov 1, 2005 in Bangkok, Thailand. It was jointly sponsored by the Christian Conference of Asia (CCA), the Church of Christ in Thailand (CCT) and the Catholic Commission for Health Pastoral Care (CCHPC). Carol Devamani of Malaysian Care represented CCM at the 2005 consultation in Bangkok. Upon her return, Malaysian Care responded to the issue by sending out questionnaires to local churches. The survey found that a good number of them did not know much about HIV/AIDS and thus would like to know more. Hence, the national consultation in Kuala Lumpur.

**Do as Christ did**

In his opening address, Bishop Dr Paul Tan, Chairman of Christian Federation of Malaysia, welcomed the initiatives undertaken by the organisers and exhorted the participants to reflect deeply on how they can promote greater awareness on the issue as well as to “witness to the love of God as Christ did in His ministry.”

Also addressing the crowds was Datuk Vaithilingam, vice president of the Malaysian AIDS Council, who affirmed that faith-based organisations play an important role in caring for PLWAs. He also said that the epidemic is not God’s act of divine punishment but rather an opportunity for His people to show care.

As part of the opening ceremony, several clients from the Welcome Community Home presented a sketch entitled “The Touch”. The heartwarming sketch was an excerpt from a play that the clients put together as part of a drama therapy course and later developed into a play that was staged in public at Actors’ Studio.

The Welcome Community Home is one of the few AIDS shelters specifically set up for men. Its founder Mr Alex Arokiam first grew aware of the issue when he joined a local church group to provide food and medical treatment for drug addicts in Kuala Lumpur in the 90s. Alarmed by the severe lack of care and the harsh life of drug addicts, he soon established the centre with funds from the Catholic Church. Arokiam was one of the workshop facilitators.

**Being prophetic**

Several local and international experts and practitioners helped to facilitate participants in a capacity building and learning process during the consultation. Many different aspects and topics on HIV/AIDS were incorporated in workshops, such as advocacy, care and management of PLWAs, treatment, counseling and fund-raising.

In a commendable effort to bring to the fore the human aspect of the HIV/

AIDS issue, often made invisible in numbers and statistics, each learning session had at least two PLWAs enriching the consultation with their life changing and transforming testimonies. In addition, during intervals and breaks, videos of the various Christian ministries were played to inform and encourage the participants.

According to Asha Lim, one of the participants, “it was a very good conference.” Asha represented the Council of Churches of Malaysia, one of the three component members of CFM, at the consultation.

Pastor Pax expressed hope that participants would pass on their knowledge when they return to their local churches. The organisers also hope to help the participants relate their resolutions to their local churches on how they can respond to the crisis.

“We want to be prophetic and say to the church: ‘This is what the Lord speaks to us. Let’s get our act together’,” he said.

**Regional focus**

Meanwhile, the Christian Conference of Asia (CCA) continued to engage wider faith-based commitment to focus on the fight against HIV/AIDS in the region. Following up on the 2005 consultation in Bangkok, CCA held the 2006 Ecumenical AIDS Consultation with the theme ‘Making Church Competent’. This time, it was held in Chiang Mai, Thailand on Nov 20 – 24, 2006. Asha Lim (Full Gospel Assembly) and Shellatay Row (Methodist Church) represented CCM at the 2006 consultation.

In addressing the 50 participants, the CCA General Secretary Dr Prawate Khid-arn affirmed the place of the gospel in addressing the issue. “The challenge before churches is to place HIV/AIDS issues within the story of the gospel – the message of God’s love – that would allow the issue to be understood in a respectful and life-affirming way,” he said.

In elaborating on the theme ‘Making Church Competent’, Dr Prawate

highlighted three strategies for churches to become effective agents of transformation – listening to the biblical teaching of Christ, listening to indigenous wisdom and cultures, and comprehensive intervention.

Various speakers were present to address the participants. Fr. Phillip Kuruvilla of the Syrian Orthodox Church in India, spoke on the need to educate churches on the HIV/AIDS issue. He observed that firsthand field exposure is a helpful strategy in getting ownership and participation from church leaders. Fr Phillip also affirmed the need for young people to be empowered to respond to HIV/AIDS and for church leaders to see beyond the issue of “us and them” in order to work together more effectively.

Other speakers included Dr. Erlinda Senturias from the Philippines who offered a perspective on empowering Asian churchwomen from the view of restoring God’s image in both men and women.

**Break the silence**

No war in the world has ever claimed more lives than AIDS. In a world where the cries of the suffering are often conveniently forgotten, the challenge of HIV/AIDS needs the concerted response of a united, not a divided or segregated, Church. It needs a church which cares for those who are stigmatized, marginalized and ignored. Together, we must together break the prevailing wall of silence that continues to segregate them. As the visible body of Christ, we must be bold enough to tell the story of Jesus both in our personal lives and in our actions in the community, and stay united in the fight against AIDS.

While much has been achieved to combat the HIV/AIDS issue, there remains much more to be done in the years ahead in awareness raising, education and care, both preventive and palliative, to prevent and control the spread of the disease and to care for those affected and infected by the virus. May the silence of the forgotten be broken and the cries of the suffering be heard. ✨

For more information and resources about HIV/AIDS, contact Malaysian Care at Tel: 03-90582102 or visit <http://www.malaysiancare.org>. Malaysian Care is an associate member of CCM.

## Global Summary of the AIDS Epidemic, December 2006

### Number of people living with HIV in 2006

|                         | Estimate     |
|-------------------------|--------------|
| Total                   | 39.5 million |
| Adults                  | 37.2 million |
| Women                   | 17.7 million |
| Children under 15 years | 2.3 million  |

|  |             |
|--|-------------|
| People newly infected with HIV in 2006 | 4.3 million |
|--|-------------|

### AIDS deaths in 2006

|                         |             |
|-------------------------|-------------|
| Total                   | 2.9 million |
| Adults                  | 2.6 million |
| Children under 15 years | 380,000     |

### Regional HIV and AIDS Statistics, 2006

| Region                                  | Estimate     |
|---|--------------|
| Sub-Saharan Africa                      | 24.7 million |
| Asia                                    | 8.5 million  |
| North America, Western & Central Europe | 2.1 million  |
| Latin America                           | 1.7 million  |
| Eastern Europe and Central Asia         | 1.7 million  |
| North Africa and Middle East            | 460,000      |
| Caribbean                               | 250,000      |
| Oceania                                 | 81,000       |
| Global total                            | 39.5 million |

Source: UNAIDS WHO AIDS epidemic update: special report on HIV/AIDS December 2006

( This article first appeared in Berita CCM and is reprinted with permission )



# My Testimony

I grew up in Penang, an island surrounded by idol worshippers. If you go to Ayer Itam, you will see the Pagoda and the statue of the goddess of mercy; at Pulau Tikus, the sleeping Buddha, and in Pitt Street, the Kwan Yin temple. I was a Taoist then, and would literally pray to any 'gods' in the temples, asking for favours, prosperity, blessing, and protection. This went on until I left Penang to further my studies.

In 1981, while working as a project manager at Arun, Indonesia, I was involved in an industrial accident at the job site. I was hit by the boom of a mobile crane, and the 2 bones of my leg (tibia and fibula) were broken at various points and my ankle was crushed (multiple fractures). I was flown from Arun to Medan in a helicopter and medivac to a hospital in Singapore. I was told by my family members that I was in a state of delirium – experiencing great pain, high fever and semi-consciousness for a week. When I finally came to my senses, I was shocked to discover that my left leg was in such a 'messy' condition. I was bedridden. I could

not even perform simple routines by myself. I was like a newborn baby again. When nature called, I needed someone to bring the urinal to me, and the bed became my toilet. I was completely shattered, in a state of helplessness, hopelessness and consequently, often indulged in self-pity. Many times I asked God, "Why? Why me? Why had it to happen to me and not to someone else?" I was bitter inside and to me, God was unfair – just when everything was beginning to look rosy (I was then very much-liked by my bosses and was just starting to enjoy the wealth and status as the project manager of a multi-million dollar project), this calamity had to happen, bringing my 'the sky is the limit' world to an abrupt end.

As time went by, reality began to set in. Fearing for the future, life became meaningless to me. I asked myself how I was going to survive with my left leg so badly damaged. As a civil engineer, my job required me to visit job sites. I did not want to be an amputee either. Then, one evening, while lying alone in my room, the

inevitable thought of suicide began filling my mind. Somehow, something prompted me to pick up the small Christian booklet left by my dear brother's visiting friends. Just when I opened the book and began to read, I heard a voice saying, "Son, I know how you're feeling now – devastated, feeling sorry for yourself and hopeless. But do not despair, for I, your Father, am with you and I will see you through."

I did not know where the voice came from, but I felt the calm assurance, and was strangely comforted. Peace filled my heart. Since hearing 'the voice' I began reading the Bible and speaking to Father God, asking Him for favours. Daily, I would ask Him to heal me and restore me as I did not want to have my legs amputated (as recommended by the then Prof. Bala, Head of Orthopaedics in the Singapore General Hospital). I then made a deal with God – if He were to heal my leg, I would believe in Him.

By then, I must have undergone more than 10 operations and the final operation was 'micro-surgery' i.e. taking about 8 inches of the fibula with arteries, veins, and flesh from my right leg and transplant it to my left leg. It was a major operation. I remembered on the day of the operation, I told my sisters that in the event that I died to share whatever I had. While lying on the trolley-bed, waiting to be pushed into the operation theater before slipping into unconsciousness, I saw a vision – a huge figure with blazing brightness was standing on the trolley beside my right leg. The next thing I knew, when I regained consciousness, I was told all went well. I thanked God for His presence.

About a year after the accident, the final plaster cast was removed from my left leg and you cannot imagine the pure joy I experienced when my left foot took its first step on the ground – there was amazingly no pain

on the foot and shin, which meant that all the operations I had been through had proved successful. It was then that, gratefully, I told God right there that I believed in Him and I said the sinner's prayer. I thank and praise the Lord for preserving me, for healing me, for being my Comforter and Counsellor, and for His love and promise to me (through the Voice).

Psalms 30:5 – Weeping may last through the night but joy comes in the morning.

When I look back, the thought of a living God being with me all this while is hard to comprehend but I believe He is and has been there. He lifted me up from my darkest hour. Now I understand why this happened to me and not to someone else. God loves me.

Now that I am a child of God, I have hope of eternal life. I know by faith

Lord Jesus has prepared a place for me in my Father's kingdom. I have His joy and peace in me. I learn to be contented in all situations, whether in abundance or in lack. I am working diligently on my salvation with trembling and fear as apostle Paul said it.

Last but not least, I am blessed with an understanding wife and 2 children. Looking back, the best thing that ever happened to me is knowing God, knowing Jesus Christ, indeed without whom I will not be here.

"Praise and glory be to God, my Rock, my Redeemer, my Saviour."

*Ong Lian Teik* ✨

## From Government Service to God's Full Time Service



*(Miss Tay Choon Neo is the newly-appointed Deputy Education Secretary of the METHODIST COUNCIL OF EDUCATION)*

Being a teacher was hardly ever boring for me – there was simply too much to do! When I needed a change, somehow the Lord always provided a window, if not a door.

I remember, when I was a kid in school, I never put Teacher as one of my ambitions. However, God saw it fit to let me stray into that path, which I remained in for 31 years. Eight schools in 4 states later, I leave with many memories, experiences and friends. My last 12 or so years remain most vivid in my mind. By then, I had gone through a high point in my life when I did my M.A. in England. Returning from the UK at a time when ICT was becoming

the buzzword, I was fully involved with the Smart Schools programme with my niche in CALL (Computer Assisted Language Learning). My life was getting very exciting in year 2000 as I stepped into the school in Putrajaya with its 535 computers, 7 in each classroom. I was the Senior Language Teacher then. Five years later, it was another change when I was Penolong Kanan Kokurikulum in the same school. That was an interesting about-turn, from academic subjects to co-curricular activities. But maybe the Lord was preparing me for something then – and my involvement in Girls' Brigade was absolutely a plus point.

**> continue from page 21**

November 2005 rocked my comfortable teacher's boat when I received a call from Ms Yin for a position in the Methodist Council of Education. I would have to take optional retirement from government service if I were to accept the offer. Many calls went toing and froing vertically and horizontally as I struggled with God and consulted with Christian friends. Finally my papers were put in after Easter 06. Lord, I leave this all up to you.

I really can't say I was called by God. I tend to agree with what Oswald Chambers said in his devotional *My Utmost For The Highest*, "God did not direct His call to Isaiah — Isaiah overheard God saying, "... who will go for Us?" (Isaiah 6:8). And we know that Isaiah said 'Here am I! Send me'. God's timing is always perfect and

my spiritual ears heard the call and my heart was ready to accept, albeit with much trepidation.

So it was from government service to God's full-time service. Being in the Methodist Council of Education has further strengthened my commitment towards the teaching ministry, though this time not as a teacher. Coming from a non-Christian home I accepted Christ at 15 in Sr MGS KL. Like many others, God has blessed me through my education in a Methodist school. Now I see the important role these mission schools play in our country. Sadly, however, over the last thirty years or so, this role is slowly being corroded and will disappear if the church does not take deliberate action but let it die a natural death. The huge harvest field in the schools will be destroyed by

locusts and pests.

While we still are able, let us, the Methodist Church and the Christian community, rise up and champion the cause for holistic education for our children. We need workers for the harvest — teachers, school administrators, school Board members, PTA voices, alumni strength, GB/BB officers, Bible Knowledge teachers, chapel speakers, CF leaders, clergy and laypeople.

My hope is that I be His obedient handmaiden and my dream is that our mission schools once again hold high the name of our Lord Jesus Christ and His Word.

*Tay Choo Neo* ✨

# Life Beyond Seventy

Moses prayed in Psalm 90 : 10 "The years of our life are three score and ten or even by reason of strength four score; yet their span is but toil and trouble; they are soon gone, and we fly away.

It is a great honour and privilege to write about life beyond seventy. January 2006, I celebrated with my children, grand children and my dear wife my 70th birthday in Singapore. It was a day to remember. After that I began to think what I should do after that day. I have been an active person all my life in work and public life up to this point. I shall now give my view on life beyond seventy.

Generally for my friends who are non-Christians, they would want to go on working and gainfully serve in any vocation until they are not able to do anymore. Some would completely cease to work and idle their time away, claiming that they deserve it. What a waste it is.

For Christians, I regret to say that some of them hold the same views of some non-Christians I mentioned above. They become non-productive as far as God's kingdom is concerned. Forgive me if what I have said hurt some of you. The spirit has convicted me that I should tell the truth. It is not wrong for the retirees to take the back seats, yet be sensitive of the work of God whenever the occasion arises. We must always remember and be aware of God's purposes in our lives. Can we without shame declared what Paul said in 2 Timothy 4:7 "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith "

Now, allow me to express what I think life should be beyond seventy. It is indeed God's grace that we can live beyond this age. Many of my contemporaries are no more, some are rendered inactive by all kinds of sicknesses, only a few are still running around. So it is not by accident

that God has kept me alive, healthy and not in want. May be I need to explain a little further God's grace and blessings upon my life. It is not what I have done to deserve all these. My brief testimony is necessary to show God's mercies and faithfulness.

I was born in Xiamen, Fujian Province, China in January 1936 in a very staunch Buddhist and ancestor-worship family. I have lived under the Japanese occupation during the Second World War for eight years amidst bombings and famine. Yet God preserved my life. God brought me to Malaya in June 1947. Salvation reached my father's household in 1950 through my mother who has accepted the Lord and her life was transformed. As a result, one by one, the whole household of 13 members came to the Lord as that of Acts 16:31. Praise be to His name and His faithfulness.

When you have tasted the goodness of the Lord, it does not matter whether your lives are less than 70 or beyond 70 you need to echo what Paul has said in Philippians 1:21 “ For to me to live is Christ and to die is gain “. I appeal to God that in His mercies He can still use this unworthy vessel for the extension of His Kingdom. In the service of God there is no age limit. I started to serve Him at the age of 15 as a youth sharing His goodness and salvation in various capacities. The amount of God’s blessings on me keeps reminding me of Paul’s words in 2 Timothy 4:2 “preach the word, be urgent in season and out of season, convince, rebuke, and exhort, be unfailing in patience and in teaching.”

This is a troubled world and the society is very sick. It is urgent that Christians truly be light and salt of the world. Let us come out of our comfort zone, be sensitive and conscious of the many needs around us. When you are 70, the vast experience you have gathered throughout the years and the ability God has given you can become great resources of knowledge, strength and blessings for the younger generations.

I always admire those who are more senior than me and still actively

engaging in God’s business. These are God’s special forces. When the going is tough, the tough gets going. God does not always use the top brilliant scholars, successful financiers or great statesmen. He has chosen fishermen and the tax collectors for His purpose. Today He can choose you and me, those who are 70 and beyond. In the past, I have served Him half-heartedly and part time. It is my desire now to say, “ I am here, send me. “

Paul said “ I can do all things in Christ Jesus who strengthens me “ There are many things we can do for the Lord only we have a willing heart. The followings are the few things God enables me to do at the moment for your reference. I have gone for a Mission Trip in Cambodia in December 2006 and would be going to China this May for the same purpose. I am in the church preaching team, preaching occasionally in our church, church preaching point and other churches when invited. I serve in Mission and Social Concern Committee. I teach in the church school on Saturdays. Outside the church, I still sit on the

Marriage Tribunal and also an Adviser of the Juvenile Court in Kota Star District. I am active in the Gideon International and also the Full Gospel Business Men’s Fellowship. If you are willing to serve God, there is nothing you can not do. If you can not move to serve, you can still pray.

Many friends of the world used to tell me that I can now sit back and enjoy the fruits of my labour. God has blessed us with four God fearing children, all happily married with children. Even though they are all far away from us but we are bound in God’s love as one family. When I think of God’s blessings, His grace and His love there is no way that I can sit back and do nothing. May God continue to use me for His purpose. Glory be to His Holy name. Amen.

*Khor Teik Hooi* ✨





## What I learned at SFI #4

I signed up for the “School For Intercessors”(SFI #4) as I wanted to be an “effective fervent pray-er” and learn to be able to “hide the Lord’s Word in my heart”. As the day drew near for the seminar, I had doubts if I was prepared for that commitment. However, all the doubts and fears left me when I arrived at Stella Maria, Penang to join the warm and friendly family of GOD.

Sister Lay Ching and Rev.Ong were empowered by the Holy Spirit and led us through the sessions with GOD’s Words, accompanied by inspiring

and uplifting songs. Sister Caroline not only filled me in on the section which I’d missed but continued to encourage me with the Scripture verses. Truly the Lord’s abundant love and grace were manifested through all these people; and what a beautiful way of praying to GOD with songs from the Bible.

At times, my heart overflows with so much love for the Lord that I just want to sing praises and offer thanksgiving to Him without ceasing. I want to let the whole world know the wonderful joy in me and the

greatness of our Almighty GOD. It is my prayer that others too will desire to know the Lord, our GOD personally, and be filled with the Lord’s peace, joy, love and grace. We will strive to seek GOD’s ways and fulfill His purpose for our lives. SFI#4 was an inspiring and enriching experience and it was a blessing to all those who attended.

Praise, honour and glory be to GOD.

*Jacey Choong* ✨

School for Intercessors (SFI) taught me some great lessons- instead of merely complaining or lamenting about the state of things in our country like the rising crime rate, or wringing our hands helplessly at the state of our judiciary system, or turning blue in our faces over corruption in the country; we can actually do something positive! We can and we need to pray and intercede for this country we have called as ours. We are called to be “Samuels” for our nation. Samuel was grieved when King Saul sinned against God. He saw the failure of the government as a result of his failure to pray and intercede. And we need today to carry this burden in our hearts for our country!

But intercession goes against our very grain. And intercession involves a lot of discipline, especially when we are so used to praying just for me and mine. For many of us who were novices in this, it was certainly tough going for us, having to pray for our nation some 4 hours that Saturday afternoon. It took much will power to pray, having to fend off tiredness, wandering minds etc.

We learnt to read the newspapers with new eyes- how to pick up news and to pray for these events. We have to keep up with the current issues in our country and the world at large in order to be effective intercessors. We must cultivate the habit of turning whatever report that bothers you into an item of prayer!

Pray through events that will take place especially those involving important decision making.

Our speaker Wee Lay Ching also taught us to sing prophetic songs- it was not just singing scripture but she taught us that there is prophetic power in music. This is not something new, for David set aside his musicians to prophesy.

*Mrs Caroline Lim*  
*Wesley Methodist Church, Taiping* ✨