

B E R I T A
TRAC



2019 • Issue No. 1

FOR INTERNAL CIRCULATION ONLY



General Conference Pastors' School 2019
Venue: Port Dickson Methodist Centre



Rev. Yong Wai Yin
 Pastor of Wesley Methodist Church
 Seremban

Singing The Songs of Lent and Easter

It has been said that music is the food of the soul. Songs, even more than laws imposed from the outside, shape us. The ideas and words put forth in a song linger on in our minds so much longer than those put to prose. Songs evoke emotions in us, negative as well as positive. Each generation of the human race is shaped for good or for bad by the songs it imbibes and embraces. Songs have informed and shaped worldviews and the ethos of each generation, given society perspectives on life, and moved peoples to action.

It is no different with God's people. The Methodists particularly have been known for singing their faith thanks to Charles Wesley, the "sweet singer" who wrote more than 6,000 hymns, many of them out of his own experience with God and God's love. Many have been shaped by these hymns. In the Lenten season, hymns and songs play an important part as they bring us into the experience of the great themes of Jesus' life, passion, crucifixion and death. As we hear again the events in Jesus' life, hymns and songs also help us respond in repentance, in praise, in prayer and in commitment. Allow me to share with you some of Charles Wesley's hymns for this season.

We began the season with Ash Wednesday's reminder that we are "dust and to dust you shall return," and therefore, we are also called to "repent, and believe the gospel". When we sing the hymn, Depth of Mercy (UMH 355¹) we confess our recalcitrance, resistance to the grace Jesus holds out to us and that we crucify our Lord again each time we deny him. The last verse forms our prayer of repentance in surrender to the Lord.

Charles Wesley was taken up by the immensity of God's love and all that Christ went through for our sakes. He wrote And Can It Be That

I Should Gain (UMH 363²) just after his own conversion experience on 21st May 1738, in which he came to the assurance that his sins had been forgiven and he had peace with God. When we take time to contemplate what God has done for us in Jesus Christ and how He did it, we cannot help but together with Wesley be amazed at His immense love and the lengths to which He went so that we are freed from the chains of sin, are enabled to follow him and approach his eternal throne to receive the crown He has for us!

Charles was so captured by God's love shown in Jesus' sacrifice on the cross that several years later he wrote O Love Divine, What Hast Thou Done! (UMH 287³). This hymn is usually sung during Holy Week, and we sing to express our awe that the immortal God would be willing to die for our sins! On Good Friday, we sorrow with 'Tis Finished! The Messiah Dies (UMH 282⁴). But in dying he sets us free from sin and guilt and pain. In Jesus' death, Satan no longer has power over us. We are freed indeed, to love and serve the Lord!

But the grave does not have the last say. On the third day, God raised Jesus from the dead we announce to the world that "Christ the Lord Is Risen Today, Alleluia!" (UMH 302⁵). Death has lost its sting and we rise together in triumph with Jesus!

It is only when we have walked with Jesus through his passion, crucifixion, and death that we are truly able to celebrate Easter with joy. We watch Jesus take on our

pain, our wounds, and our sin on the cross and we are brought to the enormity of our sin and the darkness in our hearts. We are brought to our knees at the foot of the cross as we see the sinless Lamb of God hanging there, taking the punishment we deserve but could never have borne to save ourselves. As Jesus is laid in the tomb, we despair but we also wait. And then, on the third morning, we hear again the good news with joy, "Christ is risen! Indeed, he is risen! Hallelujah!" and we celebrate and proclaim it to the world.

Let me invite us to make time to sit with some of these hymns of Jesus' passion, death and resurrection in this little exercise. You may have hymns of the Lenten season and Easter to which you are drawn. Do use them. Otherwise you may use those already mentioned.

1. Sing or read the hymn, savouring the words and the pictures the words and music paint.
2. Notice what word(s) or picture catches your attention. Stay with it.
3. Then bring it into a conversation with the Lord Jesus, telling him what you have experienced, and sit quietly to wait for his response to you.
4. Take the hymn with you into your daily routine, to remind you of God's presence with you through the day.

May you be blessed this Easter and may the hymns and songs you hear and sing draw you closer to the Lord Jesus Christ!

¹Depth of Mercy <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TqZYM2gAois>

²And Can It Be That I Should Gain <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sQelGbKqiw8>

³O Love Divine What Hast Thou Done <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0tIKT6B4E9c>

⁴'Tis Finished! The Messiah Dies <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aUrvANitXa8>

⁵Christ the Lord Is Risen Today <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nzy7jFNUc3w>

MW 1 Church 1 School

By Mdm Theresa Yip



Transfer of goody bags to SK Methodist PJ



The goody bags ready for distribution



Brother Hock Wah delivering a speech



Giving out the goody bags to students



Members of TMCPJ with teachers of SK Methodist



The MW ladies with Pastor Paul, Pastor Lewis & Brother Hock Wah



Members of TMCPJ with the Principal, Encik Nik Azman bin Kundor



Students with the good bags



A visit from **Bishop Rosemarie Wenner** (on 14th February 2019) from Germany who is currently serving as World Methodist Church's Geneva Secretary. On the extreme left is Mr Anthony Row who is General Conference Secretary.



Bishop Emeritus Dr Zothan Mawia, Bishop Myat San, 2 District Superintendents and Finance Chairman from the Lower Myanmar Methodist Church paid a visit to TRAC President on 10th April.

Excerpts of Testimonies from Jeremiah School 2019 Students



Over the course of 6 weeks, I am thankful to God that He has blessed this community to show me how much He can work through us and how we can glorify Him. A godly community is important as it is through the godly community that God is seen by others.

Caleb Goh, *Trinity Methodist PJ*

Out of the many lessons I've learnt in JS, one stood out – Dealing with conflict. I learn that we should not run away from conflict but to confront and to try to resolve it by relying on God. To discern if the approach we take to resolve such conflict brings glory.

Ernest Tan, *Bountiful Grace MC Seremban*

I've learnt that in our weakness (which we all have and are aware of), God can be even more glorified and that we should always seek to glorify God and put Him as our first priority.

Ruth Lim, *Wesley MC, Klang*

One decision that I have made after Jeremiah School is to learn to surrender my future plans to God. I believe he has a plan for me and will use me according to His will for me. I have decided to trust God in wherever he puts me and to follow his calling in that field.

Ian Lim, *Wesley MC, Seremban*

I don't think that I have met with a huge transformation through Jeremiah School, rather there has been a renewal of the heart, and it has helped me to see things differently. One of such renewal is the understanding of a servant-heart; this biblical community has helped me

grasp what it means to be a servant to others.

Sam En Yi (Joseph), *CMC, Jementah*

During JS, I had the privilege to experience of how God reveals himself to me through. It was during silent retreat and fasting. I prayed desperately for God to reveal himself to me and as I sat by the beach, I looked up into the sky and saw clouds gathering to form a face, and it ended up as a heart.

Shawn Lim, *Subang MC, Selangor*

The session on understanding our emotions and dealing with conflict has helped me to better comprehend relationships with those around me, and has given me the courage to learn what it means to be Christ-like in confronting others.

Cheryl Aw, *Wesley MC, Sitiawan*

One of the most helpful lesson I've learned in JS was from the Inductive Bible study class. Now I have a good tool to use in trying to understand the Bible when I read.

Kenneth, *Wesley MC, Sitiawan*

Of all that I have learned in JS, the three most impactful lessons were: (1) My identity in Christ, knowing that I belong to Christ and that I have the privilege to be a child of God. (2) Skills of Inductive bible study has enriched how I read God's word. (3) Learning how to formulate my "personal mission statement", has allowed me to set life goals that would bring glory to God.

Desmond Ong, *Emmanuel MC, Petaling Jaya*



The greatest transformation that has taken place in me during JS was the realisation that Jesus Christ has lived an obedient life that I cannot live, died a death that was meant for me, and now he offers me eternal life. This has challenged me to rethink what it really means to “pick up your cross daily” and “the cost of discipleship”.

Herbert Chui, *Grace MC, Miri*

I am an impatient person. But during the course of JS, God has taught me through the community that I lived with for 6 weeks, what patience means. It was my greatest test because of my nature and temperament; but I saw a great breakthrough through the patience shown to me by my peers.

George Yong, *Grace MC, Miri*

During JS, I’ve learned to put God first in all that I do. I would intentionally commit anything that I wanted to do to God in prayer, as I seek for strength and wisdom from God. Also, whenever I face troubles, fear or doubts, I would go to God first.

Kevin Lee, *Methodist Church, Subang*

The commitment I am making to God is that I will consistently spend time with God and to practice my quiet retreat weekly. So that as time passes, spending lengthier time with God would be second nature.

Ashley Jeremiah, *Wesley MC, Klang*

My top transformation would be my spiritual discipline. It was my first time having quiet retreat, fasting, and praying. To be honest, I did not know that I would find myself enjoying this process so much. But during such retreat, I really got to focus better on God and share with Him my heart.

Rainbow, *Trinity MC, Sg. Buloh*

The most life transforming experience for me was when I had to prepare for my sermonette. I learned to depend on God in this preparation. Being the first to preach and my first time preaching, this has taught me that it is not by my wisdom or strength, but by relying on God.

Dany Lam, *Wesley MC, Taiping*

One commitment I have made after JS is to remain faithful to God to the very end. I am aware that when I leave for my tertiary studies, there will be challenges and temptations that I will face. I’ve decided to surrender to God and disciplined myself to study His word, pray, and seek a community of faith to be part of.

Kiran Adam, *Wesley MC, Taiping*

One important lesson that I have learnt is “servant-leadership”. This has taught me to be humble, and to serve others rather than be served, just as Jesus came to serve and not to be served. Being a very proud and arrogant person, knowing Jesus Christ served others has really humbled me to the same.

Dessydellya, *Wesley MC, Ipoh*

One crucial lesson I learned during JS is that God looks at our hearts, not so much what we can do. No matter how many ministries I involve myself in, God desires that I come to Him and love Him with all my heart.

Annabelle Khoo, *Wesley MC, Sitiawan*

During JS, I learned the importance of developing godly spiritual discipline. To be able to run the race of life a Christian, understanding the Word of God is crucial. Also, equally important is my prayer-life, my conduct and fellowship towards others.

Zhu Hock, *Wesley MC, KL*

One of the important lessons I learned was during the spiritual formation and discipline session. I learnt about the importance of it and how it can change our lives. It not only builds our character but it helps enriched our understanding of God.

Nicole Chew, *Wesley MC, KL*

Living in a community of faith is very enriching, because we are accountable to each other with our lives, and also the encouragement we give to one another. This was seen in during mission week, where I was given the responsibility to share the Gospel and my testimony in front of many people. The spirit of Christ was seen in the unity and love within this community.

Mike Choo, *Wesley MC, Klang*



Through the course of JS, I have become confident of my position as a child of God and this has strengthened my passion to be more devoted to God and His will in areas where God has blessed me with talents.

Caleb Chin, Emmanuel MC, Petaling Jaya

I've learnt to trust in God wholeheartedly and to let Him lead my path instead of being self-reliant and insisting on my own way which is not God's will for me. I've also learnt the importance of spiritual disciplines such as quiet time and silent retreat and how they help me to know God more intimately.

Yan Ling, Wesley MC, Johor Bharu

One evident transformation I experience was the progressive renewal of my mind and the discipline to

read the Bible. As a result of experiencing God in JS, I have decided to serve God and Wesley Seremban in a more active manner.

Ivan Chia, Wesley MC, Seremban

Throughout the whole journey of 6 weeks, I realized more and more everyday how much I needed God in my life because of my sinful nature and the insufficiency of human. Knowing this, I slowly learned (and still in the process) to put aside my pride and depend on God instead. Taking up my cross to follow Christ, I understood what it means to be a member of the body of Christ and to serve humbly because of what he had done for us.

Odelia Lee, Mega MC, Subang Bestari



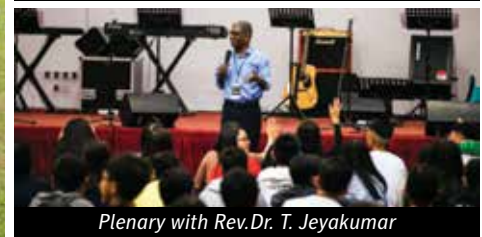
Youth Quake 2018

Theme: Jesus: the search for truth

By James Ong (NYD)



Helpers of YQ 2018



Plenary with Rev. Dr. T. Jeyakumar

Youth Quake (YQ) is a camp that is held once in every four years. A camp that is evangelistic in nature, where youths from their local chapters are encouraged to invite their friends for this event.

Last year's YQ was held at Port Dickson Methodist Centre from the 9th – 13th of December 2018. There was a total of 377 campers, and we had the privilege of having Rev. Dr. T. Jeyakumar, President of Trinity Annual Conference of the Methodist Church in Malaysia as our plenary speaker. Apart from the plenary sessions, there were

different categories of workshops focused on **personal life, family concerns, community issues and soft-skill developments**. On top of that, there were team building games that promote unity in diversity and fellowship among campers and helpers.

We truly thank God for the committee and helpers for their tireless effort without which this camp could not have operated. But, all glory to God for the change that has begun in the lives of some of these youths.



Helpers serving meals



Different Workshop sessions



Team Building

11th East Asia Area Seminar: 27th – 30th March in Hong Kong

By Mdm Theresa Yip



Opening Service



Ready for Gala Dinner



TRAC MW with World Fed President, Alison Judd



Korean Presentation at the Gala Dinner

The Malaysia Unit comprises of 40 participants from TRAC, CAC, TAC, SIAC, SCAC and SAC. Participants from TRAC MW were : Mdm Theresa Yip (TRAC MW President); Mrs Julia Wong; Mrs Evelyn Lim; Mrs Irene Khoo; Mrs Roslind Yong; Mdm Lee Poh Goek, Mdm Lukshmi Devi ; Mdm Irene Teo and Miss Celine Choong (MYF President).

This Area Seminar provides us with the opportunity to learn and to be equipped through the many distinguished plenary speakers as well as to listen to each other's stories, respond to each other's concern and learn from each other as we share, pray and worship together. The seminar theme "Here I am! Send me" is most timely and fitting in this increasingly secular world where we stand against much challenges and hostilities as we stand up for Christ and proclaim His name. It was truly a blessing to be able to hear from so many distinguished speakers for an insightful and interesting sharing.

This year, 40 young women from the Asian Young Women Leadership Development (AYWLD) 2019 were present in our midst, representing all the EAA member countries and potential member countries of ever-expanding Asia. TRAC MW sponsored the airfare of Celine Choong, our MYF President for this Seminar. Life only moves forward and it never goes backward. This means that we can see what our future will look like by looking at what we do with our next generation leaders. Young women have so much to say to the existing leaders, and they also look for wise counsel from the senior leadership. We are challenged to put our hearts and minds together to be open to learn from each other.

The speaker for the Closing Service on 30th March 2019 was Rev Ralph Lee on "Be Empowered! Bear Witness!" (Isaiah 49:8-13). He began his sermon with "forget closing – this is the start of mission!" We were urged to take the example of young people in the news who fuelled by a passion for those in need, had spoken out for justice. He challenged us to consider whether we as a church had become too middle class and little concerned for those in great need. When we move as worldwide Methodist we can make a difference! A single person can walk long but together we can walk long and far! Can we become true daughters of God? When we leave and go back to our country, can we be God's agent of love? This is what all of us would have carried home – to be God's agent of love.

Coming together in Hong Kong with the rest of the sisters from other regions indeed find much to celebrate as we nurture our personal growth as well as strengthen our sisterhood in East Asia Area and the World Federation of the Methodist and Uniting Church Women. We praise God for faithfully providing for our needs and we thank God for past achievements and trust God for whatever the future may hold. May God bless us abundantly as we answer the call – "Here I Am!"



Malaysian team with the World Federation Officers



Outing To Victoria Peak



Figure 3-EAA Secretary Margaret Chan (CAC) doing the roll call at Business Session



Malaysian Presentation at the Gala Dinner

Christmas 2018 in Ba'kelalan, Sarawak

By Rev. Dr. T Jeyakumar



Ba'kelalan comprises nine villages at Maligan Highlands, Sarawak and is about 3000 feet above sea level and 4km from Kalimantan borders. A four-wheel-drive brought by the village head, Pak Berauk, took me from Lawas airport to Kampong Long Rusu where I was supposed to stay and minister during Christmas. The cool mountain weather was so welcoming although the water was icy when I reached late evening. However, the amount of food I ate kept me warm. There were two breakfasts each morning as the pictures show, tea without fail in-between meals plus sumptuous lunches and dinners. Christmas gave me an added reason to eat to my heart's content.

The Borneo Evangelical Missions (BEM) church in Long Rusu invited me to preach at 5 different worship services (2 on Christmas eve and 3 on Christmas day). I preached 5 different sermons to the same congregation on those 2 days. The theme was, "Yesus Cahaya Yang Benar" (Jesus the True Light). The young people led in the worship celebrations while the Lun Bawang Christians were receptive to every word spoken. One of the good things about the worship services was that no one was clinging on to their handphones. During that period there was no phone connection in the village, let alone wifi – so no messages to send or receive. While it was an inconvenience to the people, it was a blessing during the worship hours.

The whole trip was an eye opener to me. Five hours of drive on mostly muddy-road in 21st century Malaysia from Lawas to Long Rusu! One could only travel in four-wheel drives or on motorbikes. The people were warm and friendly towards me and one another. Knowing that I

was alone there during Christmas, they made sure I was well fed and I was told of many miraculous works of GOD in the lives of the village people who faithfully looked up to GOD. The village that invited me was supporting one of the seminaries belonging to the Borneo Evangelical Missions in the Buduk Aru village next to them. The old seminary known as Sekolah Teologi Pertama Buduk Aru, with insufficient dormitories and a wobbly library building that might collapse anytime, has produced many pastors and missionaries. Hearing their plight TRAC Board of Missions and a few individuals decided to offer financial help so that the Seminary could erect some new buildings.

I left home in the early hours of 23rd morning. Along the way when I saw the roads we travelled on and looked at the surrounding conditions, I did ask myself why I was doing that during Christmas. Was there no better place to celebrate Christmas? Almost instantly a thought came to my mind – what would have happened if Christ had that thought – "Is there no better place to go than to the sinful world?" Then I said to myself, "If Christ would leave behind the comforts of His heaven and come to earth, what am I feeling restless about?"

After a flight delay, I returned home late on 26th night, with new friendships made, new experiences, new awareness, a warmed heart, a bigger stomach, plus a heavier luggage with rice, barley and salt (generously given by the Christians). Above all, my spirit soared, inspired by the ways of GOD amongst HIS people even in the difficult-to-access places. It was a short Christmas mission trip which will be remembered for a long time.



General Conference Pastors' School
Theme: A Pastor After God's Own Heart

Guest Preacher:

The Most Reverend Glenn N. Davies

*Archbishop of Sydney and Metropolitan of
the Province of New South Wales
in the Anglican Church of Australia*



The Methodist Church In Malaysia
Date: 02–04 April 2019