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Youth Ministry Deuteronomy Style

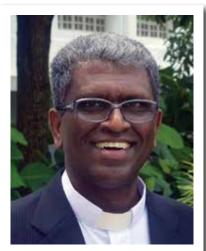
I am very thankful for the youth ministries that take place in our churches. In our churches the youth ministry is creative and vibrant. We are not just confining ourselves to do ministry with the youths who have grown up in the church, but also through Boys' Brigade and Girls' Brigade (in church and in schools) we are reaching out to the younger people. I wish to record a word of thanks to all the people who volunteer themselves for youth ministry. You would not know now the investment that you are making, but eventually you will.

While I am thankful for all the youth ministry staff and volunteers, I must state here that the youth ministry should not be done in isolation of the rest of the church. The whole church needs to get involved in youth ministry. Only when Christian adults are involved in the life of the youths can they contribute to the maturity of youths to Christian adulthood. Youth ministries and nuclear families should never carry the weight of raising youths alone.

The present way of doing youth ministry is rooted in the rise of the Christian Endeavour Movement at the turn of the 20th century, with programs specially created for youths and which were imitated by the churches. ¹While the youth ministry evolved to be more creative in reaching out to the youths, still it did not make a lasting impact on the lives of youths. The improved style and creativity had neither helped the youths to preserve their Christian faith in their adult life nor helped to retain them in the church. One must not think that this crisis is caused by lack of evangelistic efforts.

So where does the failure lie? The problem is, some churches are doing youth ministry in isolation – youth service, youth church, a few youth counsellors, a youth worker. These youths don't even know what is going on in the larger church. Youth ministry cannot be done by segregating the youths from the rest of the church. In fact, this is also true of some children ministries. Children have no idea what is going on in the church at large.

We need to involve more matured Christian adults in the youth ministry so that the youths can come into a one-on-one relationship with matured Christians. These godly Christians could be parents of youths, older singles and any matured parent in the church. Since the goal of youth ministry is to produce lasting faith in youths, preparing them to sustain the Christian faith in their adulthood. then all that adults the must do is take to the youths alongside them in ministry, in mission, sit with them in church, take them home



Rev. Dr. T. Jeyakumar *President, TRAC*

for a meal and live out the Christian faith. If this is the goal then the church does not have to worry about budget for the ministry, programs and even the number of youths they don't have with them. They impact the lives of those whom God has already placed in their midst.

Youths, families, and the church as a whole can experience genuine Christian growth and lasting maturity together through instruction from the word, outreach involvements, regular fellowship, fun time and prayer time, and other co-operate programs. In fact, if we look around, we find that those who have grown in their faith as adults are those youths who were brought up in Christian homes, where one parent modelled Christ and/or youths who had developed significant relations with church adults.

Youth ministry should be an integrated ministry and not done in isolation. It should not be a ministry of the youth to the youths. It should not be a ministry of one person – the youth coordinator/pastor – to the youths. It should be done in partnership with Christian parents and Christian adults in the church. In fact George Barna's research evidently shows that in order to raise spiritual champions, "Churches across the nation work with families in this process..... The beauty of this process is that when it is working well you cannot tell who is really leading – the church or the parents."² To be sure when we look at Scripture it is the families that pass on the faith to the next generation (2 Timothy 1:5). Faith in Christ cannot be transferred directly from textbooks to the youths. Faith cannot be transferred to young hearts through some weekly activities. Faith is normally transferred through interaction with people and matured adults transfer a mature faith to maturing youths.

¹ Mark DeVries, *Family Based Youth Ministry: Reaching the Been-There, Done-That Generation*, (Illinois: Intervarsity Press, 1994) p. 22.



When we think of youth ministry, we always find a young person to do the ministry. Our idea is that the youth worker must be energetic and creative. But youth ministries cannot be done by one or two persons. "For a church's ministry to teenagers to be successful, it needs to have an adult staff to student ratio of approximately 1:8 for high school students and 1:6 for junior high students."³ This clearly tells us that most youth ministries run by a person or a couple or two is not going to be effective. Even if the church could hire more people how many can the church hire? So, it comes back to the fact that families and older adults in church could truly support the ratio needed to do effective youth ministry.

How can the church keep the youths involved in the life of the church? "Faith grows when we are serving."⁴ When youths serve alone, they may be discouraged, make mistakes owing to lack of experience and the scope of ministry given to them will be limited. However, when the youths are allowed to serve together with adults, they find their ministry-niche in the church. When youths serve alongside adults in the church, faith is nurtured, faith increases and the youths grow in their faith in Christ. Marva J. Dawn who believes that the church as a whole should be involved in the raising of children, asks some important questions that make us realize that it is not enough to just get the youths into the church service and to get some parents or extended families to sit beside them. She rightly asks, "Does the congregation give young people meaningful jobs to do in the parish? How else will they learn that being part of the Body of Christ involves us all in mission, that a life of faith is often hard work, that there are intrinsic rewards more valuable than money or fame?"5 Get the youths serving with adults!

Another important thing is that when the youth ministry involves many adults who actively support the ministry, it will draw the youths into the life of our churches. I feel nothing matters more than this. Surely youths cannot just attend their own ministry, listen to sermons or messages on subjects that just speak at their level and go back to struggle with issues in their lives. When they are in the church at large, they learn about life's issues in a larger context. They at least appreciate adult struggles. Exposing them to life and ministry of the whole church prepares them ahead of time for what they will experience and encounter later in life. They get to feel and experience what worship with adults and of adults are like. When they have come to know the adults in the church, they will return to the church they grew up in, even after having been away from it for studies, for instance, even if their peers are not in church. There is a connection with the church still.

In fact, the Scripture shows us that raising children and youths is not only the responsibility of the nuclear family but also the task of the whole community even as we discover in Deuteronomy 6:1-8.

The vision of being a church that embraces the youths, where adults care for them and draw them into the fold is nothing new to me because I was discipled precisely in this way. I was in the Boys' Brigade and the Methodist Youth Fellowship which were both program-oriented. But the homes and the hearts of the BB Captain, the youth counsellors, our Pastor and some matured Christian adults were open to me and other youths. Although countless number of youths went through these two organizations in our church yet thirty-three years on, I realise that it is those of us who had a relationship with the church adults who have kept our faith intact. Moreover, we are still in relationship with some of those adults.

We must put into practice the heart of what I am saying here because some studies show that as high as 70 percent of the young people who had gone through youth ministries which had run in isolation, had not made the Christian faith their own by the time they graduated from high school.⁶

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³ Michael J Anthony (Ed.), Foundations of Ministry: An Introduction to Christian Education for a New Generation, (USA: BridgePoint, 1992) p. 164.

⁴ Mark DeVries, *Family Based Youth Ministry: Reaching the Been-There, Done-That Generation*, (Illinois: Intervarsity Press, 1994) p. 33.

⁵ Marva J Dawn, Is It a Lost Cause?: Having the Heart of God for the Church's Children (USA: Eerdmans, 1997) p. 58.

⁶ John Trent, Rick Osborne, Kurt Bruner (Gen. Eds.), Parents Guide to the Spiritual Growth of Children, (USA: Focus on the Family, 2000) p. 9.



For The Advancement of Christ's Kingdom Among Boys Ist Kuala Lumpur Company

By Pastor Jonathan Chan



Are you a parent trying to develop your son(s) into an all-rounder? Are you a church member and wonder what the youths are struggling with? You're about to find the answers.

Often, youths could not find a clear answer between right and wrong in critical moments. They could not find Godly mentors when they struggle with identity, sense of belonging and purpose. If this continues to happen in our churches, we will lose the future leaders we're hoping to see. This is why this article is important.

You are about to discover the origin, objective, impact of the Boys Brigade (BB) ministry; it's challenges today and why churches need to have a BB company to complement an existing youth ministry.

Most churches today have youths who are present at MYF because:

 They don't have a choice – either because their parents made it compulsory to attend; or there is no other youth ministry within the church (other than ones at other churches). As a result, they are not interested in the lessons and finds everything about MYF boring; and nothing about it is ever good.

2) They are happy to be there, but lack the leadership capability to grow it to the next phase into a ministry that gives them vision and purpose, that excites them to see God's kingdom grow.

However, this scenario isn't new to the church. In Glasgow, Scotland, a man by the name of Sir William Alexander Smith saw a similar challenge:

"He was a young Sunday school teacher who worry that the Boys in his class were rowdy and he had difficulty keeping his class quiet in order to teach them. But on Saturdays, as an Officer in the Volunteers (part of the army in 1870's) he could get a hundred men obey his every word of command yet he could do nothing with a small group of lively Boys. Why couldn't the Boys in his Sunday school be like the Volunteers." (Senior Section Handbook, The Boys' Brigade Malaysia, Sixth Edition, p. 14).





It was this idea of 'Drill and Discipline' that started the ministry of the Boys' Brigade (BB) in Scotland, back in 1883. The original intention was to impart the word of God to Boys and teaching them to be discipline to receive the Word of God.

Not only did the method proved effective, it went on to become a movement that started BB companies in 60 countries all around the world, including Malaysia.

Today, there are over 8,000 members in 127 companies spread across Penang to Johor, Sabah and Sarawak. Focusing into Klang Valley, there are 18 companies (including 2 in Seremban) and counting. That number however, is hardly enough compared to 382 public secondary schools (not including private & international schools). If we assume each school has an average of 1,000 students, we have 382, 000 students that need to hear the good news of Jesus Christ, and 18 companies will not be enough to do the job.

The impact of this movement is evident in more than 70 years of young Boys coming to know Jesus Christ as their personal Lord and Savior since 1946. Today, some have gone on to become various industry leaders in their own right; and pastors of the Methodist Church in Malaysia.

The BB ministry however, is not free from challenges. Common among all BB companies across the country, is the challenge of a lack of volunteer officers. These are the behind the scenes shepherds and mentors who tirelessly present themselves every Saturday, more than 40 weeks a year, to spend 6 hours or more with the Boys; teaching, training and mentoring Boys from 7-18 years old towards building character like that of Christ Jesus. Generally, in most companies, we have two types of officers: the veterans who have served 10 years and above; and new officers who are doing their undergraduate studies or have just joined the work force.

Veteran officers who had served for an extended period of time are feeling the fatigue of the ministry. They



Group Discussions at 2019 BB & GB Spiritual Camp

realize a decrease in their energy level as they age; and the increasing struggle to remain relevant to the lives of the Boys who grew up in very different environment from their own childhood. The new officers on the other hand, struggle with juggling between the demands of tertiary education, figuring out their priorities in life and social life. Naturally, many prioritize their studies and personal pursuits above standing under the hot sun with young Boys every Saturday. Suffice to say that we need both types of officers and the challenge of not having enough officers is a constant struggle. Thankfully, those who do choose to stay and give their time to develop younger Boys, do so passionately and find fulfillment in seeing younger Boys develop into God fearing men with character that is modeled after Jesus. We are constantly praying for more of such men.

Other challenges include but not limited to: effectiveness and relevance of the method in 2020, spiritual health of officers, sharing the gospel effectively, among others. These challenges then beg the question: Should we still encourage our Boys to join the BB? Does the BB ministry still benefit the church today?

My answer is a resounding, 'Yes!'.

Because the **BB** is the **only** Christian uniformed organization that makes it their **objective** to: *advance(ment of)* Christ kingdom among Boys and promote habits of: Obedience, Reverence, Discipline, Self-Respect and all that tends towards true Christian Manliness.



Applying good sportsmanship and giving their best made the badminton team silver medalists at Kul Games 2019



(Senior Section Handbook, The Boys' Brigade Malaysia, Sixth Edition, p. 13).

Despite the challenges mentioned above, officers still strive to instill the above habits which are increasingly rare among youths today. This will continue to be a need especially if we are looking to youths as the future of the church and country. In addition, the BB is recognized by the Ministry of Youth and Sports which allows us to recruit and operate in both public and private schools, opening up vast opportunities to reach those outside the church.

The BB in Malaysia is in a unique position to help Boys connect the truth in scriptures to action on a weekly basis. Though the MYF can include this in its programs, "buy-in" is where the two differ. BB Boys sign up expecting discipline - which can facilitate learning and applying the word of God. Youths who attend MYF didn't sign up for discipline but to learn the depth and breadth of scripture.

The answer is not one or the other – but both. Boys need the discipline from BB to learn to be still and apply biblical principles. And they also need the depth of teaching offered at MYF. They complement each other – just like a pen and ink. Together, they are most effective.

Where do we start? If you are a parent desiring your son(s) to be all-rounders, encourage them to sign-up at the nearest BB Company (more info at www.bbmalaysia.org). If you are a church member and wonder what the youths are struggling with, you can find the answer from an active BB Officer who serves every week. The fact that you are asking the question may indicate that God has given you a burden for young boys to know Christ. You may find fulfillment for your calling as a BB Officer. I made this decision years ago. And though I have had highs and lows along the journey, but still, I have no regrets since.



Left to right: Lt. Au Kar Fei (Finance Consultant, Small Group Leader), WO Yong Zhi Hui (Auditor), Chap. Jonathan Chan (Pastor), Lt. Liew Hoi Kiat (Senior VP of Foreign Bank), Lt. Jimmy Wong (Head of Dept of Local Bank) – all were members of BB and are currently active officers.





From Left: Capt. Yee Mun Them (Regional Manager of Local Tech Company) with Lt. Au Kar Fei. Middle: Non-Commissioned Officers (NCOs) who once didn't know Jesus but now attending church services. From Right: Lt. Leong Rong Fei (Electrical Engineer, Small Group Leader) with Lt. Liew Hoi Kiat



To Him we give all glory, in His path we pray Brigade Boys will always follow

2nd Penang Company Boys' Brigade, Wesley Methodist Church Penang By Capt. Ch'ng Ewe Hong



Second Penang BB entered 2019 with a new pastor, the Reverend Ting Moy Hong. It also celebrated the second year of its new platoon at Wesley Methodist School Penang (International).

School platoons

Government schools continue to be the main outreach points for the company, with support from Methodist Boys' School and SMK Jelutong. The advancement of Christ's kingdom through brigade training and values is moving along slowly but surely at these schools including Wesley Methodist School. We pray that we will be able to reap the harvest in good time.

Church-based headquarters

Wesley Penang will remain the home base for those boys who do not attend the platoons at the three schools. It will also serve as a meeting place for all the boys including those from the three schools to come together to learn, play and know each other.

Children with special needs will continue to have a place at 2nd Penang, as inspired by Mr Chow Chee Keong, a former Brigade boy who is now running a charity outreach in Taiping. We hope to have inclusive activities for these children so as to enable wholesome development.

The company held its enrolment service at the church on July 27. It was also promotions day for the boys. Hardworking boys moved up the ranks to assume more responsibilities while others became NCOs or non-commissioned officers. The boys too celebrated their successes as badges were awarded to those who underwent and passed their courses. There was more joy as prizes were given to the winners of various competitions held during the year. The service ended with Chaplain Rev Wong Mun Wah urging members to always set a good example at home, school and wherever they were, as encouraged by 1 Timothy 4:12.

Badge Awards

Six Junior boys received the Gold Award and two Senior boys the President's Badge, the second-highest award in the Boys' Brigade which requires rigorous participation.

Band

We are the oldest bagpipe BB band (at least in peninsular Malaysia), and we continue to bless other companies by training or helping to start their own bagpipe section. In July, we performed at 12th KL Company's enrolment service at Damansara Utama Methodist Church. We also played at the funeral service of the late Ong Will Sern, a member of 12th KL.





In November, we took part in the 20th anniversary celebrations of Mr Chow Chee Keong's ESDA Community Service Centre and escorted the guest of honour, YB Puan Hannah Yeoh, the Deputy Minister of Women, Family and Community Development.

During the Christmas period, the band played at Gurney Paragon, Penang Hill and Habitat Penang Hill.





As one of the former boys wrote during the

company's 65th anniversary celebration in 2017, we pray that God's blessings will continue to pour through 2nd Penang and its members, past and present, will be the light and salt to the many they come into contact.

Wesley Methodist Church was where it all began A second home for many in 2nd Penang There they marched and stood in parade Proud in shining blue of the Boys' Brigade Lessons on obedience, reverence, discipline, self-respect order of the day Habits to come with Christ manliness in the sway Indeed, many have found the Lord as Saviour Thankful for showers of blessings and good behaviour Sixty-five years have come and gone The boys were back to renew their bonds From as far north as America and China they came Those south in Australia and New Zealand did the same Kids from the 1960s to 2010s joined the anniversary do There was even one from 1952 Joy and laughters were everywhere

From the young and not so young old stories shared Breathtaking were the buglers' calls Blasting the past into minds present in the halls The bandsmen had old hands rattling a beat With pipers and flutists playing and tapping their feet Still, David Loo, Stanley Yeong, Yew Meng brought a serious note With the encouragement and challenges they poked The fun and games were of a four-day plan drawn But the feasting and outings kept going on and on Oh, what a treat when generations meet Memories to cherish ever so sweet The Lord God has blessed us much, His goodness overflows To Him we give all glory, in His path we pray Brigade Boys will always follow Be they sure and steadfast Clinging to the anchor they have cast. Amen

Daniel Lin (2017)



The 1st Petaling Jaya Boys' Brigade Company

By Lt Jason Tan, Lt Aristal Wong



'MASUK BARIS! 10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5...', yells the commander, as members of the 1st Petaling Jaya Boys' Brigade Company (1st PJ) scramble to get in line before the commander completes the countdown to avoid "punishment."

An all too familiar sight every Saturday, where Boys exchange their gaming consoles and smart devices for character-building activities.

Held at Trinity Methodist Church PJ, the Boys are nurtured on Christian education, leadership skills, teamwork, life skills, and many more. They are awarded for their efforts badges and promotions.

The 1^{st} PJ started in 1959, and it has close to 100 members today. It comprises of two sections:

• Junior Section

The Junior Section is separated into two groups: Pre-Juniors (6 - 8 years old) and Juniors (9 - 12 years old). The Junior Section emphasises on Christian character building, basic life skills such as first aid and cooking, and BB knowledge. Juniors are given more responsibilities to hone their skills and are also sent for Leadership Camps. High performing Juniors can achieve up to 6 awards and can be elected Junior Leading Boys.

Senior Section (13 – 19 years old)

Seniors Section Boys have more than 20 awards that they can achieve and cover different sets of skills. Whether it is crafting, swimming, first aid, computer knowledge, there is something for everyone.

Boys with leadership potentials are sent for NCO (Non-Commissioned Officers) training camps to further harness their leadership skills. Those with strong leadership traits have the opportunity to be promoted to the ranks of Lance Corporal, Corporal or Sergeant depends on the leadership capability of the individual and the needs of the Company. Once





promoted they are given various roles in Senior Section which ultimately teaches them how to conduct, manage and oversee the activities run by the Company. This prepares the Boys for their early adulthood and working life by putting into practice what they have learnt from their awards and to grow with experience.

Recently, 1st PJ hosted the Founders' Day Celebration together with 1st Kota Kemuning, 1st Klang and 8th Petaling Jaya Company at Trinity Methodist Church, Petaling Jaya on 21 September 2019 thereby building rapport with the various Companies within the Selangor State Council whilst commemorating the founding of the Boys' Brigade movement.

While both sections have their own activities catered to their respective age groups, they would still meet for the opening and closing parades, and for yearly events such as Enrolment Sunday, Year-End Camp, Awards Day, and Year-End Performance. with the older Boys having more police-like uniforms. The Boys of each section are supervised by Officers, who are mostly working adults. Most Officers are former Boys who have experienced the positive upbringing in the Boys Brigade and hence, want to "pass the baton" by serving as Officers in 1st PJ.

Founded on 4th October 1883, the Boys' Brigade is the world's oldest uniformed youth organisation. Its object is the advancement of Christ's kingdom among Boys and the promotion of habits of Obedience, Reverence, Discipline, Self-respect and all that tends towards a true Christian manliness.



The sections are easily recognised by their uniforms,







The Boys' Brigade: Towards Greater Discipline and Character Development

By Rakesh Kumar (DUMC Drug Rehabilitation Centre)

Visitors at DUMC may sometimes be intrigued by the sight of children in spectacular uniforms marching up and down the church grounds. These are the members of the Boys Brigade 9th Petaling Jaya Company, which was founded by Tamil congregation leader Pastor Ravindren a/l Arumugam (Ravi).

Pastor Ravi, who now serves as the chaplain, was instrumental in the formation of the company four years ago, believing that the organisation's activities would help bring out the talents and shape the growth and discipline of its members.

According to Captain Ganesh Rawantheran (Ganesh), Pastor Ravi was a member of the Boys' Brigade when he was young and is seen as a role model.

Ninth PJ was officially formed on October 4, 2016. Its members are aged between six years old and 19. Children between six and eight years old are in the Pre-Junior Section, while those aged between nine and 11 years join the Junior Section. The Senior Section is for children between 12 and 19 years old. The company now has 15 members.

"Adults can take part too as volunteers. They are trained to become officers over a period of two years," Captain Ganesh said.

The Boys' Brigade was started by Sir William Alexander Smith in 1883 in Glasgow. At the time, Sir William was concerned over the lack of discipline among the boys in his Sunday School class. To solve the problem, he decided to combine military drill with group physical exercises and religious instructions. This led him to form the Boy's Brigade, and thus 1st Glasgow Company was established.

Universally, the object of the Boys' Brigade is the advancement of Christ's kingdom among boys and the promotion of habits of obedience, reverence, discipline, self-respect and all that tends towards a true Christian manliness.

The objective has been the same since the organisation's inception, except with the addition of the word "obedience" in 1893. In Malaysia, the word "boys" has been changed to "members" and "manliness" to "character" to reflect the inclusion of girls in the organisation in 1994. In practice, the objective is:

- To help members develop and grow in moral character
- To train members to become loyal and responsible citizens
- To promote members' physical fitness and develop their leadership potential

In physical fitness, when one mentions "drill", words such as "gruelling", "grim" or even "hardship" would emerge, but the situation is completely the opposite here. At DUMC, BB members have loads of fun as their activities would include outdoor sports, camping and visiting neighbouring towns such as Kuala Kubu Bharu, Rawang and Pedas, enjoying the camaraderie. They have also gone to as far as Pulau Pinang for fun, adventure and experience.

But the core intent of the group remains the same, that is to further the advancement of Christ's kingdom among members and to promote habits of obedience, reverence, discipline, self-respect and all that leads towards a true Christian character.

Despite the rising enthusiasm, Captain Ganesh says the BB still requires more participation, especially from parents who can be fully committed to getting their children to be members. The parents of current members have been very supportive and have seen their children grown to become responsible individuals. The BB's leadership hopes this will encourage more children to join the company.

Indeed, those intending to send their children can rejoice from some of the achievements, especially in education, where 9th PJ was able to send a few members to colleges and some to undergo technical courses.

To encourage succession and continued interest, some members had been trained to become instructors, and ultimately officers. This would in a way attract newer and younger members.

There have been individual tales of success inspired from the experience BB afforded them. There was one slow learner who overcame all obstacles and is now on the way to become a hairstylist. Another youth who grew up in Taman Sentosa, a place notorious for gangs, is now a technician servicing air-conditioners, while another is doing hotel management.

Ninth PJ members are also responsible for walking with the neighbourhood of the PPR (Program Perumahan Rakyat), bringing the light that is Christ to their lives. Some of the members' meetings are even held at these flats, taking the meeting out from the church to the grounds of these challenged neighbourhoods.

According to Lieutenant Paul (full name), the company hopes to especially reach out to those from the B40 (Bottom 40) group and the surrounding community. It hopes to encourage more children to aspire for a better lifestyle, aided by the discipline acquired through the Word of God, and achieve their dreams and ambitions.

Life of 1st PJ Girls' Brigade in Trinity Methodist Church, Petaling Jaya

By Adele Chow Captain, 1st PJ Girls' Brigade Company 2020

The Girls' Brigade has been part of Trinity Methodist Church's life for many years now. Then known as the 1st Petaling Jaya Girls' Life Brigade (PJGLB) Company, started on November 1960 by the late Mrs Khoo Onn Soo, the company of 23 girls and officers has now grown to The 1st Petaling Jaya Girls' Brigade Company of approximately 260 girls and officers. Today, 1st PJ GB members are not only seen having their parade on Church grounds on most Saturday afternoons but we are also a part of the Methodist Primary School (just across the church) and SMK Assunta, Petaling Jaya schools' uniform body which meets on Wednesdays. We continue to witness God's love and faithfulness in our Girls' Brigade journey. Girls' Brigade has provided us a platform where we can grow and nurture girls from as young as 6 years old to SEEK, SERVE and FOLLOW Christ, our Captain Divine. We hope to plant seeds that one day will grow to become trees that will bear much fruit and that will be witnesses of God's love to the ends of the Earth.

In 1st PJ GB, a typical Saturday (or parade) would involve members doing drill which is an integral part of the brigade's activity to train girls to have self-discipline and control, to inculcate teamwork and to develop a sense of duty towards each other to achieve the spirit of espirit-de-corps. In addition, badge work program that aims to develop a TOTAL girl - Spiritually, Physically, Educationally and Socially will be carried out to grow girls into wholesome girls – and to help us remember this – the Bible verse to guide us is found in Luke 2:52, "And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and men".

The Girls' Brigade Malaysia theme for 2020 is *FRUITFUL AND OVERFLOWING – Show Kindness, Impacting Lives.* We are constantly reminded in Colossians 3:12,

"Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience." In 1st PJ GB, we continue to desire for the members (both girls and officers) to make a difference in the society. Through our annual community serving activities such as spending a day in the children's shelter homes, or spending 3 nights in a home for the elderly, we hope the girls will learn to serve the wider community and to impact the lives of others. As we move into our 60th year as a company in 2020, we plan to dedicate this year in our effort to uphold GBM's theme by a few initiatives such as participating in the "Locks of Love" - a journey to inspire hope for cancer patients by donating hair to be used to make wigs and "Tree Planting" - empowering our members to preserve, conserve and safe the environment.

1st PJ GB stands to testify the many prayers that has been answered, the many plans that has been blessed, the many girls from every background (from the under privileged children from shelter homes, to the orang asli girls, to girls from overseas) that God has blessed us with. From witnessing God holding back the storm when we prayed for good weather to Jehovah-Rapha's healing mercies, God's hand in transforming a shy person into a confident young leader of the company, to journeying with a young girl that committed a sinful act to becoming a responsible young leader today; indeed is God's work in action in the ministry of the Girls' Brigade.

The Girls' Brigade has ministered to thousands of young girls. Through the years, the lives of women, not just the girls have been touched and transformed by the wholesome program of the Girls' Brigade.



Excerpts of 1st PJ GB Girls' Testimonies:



1st PJ GB Pioneer girls attending the 10th GB Fonomarae 2019 in Kuching

1st PJ GB Enrolment Day

Junior Edna Zemira Raj, 10 years old

.... "The best part for me about GB is the worship sessions – we sing together and praise God as one big happy family. All my leaders are so nice and caring towards me – after all I didn't miss Bintulu that much nowadays ...

... GB has taught me that it is never too young to reach out, to share God's love, to be humble and obedient and to help one another". Ecclesiastes 12:1 says Remember your Creator in the days of your youth, before the days trouble come and the years approach when you will say "I find no pleasure in them" –. GB has made a great impact on me and my desire to know more about Jesus and how to have a servant heart."



A combined 1st PJ BB & GB Guard of Honour Parade

GIRLS' BRIGADE



1st PJ GB coming out as Champion for both Junior and Senior/Pioneer sections in the Selangor & Federal Territory Drill Competition.

Pioneer, YL Jareline Kh'ng, 16 years old

.... "My mum sent me to GB when I was a cadet. In the beginning, I didn't really know what GB was, I just had lots of fun and made lots of friends. As time went by, in 2017, when I got into high school, I left GB because my high school life was so busy and I had school activities on Saturdays. At that time, I never thought that I would regret my decision because I was so excited for high school and "nah", GB ain't that important to me, school first. But as time went by, I started missing all my buddies in GB. I felt happy that they were having lots of fun in GB, but it hit me that I was not there. I have that empty space in my heart that aches. So I gave a serious thought and seek God for His guidance, "tadaa", I am now back in GB. Right now Saturdays has become the day that I look forward to every week. Firstly because I love GB, secondly because of all my favourite people here, and thirdly, GB is my second home"....

Pioneer, YL Lavender Ling, 16 years old

.... "I first started GB when I was 6. To be really honest with you, I didn't really like GB then. That was because I seldom go to GB and I didn't have many friends and the worst part was I was a shy person, so it was hard for me to fit it. Later I was forced by my mom to go for a TRAC BB & GB camp in Ipoh which I didn't regret as I started making friends. I became more confident and today I will not forget names such as Alicia, Eleanor and Euodea, to name a few

... One of the best thing that happened to me in GB was I kind of found my future career direction. In GB, occasionally we will have inter-squad challenges such as a "Master Chef" cook off. That was when I found my passion in cooking and baking, and I would love to be a successful baker in the future.

... So, for some girls, GB might be tough for you at first, but my advice is to attend GB consistently and learn to make new friends.... The best way to make one is to be yourself and pray to God and He will bless you with many amazing friends. Also, GB might just be your second home instead of an extra weekend activity."



Girls' Brigade Malaysia Bible Quiz

Reported by Erin Pneh & Lydia Chin (2nd Penang Coy)

The national Bible Quiz 2019 on the book of Mark was an event organised by Girls' Brigade Malaysia (GBM) for the first time. Many girls from GB Companies all over Malaysia took part in the two-round online guiz before 15 finalists were selected to participate in the final round at Fonomarae. To prepare for the quiz, we studied the booklet "Introducing Jesus: The book of Mark" that was given to us before the camp. We also took the initiative to study the book of Mark from the bible in the New International Version, from chapters 1-16. Both of us studied together before and during the camp in order to be able to answer questions more swiftly and efficiently. After all, we were advised by Ms Mabel that being selected to the finals already made us winners and if possible we should bring back "bonus"... That added on to the pressure...

Prior to the day of the quiz, all finalists were gathered for a briefing. Division of finalists into teams and the items used for the competitions were introduced, and we tested them to familiarise ourselves with them and also the style of questions that would be asked. We both anticipated the day of the quiz albeit feeling nervous, anxious and excited.

On the morning of the quiz, we were placed into teams A, B, C, D and E by drawing lots and we went to our respective places. In teams of 3, we were seated according to our teams in a row on the stage. The first round began when we were tasked to answer five multiple choice questions each. We wrote our answers with a marker pen on a mini white board, showing them to the judges after five seconds. As each of us took turns to answer, our scores were shown on the screen and updated every round. At the end of round 1, the overall scores were displayed and Team A tied with Team B and C for the top spot, followed by Team D and Team E. All finalists then took a 15 minute break while the rest of the Fonomarae participants took a separate guiz through Google Docs. The Fonomarae participants were placed into five big groups, with each group merging with each finalist team. Their scores would assist in pushing up the final scores of their respective Bible quiz finalist teams.

15 minutes later, the finalists entered the hall and we took our seats. Round 2 which is speed round of subjective questions to be answered orally began. This round was tougher as marks could be deducted if the questions were answered wrongly. The fastest team to press the



From left, Lydia Chin (3rd place) and Erin Pneh (1st Place)

light buzzer got the chance to answer the questions projected on the screen. Wrongly answered questions were opened to the floor so that the Fonomarae participants could help to add to their team's score. When the round ended, the marks were re-totalled and the scores were shown. Team A was in the lead with Team B and D following closely behind. Team C and Team E came in third and fifth respectively. We were nervous as the results of the Fonomarae participants would decide the final score earned by each team. Finally, Team A emerged as champion with the highest accumulation of points, with Team B in the second place and Team D in third place. Team A went onstage to receive their hardearned trophies, which were presented by our National President, Ms Tnay Yong Hua from 1st Sibu Company.

For us, there was a sense of familiarity when we went through the book of Mark as we had previously studied the book of Luke for SPM Bible Knowledge. But through this quiz, we got to see the differences between the two gospels in terms of the words used, stories and details as told from two different perspectives. We saw and learnt more about the life of Jesus Christ. From the book of Mark, we learnt that the people during Jesus' time constantly put their faith in Him and we are awed by the many miracles He performed, especially the healing of the sick. Similarly, we as young people should dligently study his Word and put our trust in Him and let Him guide us in our endeavours.

All Glory be to God!!





Hi, I'm Shevon. I joined GB when I was Form 1. The main reason why I joined GB was because of the badges and achievements which attracted my attention. That is also the reason why I attended Young Leaders' Preliminary Training (YLPT) too.

When I was in Form 2 (2015), I joined the YLPT camp. It was my very first leadership camp where I had to stay overnight at a church for 3 days 2 nights. Well, I was very nervous that time when I heard it was a leadership camp. My teacher advisor, Pn Wendy Sito encouraged my friends and I to join the camp and I am glad to heed her advice.

Through YLPT, I had learnt a lot of leadership skills, teamwork with other soon-to-be leaders at that time and also how to be in charge as a commander. Speaking of commander, I was so nervous whenever I had to give the commands. Thanks to Ms Goh, Ms Jia Mi and also Ms Yiwynn who taught and trained me how to be confident in executing the commands.

After attending YLPT camp, I applied the knowledge I learnt in order to train the juniors at my school GB. My teacher advisors gave those who attended YLPT a chance to show them what the officers and leaders had taught us. We did our best as young leaders and we made them proud. Every year, I encouraged my juniors to join the YLPT camp so that they will get an experience of how to be a leader. The camp may be tiring and the leaders there are strict but it is all worth it. I still remember all the commands and the history of GB, thanks to YLPT camp.

Before I end this, I would like to thank my teachers for their encouragement and the GB officers once again for their efforts in making the YLPT camp a success. Without them, I would not have become the president in my school's GB uniform body.

By Shevon Foo





Wesley Methodist Church Ipoh - Sponsoring Body of 1st and 6th Ipoh BB companies as well as the 1st and 2nd Ipoh companies of the Girls' Brigade

By Kevin Lok

The Boys' Brigade is the oldest uniform youth organisation in the world. It was founded on October 4, 1883 by Sir William Alexander Smith, who was a businessman. Sir William was also a member of the 1st Lanarkshire Rifle Volunteers, a unit of the British Army, and a Sunday School teacher.

As a Sunday School teacher, Sir William encountered difficulties in keeping the children quiet to teach them the Word of God. He then had a vision that if the boys met together to have drill and discipline, they would behave better on Sundays for him to easier share the Word.



I joined 1st Ipoh Company as a boy in 2012. As I looked back, my journey in this ministry has indeed been part of God's plan even though it was just a short 18 months while in secondary school. However, my association with the Boys' Brigade did not end there as God called me to serve when I attended Form 6 in SMK Methodist ACS Ipoh. Since then, I have continued to work with other officers and came to understand more about this ministry's aim to reach out to young people and share the Good News of Jesus Christ. After I finished Form 6, I remained as an officer for four years serving through my local church. I am now based at the Boys' Brigade Headquarters. In the four years at the local church, I saw many young people getting to know Christ through the BB.



The ministry of the Boys' Brigade and Girls' Brigade started in Malaysia in the 20th Century. The Girls' Brigade started in 1938 and was known then as the Girls' Life Brigade while the Boys' Brigade first set up in Penang in 1946. The Girls' Brigade has expanded in the country since and there are now more than 70 companies. As for the Boys' Brigade, more than 120 companies have been established.







This year, Wesley Methodist Church hosted the joint enrolment service of the 1st and 6th Ipoh BB companies and the 1st and 2nd Ipoh GB companies. Pastor Mark Tan shared on Live With Christian Character (Matthew 5:13-30). It was a meaningful enrolment service as we witnessed the members and officers of four companies coming together to commit themselves before the Lord.

In Ipoh, four Boys' Brigade companies and two Girls' Brigade companies are still active. Wesley Methodist Church Ipoh is the Sponsoring Body of the 1st and 6th Ipoh companies of the Boys' Brigade, as well as the 1st and 2nd Ipoh companies of the Girls' Brigade.

In 2011, the leaders of Wesley Methodist Church Ipoh shared this youth ministry with Grace Lutheran Church in Menglembu, where 7th Ipoh BB Company was founded, and in 2016 with St John Anglican Church, which led to the forming of 8th Ipoh BB Company, based in St. Michael's Institution.



Next year, 1st Ipoh BB Company will be celebrating the 30th anniversary of its re-establishment. The theme of the celebration will be "Kingdom Advancements over 3 Decades: Widening Tents + Lengthening Cords". (Enlarge the place of your tent, stretch your tent curtains wide, do not hold back; lengthen your cords, strengthen your stakes. For you will spread out to the right and to the left; your descendants will dispossess nations and settle in their desolate cities. Isaiah 54:2-3)



Excerpts of Testimonies from Jeremiah School 2020



Being in Jeremiah School has helped me grow tremendously, more than I have in the past 5 years. It was truly a much-needed time in this particular season of my life. I pray that by the power of the Holy Spirit, I will hold tight to all that I Have learned, experienced, and known here. I will continue to seek the Lord all the days of my life. I want to say, I love my God, and share in His glory forever.

Noreen Choong, Wesley Seremban

Because I am brought up in a Christian home, the sense of familiarity with God often prevents me from experiencing God. But I learned and understood that, because I have come to know God, and am His child, that is experiencing Him; this has changed my attitude towards God and lifestyle.

Mark Chin, Wesley Seremban

One of the top lessons that I have benefited from would have to be Freedom in Christ. In which our identity in Christ is always and constantly reassured. Secondly, quiet retreats were very helpful for me to truly experience God and be in His presence. Thirdly, the session on God's Big Picture really gave me a bird's eye view on the grand story of the Bible.

Joash George, EMC Petaling Jaya

My top transforming story is learning to control my anger throughout these 6 weeks. Because I am a hot-tempered person, I would get angry easily over small matters, but JS has taught me how to be patient and kind towards others. The Christians community here has helped me understand and change my attitude in a godly manner.

Amanda Low, LMC Puchong

I had the opportunity to learn and practice quiet retreats, where I was instructed to keep silent and to fast from food. The silent and the fasting is so that we could direct our very focus to God alone. Here, I learn how to be quiet before God and to wait on Him as in meditate on scripture and reflect from nature.

Daniel Lee, Wesley Taiping



Becoming more selfless and putting others before myself was one of the top transforming stories for me. At the start of JS I always placed myself first, even though I may seem to be listening to someone who was sharing with me, my thoughts always wandered towards some pettier things that I wanted to do, such as doing laundry. But in these 6 weeks, 1 John 4:20-21 became a mirror to me, and God has taught me what it means to be selfless and loving by putting others first.

Janet Poh, Wesley Taiping

One of the lessons that has opened my eyes was God's Big Picture. It has shown me God's plan from the very start until the end. This has helped me to appreciate the overarching theology of the Bible. Secondly is the session on Heart of Worship, I learnt what it means to be a worshiper and also the importance of choosing songs which are biblical.

Hermione Chui, Grace Methodist Miri

After JS, I want to continue my devotion time. To dwell in God's presence is something that I've missed in my youth. Therefore, I would like to spend time with God because He has rescued me. Secondly, I desire to share the gospel to my friends. Jesus came to earth to seek and save the lost; hence, it is my duty to continue what Jesus has commanded us - to make disciples of all people.

Esther Ooi, Wesley Kuala Lumpur

Out of all the sessions we had, I've learned a few things that really struck me. From inductive bible study, I gain a tool to interpret the Bible and how to analyze and infer from the verses. Secondly is from quiet retreats, I learnt how to spend time in meditation of God's word, to quiet myself before Him in His presence. I really appreciate this, as I did not have that prior to JS.

Alicia Lee, EMC Petaling Jaya

Before JS, I was someone with low self-esteem and always seeking validation from others. However, through the session "freedom in Christ", I realise that I am a child of God, that I am made whole in Christ. I've also learned to be grateful for the talents that God has given me and that I should not be envious of others - that God is the only one I must seek to satisfy.

Caleb Ching, Chinese Methodist Bahau

I came to JS a very worried person, always worrying about what might or will happen. My mind was constantly dominated by "what ifs" and that usually affects my ability to fall asleep at night. But the turning point came when I went through "The Journey" during the last silent retreat. God comforted me through His word in 1 Peter 5:7, He reminded me that I can "leave all my worries with the Lord, because He cares for me."

Joshua Sam, Chinese Methodist Jementah

Before joining JS, I had always treated Christianity lightly, as surely there are other things that I should prioritise other than God. I thought life can still go on without putting God first - but i was wrong. One facilitator asked: "How can you be so fearful of everything else in the world but not fearful of God?" That has caused me to question my priorities and realised that I did not fear God at all.

Rayna Ling, Grace Miri





I have learned the leadership skills of leading devotional sharing in my mentoring group and leading in songs of praise . Also, I truly appreciate the time given to be with God, and to have a personal encounter with Him learning to meditate on His word, and helping me to understand the Bible better.

Harry Huang, Grace Miri.

I have learnt many things in Jeremiah School and it has truly impacted my life. One of the essential things I've learnt is the effective way to study the Bible and the proper way to meditate on it. I've also learnt about God's Big Picture throughout the time and how the entire Bible is linked to Jesus Christ. My life has been transformed as I am finally able to overcome my sins and struggles through my freedom in Christ.

Eirene Sii Jing, SCAC Kuching

Perkara yang paling menonjol dalam perubahan hidup saya ialah, saya dapat mengawal emosi yang sedang marah. Perkara ini sangat nampak ketika saya sedang marah. Selain it, saya dapat memaafkan orang yang telah menyakitkan hati saya. Selepas saya tahu bahawa Tuhan adalah yang maha-pengampun, baru saya sedari bahawa ia adalah perintah Yesus supaya kita mengampuni orang lain.

Malcolm Robert, Lg. Lamai

Jeremiah School has changed me. It allowed me the safe space needed to heal and forgive those who have wronged me in the past. With this I am much at peace, being freed from such a stronghold in my life has helped me draw closer to God my Father.

Dominic Yeap, Trinity Penang

In JS, I really turned a new leaf. I learned to face my fears in giving a sermonette and also in leading worship during our visit to Faith Methodist Church, Cheras. I also learn to trust God in what I do, and to discipline myself by reading the Bible early in the morning.

Ngo Jie Ern, Ayer Tawar Methodist Church



God's love is shown in the Christian Community here in JS. Because God loves us, we can show that same love to each other. I was once insensitive towards others, but through this community, I've learned what it means to love others the way God loves me.

Carmel Ching, Chinese Methodist, Bahau

During the "Dealing with God" session, there was this part where we are to shout "Crucify Him", to imitate the crowd and also the priest during the passion of Christ. It was hard for me to utter those words. Later, the facilitator challenged us to surrender our lives to Christ; I broke down as I cried out to God in surrendrance.

Daniel Ong, Wesley Ipoh

I used to only view God as holy and righteous, a pretty scary figure, but Jeremiah School has taught me that not only is God holy, He is also love - I too can have a personal relationship with Him. I found joy in speaking to God and reading the Bible every morning; thus, I've made a commitment to put God first in everything.

Ng Caryne, CGMC Ipoh





Children Camp Testimony 30th Nov 2019 TMC SG Buloh

By Mrs. Amilyn Choong (Sunday School Superintendent)



This is the day, 30 November 2019 that God has made a remarkable blessing to Trinity Methodist Church Sungai Buloh Children's Camp Day. He has given us another day to learn from Him, grow through Him, joining us together in unity to magnify Him and share His love to the little ones with joy and hope. He was with us throughout the camp. Emmanuel!

God has brought 95 lovely children to this camp. They were from Zo Blessed Myanmar Refugee, Ann Cottage single mother centre, Wesley Methodist School Bandar Sri Coalfield and majority from Sungai Buloh communities. Also, God has brought 42 joyful, committed with different gifting volunteers to this camp too.

It has given us a great joy in seeing young and old working together with God's love in spirit and in truth. Truly D6 (Deuteronomy 6) was in action after what we had learned from the D6 conference for the past 2 years.

"Do Good, Seek Peace and Go After It" Psalms 34:14b was the Part 1 Hero verse of the camp. Children learned & knew who God's Superhero is and how to be God's "Superhero" too. They were taught that God's Hero has HEART and God's Hero has COURAGE. The event was incorporated with team cheer, fun in science, bible stories movie, worship the Lord with joyful heart and action, delicious pizza baking, creative art & craft, interesting games and challenging activities.

We praise and thank God for these children and volunteers. Also, we thank God for Life Methodist Church Puchong for sharing with us the teaching materials & some of their art works. We continue to keep all these children and volunteers in prayer that God's blessings will continue to be upon them. May His words be planted in them and grow in them. Looking forward to our Part 2 Children Camp in 2020.

Grace, mercy & peace from God the Father and from Jesus Christ, the Father's Son will be with Trinity Methodist Church Sungai Buloh in truth and love always. Hallelujah!



MCO and the Church - the Early period

By Anthony Row (General Conference Secretary)



On 20th March 2020 Rev Dr Herman Shastri, Gen Secretary of CCM sent out an SOS to Churches seeking volunteers to help prepare, pack and distribute food items to the B40 community who were holed up in various areas in the vicinity surrounding Petaling Jaya. As volunteer names kept popping up in the what's up chat group, Herman worked in collaboration with Maria Chin Abdullah, MP for Petaling Jaya to use her networking resources to register all the volunteers with PDRM. Herman found in Maria an excellent ally. She had the data base of community leaders, names of families in need, their location and so much more. She needed hands to help execute the whole task. About 32 volunteered, comprising members from various denomination and people of all faiths. The marvelous thing about Maria was that she did not ask for funds or ask us to raise any money to meet the needs. All she asked for was time and a heart of love to meet the hunger pangs of those in need. It must be said that Maria ensured all precautions were taken, for example, face masks, gloves, sanitizers were provided and social distancing practiced and guidelines of the Government implemented and upheld.

I was one of those who volunteered and was registered with the PDRM. My journey with this group of volunteers began on the 23rd of March 2020.

We distributed freshly prepared food for 4,000 families. The next few days, was preparing 600 packets of fresh chickens, fresh vegetables, rice, oil, beverages. What happened the following days astounded me, as more volunteers came together to pack eggs, meehoon, rice, flour, sugar, beverages, oat packets, maggi, etc to be distributed to over 3000 B40 families.

The work is not finished. We have been informed that there is to be another 14 days of MCO. And to add to it, we are still not sure what the "new normal" will be for the poor and needy and for many of us.

I am certain the volunteers will be called in the coming days to once again prepare, pack and distribute food items. Having seen how they have worked thus far, I am certain the volunteers will respond with a joyous heartthey will bless those in need and in that act of blessing others, they will be blessed.

Jesus ministered by looking into their eyes and faces of people, he had a word for them and he touched them by meeting their needs.



Retired from School Board Chairmanship

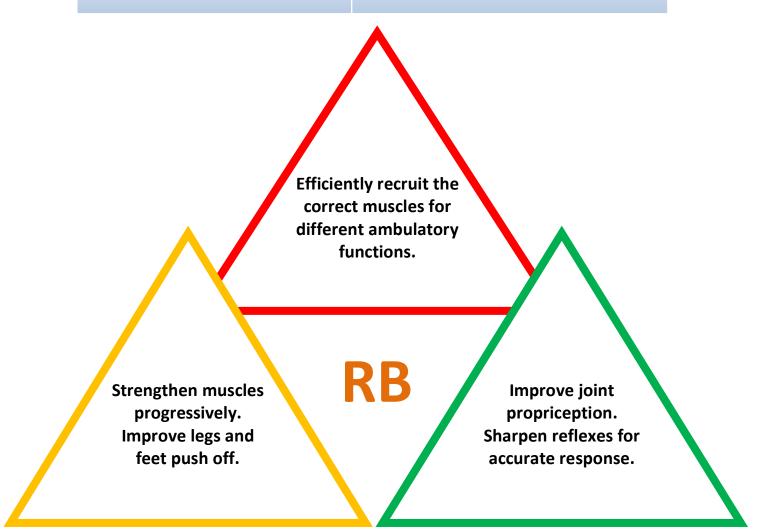
Mr Siu Tack Chuan who is a member of the Canning Garden Methodist Church, Ipoh was the Chairman of the Board of Management of Sekolah Kebangsaan Methodist Ho Seng Ong, Ipoh from the 1st of January 2012 until he stepped down on the 1st of January 2020. However, he was retained as a member of the Board upon retirement. At the end of his term as Chairman of the Board, the Chairman of the PTA Dr Zamzida and the Headmistress Puan Dahliah presented him some souvenirs to appreciate his services rendered to the School. We in TRAC are grateful for Mr Siu's faithful services to the School.



Berita TRAC is a newsletter of the Trinity Annual Conference of the Methodist Church in Malaysia. We welcome articles, contributions, comments and feedbacks that will edify the TRAC churches. The editor reserves the right to edit and publish selected submissions. Please forward all enquiries, comments and contributions to: admin@trac.org.my or call 03-7954 2836 website: www.trac.org.my



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