

# The Vine

2002

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Easter greetings to all the saints in Christ Jesus. Actually even as I type this few words, it is already 11.00pm on a Sunday night. The Vine is the last thing on my agenda. After completing the Budget for 2002 and the Treasurer's Report for 2001, drafting out the Good Friday service on Powerpoint and automated the MBTI test, I thought there wasn't any time left for The Vine but there was still time.

Then I wondered where am I going to get any articles at this eleventh hour because this is the last week of March. However the Lord has provided, with many letters from missionaries and friends coming in through the e-mail which I had just opened. I must admit that I did only a cursory check on the letters and if there are many errors, please pardon me. I marvel Dr Andy Ho, who told us that he reads 500 pages before he writes one of his articles in the Straits Times. I don't think I have the time or patience for that.

Thanks again to my fellow editor, John Lee, who single handedly produced the February issue and also supplied much material for this issue. Pastor Yee is again too busy to write his word this issue due to his role in the Shepherds group. The AGM is coming up soon. See you then.

*The Editor.*

**What is Easter?** Non-Christians may immediately think of colourfully decorated Easter eggs, or just a day for hanging out with friends. But do they really know the actual purpose for such a celebration?

The Christian celebration of Easter is linked to the Jewish celebration of the Passover. Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread were observed by the ancient Israelites early in each new year. Passover was the most important feast of the Jewish calendar, celebrated at the first full moon after the Vernal Equinox. The Equinox typically occurs on March 20, 21 or 22 according to our present calendar. "Equinox" means "equal night"; on that date of the year, the night and day are approximately equal. Many Christians believed that Jesus Christ was executed and buried just before the beginning of Passover on Friday evening.

Easter Sunday falls on the first Sunday after the first full moon - after March 20, the nominal date of the Spring Equinox. Easter Sunday can fall on any date from March 22 to April 25. This year, Easter Sunday falls on March 31. Next year, in 2003, it will be on April 20.

Easter Sunday commemorates Jesus' resurrection. In the early church, converts were baptized into church membership on this day after a period of instruction. This tradition continues today in some churches, including JCC. Here is a summary account of our Lord Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection according to the Holy Scriptures:

Approximately 2000 years ago on a Friday, Jesus was crucified on the cross. Then, He was laid in a tomb. On early Sunday morning, Mary Magdalene and a few women took spices and went to the tomb. They saw that the big stone had been removed from the entrance and the Lord's body could not be found. Mary Magdalene told the news to Simon Peter, as well as other disciples of Jesus. They ran to the tomb and could not find Jesus' body.

Although the disciples went back to their homes, Mary Magdalene remained at the tomb crying. Two angels appeared inside the tomb and asked her why. She answered that she did not know where Jesus' body was taken to. Just then, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but did not recognize Him.

Jesus asked her, "Woman, why are you crying? Who is it you are looking for?"

Thinking that He was the gardener, Mary said to Him, "Sir, if you have carried Him away, tell me where you have put Him, and I will get Him."

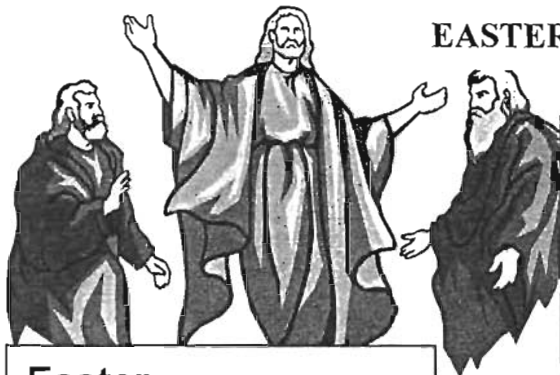
Jesus said to her, "Mary."

Then Mary immediately recognized Jesus. After Jesus told her to tell His other disciples about the news of His resurrection, she did as He instructed. There was great joy from all upon hearing the good news.

So, Easter for Christians is a time to celebrate the resurrection of Lord Jesus, for He has shown us that Christians will have eternal life through Him. It is not just another public holiday.

*Genevieve Leong*  
K.I.D.S Church

## EASTER BY KIDS CHURCH



### Christmas and Easter

(Ryan Neo - P1)

Christmas is the birth of Christ  
In a manger that He lies  
He healed many of their lives  
Anger among Gentiles was rife

Easter is the death of Christ  
Killed by people full of lies  
Three days later when He rose  
River of life flows and flows

### Easter (Amanda Goh - P5)

With all the sins, it's just not fair  
'Cos Jesus had to bear our share  
The rest of us all mourned and cried  
Until our Jesus finally died

And so our one and only boss  
Went up unto the cross  
He took away our sin  
And threw them in the bin

On a very special Easter day  
In the tomb he no more lay  
When people came to look for Him  
They found nothing but linen and string

Our Jesus has indeed risen  
All our sins are forgiven

### He Died For Me

(Felicia Soong Wanyi - P2)

Easter is about God  
Who made everything  
He died for our sins and  
Forgives us every time  
He loves us and cares for us  
He is good and kind  
He wants us to be loving  
To everyone

Wherever we go, He is always with us  
I am so happy we have Easter



### Not About Colourful Eggs

(Samantha Soong Xinyi - P3)

Easter is not about new clothes or hats. It is not about colourful chocolate eggs or sweets to eat. It is about the time when we remember Jesus dying for our sins. On Good Friday, He died for us and two days later, on Easter Sunday, He rose again. After His death, the bodies of many holy people who had died were also risen. He was buried in a tomb with guards guarding it. An angel of the Lord came down and the guards ran away. An angel told Mary that Jesus has risen. Rejoice to the Lord the real God, our Saviour. Hallelujah!

# Head Covering for Women

It is not the fascinated by the issue covering. I was already more than twenty years Christian of less than time, my involvement be just a mental some Christian further ado in my mind – thanks to the me indirectly by Queenstown Lutheran Church and directly by a National Service comrade cum Christian buddy at Bedok Lutheran Church. I shall tell you more about this involvement later.



case that I am suddenly of women's head “involved” in the issue ago when I was a young two years old. At that could perhaps be said to exercise in expressing viewpoints (without or heart over the matter) opportunity presented to

In fact, it was two years ago when I was surprised by a debate on this on the Internet. I was somewhat curious about the attention paid to this “non-issue” among Christians and so it kept me musing over it with puzzlement. Below is a synopsis of the debate (very much shortened) which started on the India Gospel Network Discussion Board at <http://indiagospel.net/discussion/messages/> in June 2000 and went on for about six months:

Roy: I'm just wondering why women do not cover their heads in church in America. Paul writes in Corinthians to do so. I just don't understand why people just ignore things conveniently.

c.a.: Roy seems to have issues with the church in America in general, and the women therein in particular. Those issues seem to weigh down his argument, and that is a shame. Because the exegesis of the passage he seems to be referring to (1) is something I agree with. ... We should look at the passage ... and see whether its plain message would lead us to conclude

one way or the other ... That is what the text says. I think it is binding on all believers at all times and in all places.

Sergios: Paul wrote in I Timothy 2:8: "I want men everywhere to lift up holy hands in prayer, without anger or disputing." Does that mean women are not supposed to lift up hands in prayer?!! What about those men who don't lift up their hand while praying?!! Just wondering..!!

Don: Peter wrote in 1Peter 3:3 that "Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of PUTTING ON APPAREL:" WOW! How dare those American women put on clothing in church! Shaaaaame! Ok, so we've heard from Peter and Paul. Does Mary have anything to say?

Rajan: Women fail to cover their heads in church in America, because of their hair-do. The hair on their head is done after spending lot of time and money to show off. If it is left covered then who is going to see and admire. They pay no heed to Paul's writing and are concerned about their looks.

Manoj: If they love the Lord, then what does it matter? The greatest commandment from Christ was to Love the Lord our God. If anyone follows this commandment then certain details like this should not matter. Should they? Correct me if I'm wrong, but I believe there is a verse that states men should not have long hair. Why is this never an issue?

*(At the time of writing this, the website is still accessible.)*

It is obvious that the debate on head covering is not a fresh phenomenon. You can also see how a single thread of debate touching on what is Scripturally right or wrong about something as humble as a piece of head covering can easily fray up into manifold strands to encompass the questions of whether women should not lift up hands in prayer, whether they should put on clothes at all, about vanity, the meaning and expression of love of God, ... (*ad infinitum*). To join in the debate, might I not add my piece that women should not be wearing pants at all, for isn't it said in Deut. 22:5 that the woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man ... for all that do so are abomination unto thy God"?

#### ON WEARING OF PANTS BY WOMEN

"The woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man ..... for all that do so are abomination unto thy God" - De 22:5

God's word is good for instruction only when it is interpreted in its proper context. Matt 23:8 speaks of people spreading their garments in the way to welcome Jesus and Jo 13:5 mentions of Jesus washing his disciples' feet as an act of humility. In the present day, however, do we at all follow the same ancient custom of spreading out our garments in welcoming somebody or stoop so low as to wash others' feet in order to be humble?

Obviously, the answer to the above question is "No", and therefore for similar reason the instruction of De 22:5 cannot be absolutely binding in the present day context. The distinction of sexes by the apparel was given prominence in the days of Moses, whereby was the justification for the instruction of De 22:5. This law against women putting on male garments has also been thought of as referring to "the idolatrous custom of the Gentiles: in the worship of Yemue, women appeared in armor, and men in women's clothes" which was considered to be an abomination to the Lord.

Today, there is of course also a distinction between the sexes by the apparel, but insofar as the wearing of pants by women is concerned, such a distinction no longer exists; this is at least so in the local context. Because of change of custom with time, women may now freely wear pants as they like; they have only to ensure that their attire and bearing do not in any way cause confusion between the sexes. By way of an example, women who wear pants with shirt and male shoes, and sports tomboyish hair-style would only cause her own embarrassment and certainly not gain the respect of respectable men, even if we may overlook the fact that she is unrightly active against the guiding principle (an contrast the direct interpretation) of the Mosaic law in De 22:5 which does not condemn the likeness of women to men.

publication had to be transferred onto stencil and cyclostyled. (Most likely, our younger generation today, so comfortable with working on Microsoft Word and efficient printers/copiers, do not have an inkling what cyclostyling with messy ink is all about.) This is an indication of the time milieu in which the issue discussed was in fashion.

Since my opinion piece on *Pants* was accepted for publication by *Koinonia's* editor, Terry Kee, it stirred some interest in my Christian buddy at Bedok Lutheran Church, an Indonesian Singaporean, to ask casually for my views about head covering for women in prayer. Just as the question on

The piece on women wearing pants was actually what I was encouraged to write by a question inviting readers' response published in *Koinonia* (circa 1980), a bi-monthly publication of Queenstown Lutheran Church. Whatever I wrote had to be laboriously typed out on a mechanical typewriter and whatever submitted to the editor for

*Pants*, I was just dealing with the issue of *head covering* as an intellectual exercise without any deep feeling. Still, I wrote quite a bit on the topic “Head Covering For Women In Prayer”. At that time, how would I have known whether such “an unimportant peripheral issue to Christians, myself included” was in fact a topic that interested not just my younger Christian buddy but also many people in distant lands whose voices were greatly beyond my earshot, the Internet being unheard of in the age of my youthful innocence? Since what was to me a mere academic exercise in expressing my views purely from a Christian perspective when invited to do so (on a seemingly humdrum topic) would actually continue to bug some Christians on the Web twenty-plus years on in this modern age, I am now in this 21<sup>st</sup> Century beginning to feel a sense of immunity to surprise if debates on the issue still maintain their currency twenty years in the future; i.e., in the year 2022. (Plausible even if you consider it unbelievable!)

Re: Head Covering For Women In Prayer

You requested for more information on the subject. The original for women to be head covered during prayer was given by Apostle Paul in 1Cor<sup>11</sup>:5. In deciding on the content of the second today, I'll present to consider the context in which it is given. Your attention is drawn to what I wrote on the meaning of *heads* by women; that God's *head* is Christ for instruction only when interpreted in the proper context. I did mention in 1991 that I'd like to show how someone has changed with time and how practices of past become obsolete today. Please note.

The Church of Christians to which Paul addressed his epistle was a pioneering one, with the promise still facing such internal divisions and apostasy (1Cor<sup>11</sup>:16). Paul was therefore not primarily concerned with theological issues when he wrote, but with the social application of righteous principles on Church like Church order, Christian success, etc. You will find his dealings with a survey of the overall context of the epistle. At that time, the Church was faced with many enemies over (and of) its members. In attempting to bring about a settlement to such conflicts, Paul was the need to voice out the acceptable version of those days. Perhaps, a woman who has head covered implied submission to the man and any deviation from the norm of the Christian community at that time would not be in accord with the basic principle of social harmony and equality; when social distinctions in conduct and decorum tended to blurring. In respect of public worship, the proper dress for women would be in line with the current emphasis on modesty.

Now, apart from the need for contextual interpretation of facts, I may add that any portion of scripture may also be seen in connection with other portions, including on a similar or related issue. It may not be treated as an independent entity, as that may not risk painting a partial or incomplete picture of a biblical command. From 1H<sup>1</sup>:21-23, it is clear that righteousness is essential from the heart, so that spiritual importance is the eternal willing of a woman's head in worship if only she is right with God in her heart. To have her heart right with God of course implies that she would be a woman of prayer and her attention in life do not make of her head as Christ. By the context of Paul's time, it was considered improper or improper for a woman to have her head covered in church as she was regarded as a woman of distinctive Church conflicts, the wearing of head covering was not a requirement, do not say were asked a woman to be veiled for properly through the original intention of Paul's command to cover, so the same practice of 2000 years ago is obsolete.

The question of head covering for women is really a small and insignificant matter in relation to the broader tenets of Christianity. It is not a base for contention in the Christian community as an intergenerational issue now, as the last great revival of the world was not a revival of the head covering issue to debate. By not having any ordinance, you would not be in any way in your own hearts. If you were to have a head covering, you would not be in any way will not have things like your mind to have you, such as early ancestral regulations, religious practices, etc., etc. Would all this be worth your heart?

It is better if you read this reply of mine in connection of what I wrote on the meaning of *heads* by women. It not only does so, but also a specific answer to your question, but treat it as a general illustration of the overall significance of a head-and-shoulder and accurate biblical interpretation. And the illustration is only a general one indeed, for I am not capable of going into the details of every biblical instruction which is a complex and subtle in itself - *Memorabilia*. The will certainly appreciate more of the truth or you do about your request. It is a good one to be a good one. I will be glad to answer your question, as I shall also through the sharing process to be and do.

My present interest in sharing the above reminiscences is not because “Head Covering for Women” is important or not. While there are innumerable more weighty issues concerning Christians than being flustered over head covering, and I know that our women in Church will have absolutely nothing to worry about being scoffed at for displaying their hairstyles, it may be of some use in this wild Internet age (‘wild’ in the sense of the uncontrollable gushing of information and misinformation) for us to be acquainted with the whiffs of fervor, across oceans, on the issue that we may from time to time chance upon so that we may be prepared ourselves with a ready explanation for people (Christians and non-Christians) who may just like to tell us that they have read about this view on the Web and heard about that disagreement from their “Christian

friends". Even if these people who approach us are our Christian brothers and sisters, maybe young in faith or less informed about Christian truths, they do not deserve any ridicule for their innocence but a sympathetic listening ear with a firm assurance that all is well for our Christian women who attend Church with their heads uncovered.

I find it significant and a happy development that in Singapore there is increasing awareness of the importance of inter-racial and inter-religious understanding and tolerance, as seen in the practical steps taken by the nation's leaders to set up the Inter-Racial Confidence Circles (IRCC) to cover all constituencies by July. Such IRCC provide great opportunities for people of all ilks to exchange knowledge of one another's customs, beliefs, sensitivities, etc. It is in the spirit of seeking peaceful co-existence based on mutual understanding and respect that sharing of contrary viewpoints should be encouraged – as frankly as can be, without hurt feelings, with an agree-to-disagree and free-to-accept-or-decline attitude for one another's communications. I believe that such exchanges are slowly but surely taking place whether in public or in private between colleagues and friends to appreciate one another better.

MARCH 14, 2002

**Varsity Muslim fairs draw crowds**

The exhibitions in NUS and NTU are held to foster greater understanding of Islam and dispel the misconceptions

By Ahmad Osman and Sim Chi Yin

CCMIS of the Quran, translated in English and Chinese, flew off the tables at public exhibitions held at two universities here yesterday.

What is a small issue of head covering to Christians is a very important issue to Muslim women. If we want to know more about why the *tudung* is considered an imperative to Muslim women, the best people we can hear from must be our Muslim friends who are familiar with the Islamic faith, not from sources of undetermined reliability; and surely our Muslim friends will not enthuse us making uninformed comments about their beliefs.

In a similar vein, Christians do not want themselves or their beliefs to be misunderstood by non-Christians, and we do not enthuse non-Christians making uninformed comments and advertising their ignorance about Christian truths regardless of whether such misplaced comments are sourced from the Internet or from face-to-face communications with uninformed Christians.



A noteworthy example of poor knowledge is seen in the case of a STREATS reader (one Mr Ibrahim B.) from Johor Baru who wrote to the papers (19<sup>th</sup> Feb) that the regulation of head covering actually comes from the Bible, implying that it is basically a Christian issue and not a Muslim issue. How regrettable that a non-Christian was not only ill-informed about Christian teachings (and had to be roundly rebutted by another STREATS reader) but also lacked a proper understanding of Islamic teachings that he sought to comment on (and so was roundly chastised by *Muis*, the Islamic authority in Singapore). In other words, he ended up being smacked left and right for his ignorance.

On the issue of head covering for women, how would you share your understanding or lack of it with your non-Christian friends if they approach you for your view based on the Bible, especially if they are entangled with all sorts of opinions picked up from diverse sources and eager to quote other misinformed Christians as authority?

While you may personally not give a hoot to the issue as a Christian, treating it as humdrum and trivial, it may be the exact opposite to your sincere enquirer and your response may just enlighten the person or entwine him more tightly in ignorance. So, whether you personally feel anything or not for the issue of head covering for Christian women, do not just shove it aside and think nothing of it. Twenty-plus years ago, I was asked the question on head covering when I least expect it as a young Christian. (Fortunately, by God's grace, I was able to deal head on with it and helped my younger Christian buddy dispose of any trace of uncertainty.) Two years ago, I became confronted with the issue again by accident on the Internet and came to realize that the issue is still very much alive in this new millennium. And today, in the light of increasing interest on inter-racial and inter-religious communications to forge better ties and understanding, you may not gainsay that a non-Christian or a young Christian (who maybe has been approached by another young Christian) will not come up to you tomorrow with the question: "I have heard this and that about what the Bible says and what others say, but what do Christianity really teach about the need for a woman to cover her head?" Will you respond to the question intelligently or just shoo it away?

*John Lee*

# Combined-Poly Thailand Mission Trip

We combed the school compound to catch 'fishes' every afternoon. We normally made friends with them by sharing about Singapore and ourselves. Gradually, we brought in the gospel. The common response usually was "I am a Buddhist since young." We were saddened by the hardness of heart but we prayed even more. As we prayed, God opened doors for us.

*"I met Eak at the Singapore Nite (evangelistic program). He joined us for badminton the next morning and he is willing to come to our room to hear the gospel. Even though he didn't receive Christ, he was grateful to us because we let him know more about God. He promise to study more about God and maybe think about receiving Christ one day."*  
Kelvin, 3<sup>rd</sup> year student from Singapore Polytechnic

*"When I was sharing the gospel halfway, the girl stopped me. She said that she wanted to*

***Praise Him for His mighty deeds; Praise Him according to His excellent greatness. Let everything that has breath praise the Lord. Praise the Lord!***

## **Psalm 150:2,6**

*do her homework, so I just sit beside her. It seemed that I can't continue on but I remember that prayer is powerful. So I ask God to stop the girl from doing her homework. Immediately after my prayer, she stopped. I was shocked and I asked her why. She said that her classmate found her handwriting ugly so she left the writing to her instead. Then Bee Kim continued sharing the gospel."*  
Bee Kim, graduate from Ngee Ann Polytechnic

By the grace of God, we shared with 120 Thai students in Thammasat University and 19 prayed to receive Christ.

### **English Class**

We held English classes daily from 5:30 pm to 7pm during the weekdays. We had games, action songs and salvation testimonies by team members. Through these English classes, we were able to make friends with Thai



students and make the gospel known to them. It was there that Jean (1<sup>st</sup> year student from Singapore Polytechnic) met 'C'.

*"C came for our English class faithfully. On the surface, she seems strong headed and committed to Buddhism. She appears to be defensive when I want to meet up with her. But gradually her attitude began to change. When I told her that I want to share a booklet that will give her a deeper understanding of who Christ is, she is ready to listen. She received Christ and we did follow-up with her. She even went with us to church the following Sunday."*

### Chantaburee Village Outreach

On the 10<sup>th</sup> of December, we went to this village with only about 30 households. Together with the second team, we distributed "JESUS" mini magazine and cassette tapes to the villagers. With the help of the Thai staff, we invited them to watch Jesus film at the crossroad. When evening came, the sky was dark and it began to drizzle. We prayed and soon it stopped. We were awed by God's power. That night, 60 children and 20

adults turned up for the film show. 5 prayed to receive Christ.

*"That night as I did prayer walk around the area, God put in my heart compassion for lost souls. I have realized that my heart has grown cold because of the many rejections that I received from witnessing in Singapore. I thank God for reminding me to earnestly pray for lost souls."* Yiwei, staff with Campus Crusade

We thank God for using us to reach Thailand. We were very much blessed by the Lord, more than we could imagine. These are some of the blessings and lessons learnt:

*"I experienced God's faithfulness and love during this trip. I thank God for bringing me to Thailand and even have the chance to know the urgency to spread the gospel."* Calyn, 2<sup>nd</sup> year student from Ngee Ann Polytechnic

*"Being part of God's plan is indeed fruitful! He is always there when I need Him! He uses people and circumstances to break me, mould me so that I can be used by Him."* Ron, 3<sup>rd</sup> year student from Temasek Polytechnic



*"This mission trip has been faith-stretching for me. I learnt to trust God in raising support and obtaining parental approval. It has been a great experience where I've tasted His goodness and love towards me. He has been faithful to me."* Cheryl, 2<sup>nd</sup> year student from Ngee Ann Polytechnic

*"I enjoyed the trip very much and I learnt a lot. Through prayer and good preparation, I became more confident especially in doing God's work." Siew Siew, 1<sup>st</sup> year student from Nanyang Polytechnic*

*"This trip has opened my eyes to see the vast harvest. God used this trip to rekindle the fire within me, allowing me to have compassion for the lost. I'm also encouraged to know that Christians around the world are helping to fulfil the Great Commission." Grace, 2<sup>nd</sup> year student from Temasek Polytechnic*

*"I thank God for reminding me that I am just an instrument, a testimony of His message of love. To know His work, I need to remain moldable and available in the Potter's hands" Cuiping, Staff with Campus Crusade*

*"I've learnt that it is not me working for God, not how much I can do for God but the need to see where He is working and just simply partnering with Him." Amanda, 1<sup>st</sup> year student from Temasek Polytechnic*

*"Learnt to submit to God's will and watch what He is doing and join Him. Learn to live a life of self denial and seeking His perspective in every circumstance." Janice, 2<sup>nd</sup> year student from Nanyang Polytechnic*

*"I want to study the bible more in depth so that God can use me to help*

*others. I also learn to obey God one step at a time, with confidence and trust in Him." Kaleb, 2<sup>nd</sup> year student from Nanyang Polytechnic*

*"Learnt to trust God in raising support, exam results and letting my project mates handle the final year project when I am not around. Through this trip, I realized that God do empower ordinary people to live extraordinary lives." Jonathan, 3<sup>rd</sup> year student from Singapore*

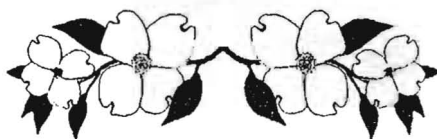


Polytechnic.

We thank you for your financial and prayer support that made this trip possible, and allowed many Thais had the opportunity to hear the gospel for the first time in their lives.

Luv

Jonathan Tan



# FUN WITH HISTORY

Here's some history fun for you. Next time you are washing your hands, and complain because the water temperature isn't just how you like it, think about how things used to be....Here are some facts about the 1500s:

Most people got married in June, because they took their yearly bath in May and still smelled pretty good by June. However, as time passed they were starting to smell, so brides carried bouquet of flowers to hide the body odor.

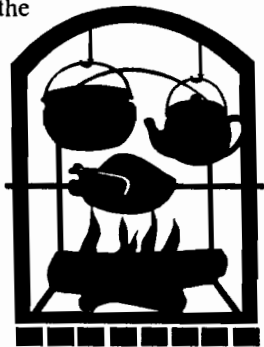
Baths consisted of a big tub filled with hot water. The man of the house had the privilege of the nice clean water; followed by his sons, and other men living under the same roof. Then came the women and finally the children. Last of all were the babies. By then the water was so dirty you could actually lose someone in it, hence the saying, "Don't throw the baby out with the bath water."

Houses had thatched roofs—thick straw, piled high—with no wood underneath. It was the only place for animals to get warm, so all the dogs, cats and other small animals (mice, bugs) lived in the roof. When it rained it became slippery and sometimes the animals would slip and fall off the roof, thus came the saying, "It's raining cats and dogs."

There was nothing to stop things from falling into the house either. This posed a real problem in the bedroom where bugs and other droppings could really mess up your nice clean bed. Hence, a bed with big posts and a sheet hung over the top afforded some protection. That's how canopy beds came into existence.

The floor was dirt. Only the wealthy had something other than dirt, hence the saying "dirt poor." The wealthy had slat floors that would get slippery in the winter when wet, so they spread thresh (straw) on the floor to help keep their footing. As the winter wore on, they kept adding more thresh until when you opened the door it would all start slipping outside. A piece of wood was placed in the entranceway creating a "thresh hold."

In those old days, they cooked in the kitchen with a big kettle that always hung over the fire. Every day they lighted the fire and added things to the pot They ate mostly vegetables without much meat. They would eat the stew for dinner, leaving left-overs in the pot to get cold overnight, then start over the next day. Often times the kettle contained the same stew for quite a while, hence the rhyme, "peas porridge hot, peas porridge cold, peas porridge in the pot nine days old."



Families that could obtain pork considered themselves quite special. When visitors came over, they would hang up their bacon to show off it was an outward sign of wealth that a man could “bring home the bacon.” Another indication was to cut off a sliver of bacon to share with guests and sit around to “chew the fat”.

Those with money had plates made of pewter. Unknowingly at the time, food with a high acid content caused some of the lead to leach onto the food, causing lead poisoning and death. This happened most often with tomatoes, so for the next 400 years or so, tomatoes were considered poisonous.



Most people did not have pewter plates, but had trenchers, a piece of wood with the middle scooped out like a bowl. Often trenchers were made from stale bread, which was so old and hard that they could be reused for quite some time. Trenchers were never washed, and worms and mold got into the wood and old bread. After eating off wormy, moldy trenchers, one would get “trench mouth”.

Bread was divided according to status. Workers got the burnt bottom of the loaf, the family got the middle, and guests got the top, or “upper crust.”

Lead cups were used to drink ale or whiskey. The combination would sometimes knock them out for a couple of days. Someone walking along roadside would often take them for dead, and prepare them for burial. The “deceased” were laid out on the kitchen table for a couple of days, and families would gather around, and eat, drink and wait to see if the party would wake up, thus began the custom of holding a “wake.”

England is old and small, and the locals started running out of places to bury people. They would dig up coffins and would take the bones to a “bone-house” and reuse the grave. When re-opening coffins, 1 out of 25 coffins were found to have scratch marks on the inside. Realizing they had been burying people alive came the thought of looping a string around the wrist of the corpse, through a hole in the coffin, and up through the ground attached to a bell. Someone had to sit in the graveyard all night (the “graveyard shift”) to listen for the bell; thus, someone could be “saved by the bell” or was considered a “dead ringer.”



And that’s the truth, folks. Who said History was boring?!

# NEWS FROM THE KEEs

March 2002

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Dear friends,

I purchased a little Lutheran Devotional book dated 1885 recently and there was a yellowed old newspaper clipping with the following words

*“One life and one alone we have to live upon this little earth. One life in which to learn so much – to seek and find and prove our worth ... So many dreams there are to dream – so many things to know and do – So many pathways to pursue ... So waste no time on fruitless quests that get you nowhere in the end. The gold of time is yours to squander or with care to use and spend ... It’s folly to postpone good deeds. Tomorrow never comes they say. The future times belong to God. Your only chance is now ... Today.”*

There’s so much to do that we really need to prioritize and accept the fact that we cannot do them all.

Things are picking up in Siikhiu Church. We ended the year by reducing our debts (part of it due to furnishing the church) from a hefty 280,000 baht to 165,000 baht. Thanks be to God.

The pavilion for Sunday School and fellowship use was completed at a low cost of 22,000 baht (approx. S\$900++)



On the Spiritual front, we had to deal with several demonic and spiritual attack cases recently and would need much prayer support.

We had just opened our co-operative “bank” that provide low interest loan to members for income generating projects at very

**low interest with money deposited by members and managed by a committee.**

**We will share more when we are back in Singapore.**

**We are due for our 3 months furlough from 1 June to 31 August this year when we will have 1 month for rest and 2 months for deputation purposes.**

**Due to some personal matters that needed to be dealt with, we would be available to meet and share with all congregations from 26<sup>th</sup> June to 26<sup>th</sup> August 2002. We will also be sharing at the LCS Missions' conference on the 24<sup>th</sup> August.**

**We hoped to be able to share in all the congregations (Chinese, English & Thai) during this time and look forward to meet all of you. Those interested to arrange for us to share to make presentations, please contact Rev. Rickson Leong, the LCS Mission Chairman.**

**Please pray for us. March and April are busy and important months for the Mission and for the Church. We have:**

- 1. EFT's Bi-annual Assembly from 25 – 28 March 2002**
- 2. Combined camp for all the congregations from 1 – 3 April 2002.**
- 3. Missionary Annual Conference and meeting from 19-21 April 2002.**
- 4. Joint Board Meeting on 22 April 2002.**
- 5. ELCT's General Assembly from 23 – 25 April 2002.**

**May the Lord continue to bless you richly according to His love and grace.**

**Yours in Christ's love,**

**Terry and Sally**



Jerry, Jenny, Jedidah & Jeswyn LAM  
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## Lam's Latest

Mar 2002

*Dear partners in ministry,*

Yes, Christmas has passed, New Year has passed, Chinese New Year has passed before we get down to this edition of our news. Yes, we made it JUST before Easter. Praying that you will have a blessed Easter.

Towards the end of last year, we were anticipating the visit of Doulos to Kuching. The advance

At the end of Oct, we stopped renting the office lot and shifted all the stuff back home. However, with the ship's earlier arrival we had to postpone the conversion of the laundry area to a room for the office. When we realise that our ministry had to be cancelled, we thought we could use that time to do the room but the contractor was now tied up with another project. He finally was able to start in mid-January this year. But before it was finished, Jerry was off on 22 Jan to help out with the International Leaders Meeting in W. Malaysia. Electrical fixing, painting and assembling bookshelves can only done when he got back in early Feb. While our other routine work goes on, we are still trying to sort out things which have been placed at different parts of the house - reorganizing things so that things can fit from a 20' X 40' space to a 12' X 10' space.

preparation team arrived earlier and Jerry settled them in. Then before the publicity was out the ship arrived, 2 weeks early; the last port was cancelled. The first Sunday saw the ship people arriving in various churches in town with the publicity brochures. Many teams went out to the longhouses outside Kuching, which was the emphasis for this visit

We had planned to make a ministry trip up to Limbang when the ship left on 20 Nov. but Jenny's father took ill the day the ship left and 3 days later was hospitalised. By the time he was discharged and his condition stabilised it was too near Christmas time to have an effective ministry trip. Pray for his health as he was again hospitalised in Feb; his heart is weak and his kidney is now only 20% functioning due to years of diabetics.

At the end of January, our team in Sibu finished their time with us. Praise God another Chinese speaking couple joined us in Dec. After 3 months of support raising, they are now with the head office in Petaling Jaya.

At the end of Feb, we made a trip to Sibu and then Jerry went on further to Bintulu and Miri for team building and some survey for future ministry expansion. We are excited that God had brought several people into our team in Malaysia and are looking to HIM for directions in expansion. Pray with us for the right decisions to make.

The church's resources in Sarawak are much -- how can be effective put it to use for the extension of His Kingdom to the ends of the Sarawak and the ends of the earth? Pray for the meetings taken in Sri Aman in recently (March) that the words spoken will bear fruit.

The kids returned to school on 7 Jan after their long holidays. JD is in Primary 2 and Jeswyn's in Kindy 2. The initial weeks was hard with Jeswyn not wanting to go to school; probably because JD is in the morning session this year while she is still in the afternoon. Praise God, she has adapted now to the situation.

With the two kids being in two different sessions this year, Jenny misses the afternoons when she can be alone to do things without interruptions. Jerry says 'Praise the Lord for all things. We've been busy with a number of continuous meetings the past & coming Sundays, but its really good.' We continue to be involved with the home group. The kids have felt very comfortable with some families in the group that they sometimes prefers to follow them to their own Sunday school and home than follow us when we share in other churches.

Pray for us as we continue to mobilise for missions and encourage believers to be salt & light where they are

Together with you,

**Jerry, Jenny, Jedidiah & Jeswyn**

**And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things, at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work. 2 Cor 9:8**





盲人福音事工

## Gospel Mission To The Blind Ltd

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27 February 2002

*Psalm 34:1-10 I will extol the LORD at all times, 'His praise will always be on my lips. My soul will boast in the LORD; let the afflicted hear and rejoice. Glorify the LORD with me,' let us exalt his name together. I sought the LORD, and he answered me, 'he delivered me from all my fears. Those who look to Him are radiant,' their faces are never covered with shame. This poor man called, and the LORD heard him, 'He saved him out of all his troubles. The angel of the LORD encamps around those who fear Him, and he delivers them. Taste and see that the LORD is good,' blessed is the man who takes refuge in Him. Fear the LORD, you his saints, for those who fear him lack nothing. The lions may grow weak and hungry, but those who seek the LORD lack no good thing.*

Dear Praying Friends, Greetings to you.

Time has passed by so quickly! I have difficulty catching up with it. And there is a nagging within me that I must keep our prayer partners updated. So before we set out for our journey to Seremban for our Council/Staff retreat tomorrow, I am writing now to update you.

Quah Ah Long was baptized in hospital on 29th December last year and has gone to be with the Lord on 14th February 2002.

Ng Git Hoe had another heart attack and had three bypasses done in spite of the high risk. Thanks be to the Lord, she is now recovering from the surgery at home. Please pray for her cough and that all her wounds would be healed completely soon.

Tay Koon Soon is recovering very well from the stroke, and has regained his memory. He is now able to make his own telephone calls and attend fellowship and cell meetings regularly.

Mdm Tye was baptized on 30th December 2001. We rejoice with her. We also rejoice to see that ten blind persons were baptized last year. Please pray that the blind friends will continue to grow

and experience the Lord's love and presence on a regular basis.

In May this year, Madam Loke Fong Lian and Angela Tay will be baptized. Mdm Loke is about seventy-three years old, and was formerly a vegetarian, whom we have been befriending over the past two years. It is so wonderful to see her grow and participate in Bible quiz and discussion, and above all, to see her willing to commit her life to Christ. Please keep these two sisters in prayers, that the Lord will bless them with good health, protect them against the evil one and that nothing will hinder their commitment to Christ.

We thank the Lord for blessing us with new volunteer drivers, and we are very grateful to all the volunteers who have helped to make the Christmas and Chinese New Year outreach programmes possible.

During the first two months of this year, we have received four new contacts. They are above sixty years old and are rather depressed over their loss of sight. Many blind friends are also in poor health, and would appreciate our prayer support.

We have tasted and seen that the Lord is indeed good. We feel very blessed in spite of all the difficulties and problems because we take refuge in the Lord. (Psalm 34:8)

May you taste the goodness of the Lord this year too and be blessed as you take refuge in Him.

Yours in our Father's service,

Cheng Cheng Choo  
On behalf of the GMB Team.

P.S. May I covet your prayers for my daughter, Jia Hui, who will be going to Cambodia on 7th March 2002, for about ten days to do community service in an orphanage. Please also pray for her preparation for the GCE A Level this year. Pray that the Lord will keep her from all evil, and that her heart will incline to seek the Lord and walk with Him faithfully all the days of her life.

# e-mail from China

Hello,

The weather is about air con environment but when the wind blows it is quite cold as ZhongShan is very near to the sea, near Hong Kong and Macau.

Theft is a problem. Whenever the bus is crowded the driver will announce and alert you to beware of pick pockets. The company subscribes my mobile line, so it is free but the handphone is my personal one. *(Bro Yock Meng's handphone was stolen when someone cut through his jacket)*

Currently, I access the internet in my hotel room. It is ok for me to stay in the Hotel, but for the company it is much cheaper to move me into an apartment. They have identified an apartment for me, it is actually a condo unit, monthly rental cost S\$400. So it is much cheaper than staying in a hotel especially for long periods.

Communicating with the people here is not a problem but come to reading and writing Chinese is a struggle especially technical terms. Very often I have to ask them to show me.

I still use an English Bible, but surprisingly many Chinese seem to be free thinkers rather than Buddhist or Taoist.

*Bro Chan Yock Meng*

## Good Friday,

When they crucified Jesus,  
the day became night  
as darkness was sent from above.  
So far from the Father  
lonely, forsaken  
yet, so near in His infinite love.  
When they mocked Him and flogged Him,  
they were unaware  
of the darkness that clouded their mind.  
The sin of the world  
was put on His shoulders  
as He offered His life for mankind.  
When they thought they had killed Him,  
they had taken His life,  
He had given it out of free will.  
In the outside world  
no-one knew what had happened  
far away, on Golgotha's hill.  
But, the Father in mercy  
and endless compassion,  
looked down from on high on His Son.  
Who committed His Spirit  
in the hands of the Father,  
and in triumph cried out: It is done!

## Easter.

It is done! it is finished!  
Our sins are atoned for,  
God's promise fulfilled by His Son.  
The suffering Servant  
Righteous Redeemer  
our Saviour has suffered..and won!  
Jesus has offered  
His life for His people,  
His flock, He was given to keep.  
He carried their sins  
to the end He was faithful.  
The Shepherd Who died for His sheep.  
They buried His body, sealing the grave,  
but Jesus triumphantly rose.  
Heaven was opened  
Satan defeated,  
and God draws His children close.  
And now we may live  
redeemed and forgiven  
in thankfulness and joy all our days.  
Praising the Son,  
praising the Spirit,  
and glorify God for His grace.  
And as we await  
that glorious morning,  
when Jesus shall come once again  
to gather His sheep  
from the ends of the earth.  
And no-one is missing Amen!

Mrs B. de Jonge