

The Vine

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Editor's Views

Grace and Peace to you in the name of the Lord Jesus.

This is my third attempt to write having sort of dried up of things to say. So I am going to share an article which I received in an e-mail.

It says, "We quickly point out sins such as adultery, homosexuality, or racism, while ignoring those hidden areas that subtly seep into our spirits, ruining our testimonies and hindering our relationships with God. One such sin that is often tragically overlooked is pride." Indeed, sometimes I fear that by doing my best in certain ministries, eg The Vine, I may be doing it out of pride.

Sometimes I may think without me The Vine would not come out this month. Christ spoke of pride in Luke 18:14 when he instructs, "Everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but he who humbles himself will be exalted." Over and over again, we are reminded of God's utter disdain for a prideful spirit. Thus it is very worrying to think that The Vine depends on me. I hope that someone would come along and take over the show. Humble me before I fall into the sin of pride.

C.S. Lewis said, "A proud man is always looking down on things and people; and, of

course, as long as you're looking down, you can't see something that's above you." We may easily point out pride in the life of someone else, completely oblivious to the stranglehold that pride may have in our own lives. By God's grace, I realize that The Vine, although it has improved over the past 14 years, is still far from the standard set by some of the bigger churches. God has set a limit on my talents. This far and no further. Therefore I humbly admit my limitations and ask someone with more gifting in the area of publication to come and help out.

Instead of desiring to be the best we can be, pride causes us to focus solely on being "better" than someone else. A prideful person wants to be the center-of-attention at all times. Sometimes it scares me to think that I hold so many portfolios which thrust me into the lime-light. Am I doing it for the glory of the God I serve?

When all else fails, God may allow adversity into our lives. Nothing gets our attention better than going through a difficult time. He allows these experiences in order to filter out pride, causing us to return our focus on Him.

May God continue to teach us.

Martin Cheah

A Heartfelt “Thank You” to Pastor Yee

Thank God for the opportunity to serve in JCC Youth Ministry for the past 6 months. The past 6 months have been an interesting learning journey for me and given me a little more opportunity to interact with Pastor Yee. During one of the home visits that I went with him, I saw the caring and gentle heart of our pastor as he prayed for them. I was very touched and couldn't help shedding tears. I believe most of us would agree that Pastor Yee has a humble heart for service; and I had the privilege of being ministered to by God through his service.

As a preparation to enter SBC, a reading list was provided for us. One of the books that I read was Richard Foster's "Celebration of discipline". It shares about the importance of spiritual disciplines and its purpose to liberate us from self-interest and fear, and it cautions us against letting it becoming an outward show of legalism. One of the spiritual disciplines mentioned was "service". Here's a section from it that caught my attention:

“Humility, as we all know, is one of those virtues that is never gained by seeking it. The more we pursue it the more distant it becomes. To think we have it is sure evidence that we don't. Therefore, most of us assume there is nothing we can do to gain this prized Christian virtue, and so we do nothing. But there is something we can do. Of all the classical spiritual disciplines, service is the most conducive to the growth of humility. **When we set out on a consciously chosen course of action that accents the good of others and is, for the most part, a hidden work, a deep change occurs in our spirits.**”

For many years as a member of JCC, I confess that I neglected to appreciate our dear Pastor Yee for a great many behind-the-scenes acts of services that he selflessly performed; and due to the sensitive nature of circumstances, some of us are unable to appreciate him openly by sharing with the rest to appreciate him. I thank God again for the opportunity given to be able to learn from Pastor Yee. He has indeed set a good example for us to follow and as J. Oswald Sanders says in the book, *Spiritual Leadership*, “**Humility is the hallmark of the spiritual leader.**”



Pastor Yee standing behind Roy Ang

Living in Singapore where “effective leadership” is valued, very often in churches, we forget that Jesus himself came as a humble servant and many of the church leaders of that time, the Pharisees and chief priest, had their own notion of what the “effective Messiah” should be like and thus they rejected him. I nearly became one of the Pharisees too, having my own ideas of what an effective leader should look like, but I thank God for helping me to see otherwise. What is sorely lacking in church leaders of our time is humility, a rare virtue that can never be gained by seeking, so I pray that God will continue to grant our church leaders both in JCC and in Singapore grace and compassion and that our hearts will continue to be teachable. Once again, thank you Pastor Yee for what you have taught through your life of servanthood. And I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the many others out there who have served quietly.

“Therefore, my dear brothers, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.” 1 Corinthians 15:58

Saw Pei'en

John adds:

In the history of JCC, Pastor Martin Yee is our longest serving pastor, having served as pastor for 7 years. As this is also the season when we contemplate Singapore's National Day, I simply cannot help recognizing that the smooth leadership renewal we can have in the church is worthy of note just as we cherish the same for our nation with her first PM passing the baton to the second voluntarily and the second soon going to do likewise to usher in our third PM. It is worthy of commendation that in the church, as in the nation, we can have smooth leadership transitions.

We all know our beloved Pastor Yee as a person who is humble, without airs, *par excellence* despite his position of high calling. He is one who would not seek advertising for his work and whenever there is a chance for someone else to take his place in public appearance, he will gladly stand aside. As I understand it, Pastor Yee is also not a person who likes being openly praised because this would likely raise goose pimples in him; so I shall not go too far in my mention of him and his noteworthiness as a leader placed in JCC for 7 years according to God's will. Nevertheless, for honesty sake, I must acknowledge that Pastor Yee often sets leadership example in a quiet and unassuming manner and I am one of his benefactors. I recall a time in JCC when I felt lost and leading a spiritually humdrum existence, not knowing what to do, where to serve, I had a word with Bro. Yee (At that time, he was not yet a pastor) and, though sparse with his words, he was his characteristic genteel self when he dished out his advice; and, thank God, that piece of advice did give my Christian service a fillip. All these years, I have always found Pastor Yee to be a caring person who thinks more for others than for himself. His self-effacing manner is a trait that is hard to follow and, much though I feel that there is a lot for me to pick up from him, it is for all to see that I am nowhere near him in my modesty when I speak; which means that I still have an awful lot to learn by his example. It is my pleasure to state that we won't be missing him because, as he said, he would still be among us in this small and cosy JCC community. May we continue to be blessed by our regular fellowship with this mild-mannered brother-in-Christ.

John Lee

My Local Mission Experience

By Zhi Qiang

"I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing."
(Genesis 12:2)

In Genesis 12:2, Abraham was blessed by God so that he became a blessing to the nations. I want to be a generation that

seeks to bless others as God has so richly blessed me. So I joined the mission trip team, which was part of the "GEN12ii" project organized by the Campus Crusade For Christ, to reach out to Chen Su Lan Methodist Children's Home between 7th June & 18th June. Other than our team, there were many others who reached out to different people groups either locally in Singapore or in other parts of the world. With a team of 9 students from various tertiary institutions in Singapore & 1 full-team staff from Campus Crusade for Christ, we underwent a training program that equipped us for the local mission.

The Children's Home was first established in 1968 by Wesley Methodist Church.

The founder of the Home was Dr Chen Su Lan. The mission of the Home is to provide loving Christian nurture for needy and disadvantaged children of all races and religion, so as to prepare them to be happy and responsible members of the family and the community. In



Zhiqiang is the one wearing black, standing behind the girl in red.

the Home, we ministered to children between ages 6-12 who came from broken families – where the family is too poor to take care of them, or the parents are absent due to imprisonment, drug rehabilitation, etc.

We provided tuition to help and encourage the children. We organized fun and educational activities for them like Captain's ball, Treasure Hunt & Kite flying at Bishan Park. We also organized bible-based programs through "Vespa", with singing of Christian songs and bible teaching. In

the 1st session, we taught the children to love one another, and encouragement cards were distributed to the children for them to write to their brothers & sisters some encouraging words. In the 2nd



session, we taught them to obey our Lord Jesus Christ through a game called "JESUS SAYS" instead of "SIMON SAYS". So whatever "JESUS SAYS", they must obey. The response was quite good and I felt that the children had really learnt how to obey Jesus and their teachers. The last session, which was conducted by me, really left a deep impression. We acted out a skit related to Unity, and the children had a fun time laughing. Through this last session, we also managed to share Christ to the children. Since most of the children there are Christians, we shared Christ to them to assure them of their salvation with Jesus Christ. Even though most of the children did not understand the Sinners' Prayer, we managed to explain to them and hope that the children would understand better when they grow up.

As a Worship & Devotion I/C in this mission trip, my role has helped to deepen my relationship with God through His Word (The Bible) & I really learnt how to apply the Word to my daily life. In this trip, I learnt to be more responsible & disciplined in whatever things I do and to glorify God. Last but not least, God has really stretched my patience through this mission Trip. Dealing with small children has helped me to develop my patience & I really thank God for stretching me.

How I wished I could stay with the children indefinitely, but God wants me to do something else, so I could only occasionally visit them and pray for them that they will be happy and become a blessing to others when they grow up.

Lastly, please pray together with me on the following:

1. Pray that they will have consistent quiet time and understand the significance of devotion (reading the Bible and spending time on it).
2. Pray that they will be prayerful, learning how to bring happy and unhappy things to God.
3. Pray that they will be able to apply the lessons learnt.
4. Pray that they will learn to trust God and walk with God.
5. Pray that they will find meaning in going to church and not let it just be another routine.
6. Pray that they will be able to communicate well and learn to love one another.
7. Pray that they can cope well with schoolwork, be healthy and always growing in the Lord.
8. Pray that they will be ready to share the Gospel with people around them, and to be living testimonies of Christ.
9. Pray that their joy will be complete in the Lord always.
10. Pray that they can deal well with adversities and resist temptations.

STREET EVANGELISM

5 souls saved, many others in the community of Jurong have heard the Good News, many seeds were sown. No, it's not a mass evangelistic event, it's not a powerful soul-turning sermon.

On 11th July 2004, 12:30pm, 40 over JCC youths weathering a heavy downpour, gathered at Jurong East all geared up to do street witnessing. The rain did not dampen the hearts of the young people, most of them doing street witnessing for the first time. Many had attended a Personal Evangelism training in JCC the Sunday before, and are eager to try out what they have learned. Though there were feelings of apprehension and fear (come on, who wouldn't), our youths took up the challenge boldly.



In teams of three or four, they moved out and around Jurong East, approaching people they had never seen before. Using a community survey as a lead-in, the Gospel was shared through the Four Spiritual Laws.

Through the short one-and-a-half-hour exercise, the youths were challenged to approach strangers, to build up their confidence in sharing the Gospel and to be able to handle rejections from the public. More importantly, to experience “the harvest is plentiful but the workers are few”. Many youths responded well to the event. It was a good experience for them, some are even enthusiastic enough to suggest doing it again the next week. It may be a after-event-mountaintop passion, but I pray that this fire of compassion for the lost will continue burning in the hearts of our youths, feeling the heartbeat of Jesus.

Samuel Tay



Almost like a post-retreat gathering as many cell members met at Pine Grove Condo for a lesson by Mr Chong Ser Choon on Saturday 17th July titled, “More Spiritual Delight”.

As there are no plans to organize a post-retreat event due to the unavailability of Mr Chong, this then will indeed be the nearest thing to a post-retreat.



JCC Retreat 2004 –SPIRITUAL DELIGHTS

Being Part of a Team

Certainly, I count it all joy to be able to sit in the Retreat Committee for the first time and benefit from the experiences of old-timers. It was a labour of joy as all the committee members were highly motivated to deliver results – good recreation and spiritual delights for retreat participants.

The Work Horses

Certainly, JCC has a good herd of workhorses outside the committee too. Their toil and sweat can be seen in the greatly wonderful assistance rendered quietly and efficiently.



The Retreat Day

An advance party left for Gouman Resort on the eve of the retreat and, on the retreat day itself (Saturday 12th June), an eager group of JCC members and friends travelled in two coaches across the causeway. Such was the excellent testimony of a vibrant body life as we gelled with one another on the long journey and followed up the camaraderie on the retreat grounds.

Spiritual Delights

The scenic ambience of Gouman provided a relaxing environment to retreat from the hustle and bustle of life, and reflect on the purpose of it all. The spiritual messages we received were all very practical. We have learnt how to unwind and find joy in our Christian walks as we experience the blessedness of our beloved Lord. While the Christian life is no bed of roses, neither is it all about slogging under the Cross. The Joy and the Cross are not mutually exclusive. The fun and the spiritual contemplations at the retreat were a fine mixture that produced the Spiritual Delights we enjoyed.



See You All At The Next Retreat!

Tony Koh and family

My First Church Retreat Experience as a Christian

Since my family started to attend JCC in 1997, this is the first time I have joined the church retreat. We had planned to attend the Church Retreat 2 years ago, but it was cancelled. Last year, there was a local retreat, but I couldn't make it due to work commitments. I truly thank God for his provision that my wife Poh Kiat and I were able to make it for this year's retreat together with the children, as I just returned from overseas the day before the retreat and was scheduled to travel again the day after the retreat.

My family had a very fun and relaxing time together, especially for the little ones, Amos and Bernice, who enjoyed the water-play in the beautiful swimming pool and the bathtub everyday. We truly enjoyed the sumptuous food and well-organized programs, especially for the Barbecue night and the special JCC idol night. It was indeed a very good get-away that I had looked forward to, for a relaxing and quality time together with my family.

What made the get-away so special was the God-centred theme on "Spiritual Delight" and the brotherly/sisterly fellowship we have together as God's one-big family. Mr. Chong Ser Choon is a gifted speaker who articulated clearly and insightfully the Word of God, speaking with a conviction that touched so many hearts, including mine. Personally, I have learned the importance to enjoy God as my beloved Father in all aspects of my life, which includes my career and my family. I am reminded that our Christian walk on this earth will never be easy, but our beloved Father is always there to see us through. The cartoon slides showing Jesus actually weeping to see us struggling in our daily lives tell again the unfailing love of God for us. The messages have spurred me to persevere in my Christian walk and continually seek to enjoy and glorify Christ.

I was also encouraged by many of our Church brothers and sisters for their joy in service and heart for God. It was also an excellent opportunity to know some of our church people better through the sharing and for others to know me better.



It was the first Church Retreat I have attended in JCC and the first in my whole Christian life so far. I believe it will remain a very memorable retreat experience I have with my family, even for the years to come.

Kin Cheong

THANK GOD FOR JURONG CHRISTIAN CHURCH

If history records our achievements and encourages us to continue our journey forward with zeal, then it is good for recall. If history shows us that we have fallen short in our ways and therein lie the lessons we can learn and benefit from as we move forward, then it is good for recall. As we celebrate the 37th anniversary Jurong Christian Church, we are reminded of our 37 years of history, only one year short of Singapore's age as a nation. Do we just celebrate and learn nothing, or do we take pride in our history and feel challenged to do better? Some members of JCC may view our past as nothing spectacular and they view our present as nothing to boast about, especially when compared with their favourite populist images of a great church, and they may be easily tempted to wander off to where worldly attractions are. On the other hand, and I am glad to note, there are the labourers, the slavers, who see themselves proudly as unassuming servants called by the Lord to see the lots of imperfections around them and to work hard to improve the lot for the fruits that they may not get to see in the short term. These are dutiful workers, true children of God who do not forsake their Father. They are the tough ones in faith: When things get tough, the tough get going!

It so happens ... oops! It does not just happen but comes to pass by the will of God that our 37th anniversary coincides with the appointment of a new shepherd for the English congregation, Pastor Samuel Wang. As I ponder on the history of JCC, I cannot help ruminating my own link with this congregation not just of itself but it as part of the Lutheran Church of Singapore (and its predecessor,

the LCMS) and of which the Bedok Lutheran Church is also a part where Pastor Samuel was born and raised to answer his present high calling. I have this sense of nostalgia as I look at the picture on the left, which shows Rev. John Nelson (who was our pastor when JCC was in its infancy) and his capable bilingual servant of the Lord, David Wang Mei Hsiong (now retired Principal of Anglican High School). The picture was taken at the first meeting of BLC held in a house in Jalan Tanjong on 12th Nov 1978, just shortly after the Billy Graham Crusade. David Wang, a pioneer of BLC, is the father of Samuel Wang. At this month's installation of Samuel as Pastor of JCC, I was happy to meet up with David and his wife and her sisters. All of them not only looked well

seasoned by age in their bearing, but were all cheerful, hearty and hale. God must have blessed them greatly for their steadfast faith. Thinking of my past, I recall that David Wang, with Rev. Nelson, was a great encourager of my budding faith as a



young Christian when I joined BLC, and you can see for yourself how he has not only stood firm in his faith in God, but also raised a fine son to be a pastor dedicated to God's service.

Here in JCC, where I have grown up as a young Christian (after transferring from BLC), to whom do I owe thanks for my Christian nurture? JCC is my spiritual home for some 20 years and, therefore, in my mind it can't be without merits in God's sight for playing its role in accord with God's overall plan for churches of different shapes and sizes dotted around the globe. To recognize the existence of merits is not to make ourselves arrogant, but to encourage ourselves that we are not without promise in God's overall scheme to accomplish the Great Commission by the cooperative work of his servants in all the churches regardless of whether they are diminutive constituted of only a shepherd and few sheep or jumbo size with one greatly acclaimed leader in every department.

In the neither-long-nor-short history of JCC, what do you see as the most significant moment that made your life? I am not one of the pioneers of JCC, but P.S. George is one of them. Swee Leong, though not a pioneer, joined JCC near its beginning as a youth. Look around you and you may get to know a number of others who have been with JCC for close to or even over 30 years and they can tell you a lot about how the ambience of No. 2 Tah Ching Road was at the beginning. Our early members joined the church as youth leaders. They went through a lot of strife here in JCC when it was not yet wholly a part of the Lutheran Church and when civic activists reared their objectionable influence. Yet, prior to the splitting of the church and the civic centre (JCC was until 1971 known as "Jurong Christian Church & Civic Centre") Christians of less spiritual nerve would have run with the excuse of seeking "better" spiritual shelters instead of staying put and, with vim and vigour, putting their spiritual fortitude to the test by fire. Some among the early leaders who have gone home with the Lord (including our pioneers, Mr & Mrs Daniel, parents of our former pastor Michael Christian) maintained their Godly service till the end. From those still among us today we can learn much about the early trials and tribulations that did not frighten them off but moulded their spiritual grit and determination. I have just heard that another of the pioneers, Francis Low, who is not now with JCC, is with Mas Kuning Lutheran Church. Through the combined spiritual resolve of early and later members, JCC has grown while we still maintain a manageable size according to God's way. Herein lies a significant message embedded in the history of JCC, a lesson to us on the resolute faith of a people of God that combines with His grace to keep this church alive through the decades!

It may seem odd from a certain perspective that while I say JCC has grown, we are but seeing a small congregation gathering every Sunday compared to churches with congregational sizes many times over. Let me explain. Indeed, we

do have church growth in both numbers and worth over the 30+ years of our existence. In the early years when JCC was ecumenical in membership (i.e., not exclusively Lutheran), it was officially acknowledged as the fastest growing among congregations in the LCMS (Lutheran Church in Malaysia & Singapore). It is not abnormal that over the years, we have new members arriving, and old members leaving either through death, transfers or aimless wanderings. This happens to every church. People who left us included pastors; e.g. Rev. Nelson left us because he was posted to another LCMS district. (He was finally assigned to Bedok in 1978 until his retirement.) Pastor Terry Kee was our pastor and he left us for the missions' field and is now actively winning souls in Thailand. Instead of being satisfied with a relatively comfortable environment in a modern city, Michael Christian left us in answer to the Lord's calling to serve among the materially and spiritually poor on Nias Island. Ting Ching who accepted Christ at the Billy Graham Crusade and became our parish worker in 1986 left to found her own Christian work through children after long years of faithful service among us. Among those who are neither pastors nor parish workers but lay members, we also have those who move out with their spouses to serve faithfully elsewhere (in another church or in one of our sister Lutheran congregations) and those who move in due to push and pull factors. I was one who was "pushed" out of Bedok because I shifted house from Marine Parade to Jurong and was "pulled" into JCC by the travelling convenience and the hope of service opportunity in a congregation that is similarly Lutheran. Furthermore, when I was converted to Christ, the Christian brother who counselled me and the church where he belonged did not get to see me as a fellow member. Do you not see this as he and his church contributing to church growth with a member (me) added to God's Kingdom? I don't keep track of everyone who comes and go here in JCC, but everyone who moves after a stint of service with that church or this church and continues faithfully in the Lord's service reflects a contribution of this or that church in his/her spiritual development in faith and service. Everyone who comes in not serving (maybe as a babe drinking milk) and goes out eating solid food to fulfill his/her Christian duty in a spiritually needy world is Kingdom's gain, is Church growth for which we do play a humble part according to God's plan for things to take shape. For those who are wanderers, whether they wander in or out, I am deeply saddened and I ponder where the church where they depart from (whether JCC or another) has not done well enough in their nurture and we need to prayerfully and collectively see what we can do more for the grace that our Lord has shown us. 1 Pet 4:7,9,10 tell us:

"The end of all things is near. Therefore be clear minded and self-controlled so that you can pray. Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins. Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling. Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms."

My meditation is that if only each and every one of us would heed Peter's exhortation, *"The end of all things is near ... Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others,"* then everyone in JCC will serve and be served. Wouldn't it be great if everyone is not left out of the service loop and the spiritual growth that ensues?

Thinking of brothers and sisters in Christ who grew their faith in JCC and now remain active as God's faithful children, although not now with us in the JCC community, I thank God that the spiritual investments that JCC put into them were not in vain. We can boast of what we have done and what we can continue to do to contribute to Kingdom's growth, not out of haughtiness but in the spirit of the following Psalms:

Psalm 34:2

My soul will boast in the LORD; let the afflicted hear and rejoice.

Psalm 44:8

In God we make our boast all day long, and we will praise your name forever. Selah

I envision that JCC for a long time to come will continue to be a "small church" which can make great contributions; like Singapore; just a red dot but not little known. As we ponder our pluses on our 37th anniversary, can we not be encouraged to rise up and be counted as one of the servants who have played a part? As we ponder our minuses, can we not be challenged to rise up as one of God's faithfuls who fight the good fight of the faith, taking hold of the eternal life to which we were called when we made our good confession in the presence of many witnesses? (1 Tim 6:12) When the day of the end arrives, can we confidently say, "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith"? (2 Tim 4:7) Or does anyone move around JCC blind to what we have done well and continue to nick at every conceivable area of shortcoming to pick fights and quarrels for not being served? "You want something but don't get it. You kill and covet, but you cannot have what you want. You quarrel and fight. You do not have, because you do not ask God." (James 4:2) I strongly believe that if we were to ask God for all the desires of the heart, both the good and the bad, the Holy Spirit will



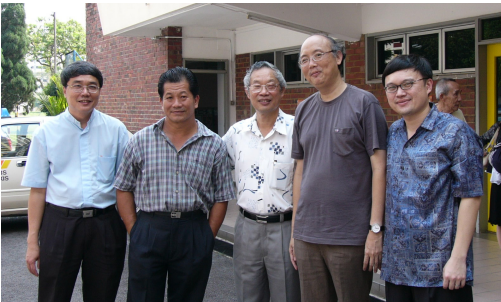
come and help us sort them apart and guide us on what we need to do for the church.

From our beginning in the 1960's, we have never been alone. In the beginning, we had our sister congregations in Singapore (Queenstown and Redeemer) from whom we got support and with whom we worked as a body not for ourselves but for Kingdom's sake. I don't think it would have been right for each of the congregations to see her existence as hers alone to build and grow separate from the rest. As a member under the Lutheran umbrella in this region, we took great satisfaction in doing what we were set up to do – to reach the lost for Christ – and, obviously, we took pride in the growth of our family, the LCMS. Church planting proceeded under the LCMS and within just two years, new work was started up North (Malaysia) and two more Lutheran churches were dedicated. Of course, church-planting developments did not stop there, whether across the causeway or here on this island. In Singapore, Mas Kuning, Bedok and Yishun came up after Jurong. To cut a “long” history short, JCC is now part of LCS (Lutheran Church in Singapore), which has under its umbrella works like Thai Good News Centre, Gospel Mission to the Blind, Seafarers' Mission and the LCCS. JCC is a member of the family but, as a member by herself, has limited resources to venture into all outreach territories. However, members of LCS joining forces certainly reach out further and wider not just within the island but also extending to foreign shores via the seamen and the foreigners who stay here. You might also have read testimonies before of how seeds sown at TGNC sprouted in Thailand. Lately, we have the Family Day Fair in support of the LCCS. How many of you consider yourself a part of the support that will go towards sowing seeds for church growth that reaches beyond the confines of Tah Ching Road, that our eyes may not physically take in? Wasn't it joyful to see members of JCC's English and Chinese Sections setting up stalls at the fair self-sacrificially, in a familial partnership effort with sister Lutheran congregations to uphold the social ministry by the LCCS? As I mingled among the crowd at the fair, I caught up with quite a number of old friends from the different Lutheran congregations; one of whom was a great brother, Eric See: Age 70+, little education, joined BLC after accepting Christ at Billy Graham Crusade; an exemplar of active service to the Lord all these decades, and now still fit and active. Another sister-in-Christ whom I have known since my days in Bedok still looking strong in His service. Long ago, her mother also joined BLC after accepting Christ at the Billy Graham Crusade. I am very encouraged by Christians who never waver in their faith and in their service to the Lord.

I would like to suggest that we do not look at the sky like a frog at the bottom of a well, but covet the opportunities we have for church growth through the co-operative endeavours of all our brother and sister Lutherans. Within a family, if each member thinks only for herself, there will not be so much gain as

when all members work supportively of one another to bring in the harvest. The harvest can crop up anywhere for Kingdom's gain. If we have Hokkien-speakers who need to attend a Hokkien service, we can bring them to Yishun; and if we know of Hakkas who would need someone speaking the dialect well to talk with, we have a fluent Hakka-speaking pastor in Mas Kuning. These are just two simple examples of what we can do for church growth by our works although not necessarily expanding our church halls. We can continue to work co-operatively with sister congregations of LCS for church growth and, thank God, with His wise guidance we will always have the right amount of resources to fit the requirement of our membership size here in JCC as He would direct us to have. All we have to do is to obey His Commission and work without griping.

Visible size and beauty is not everything for a church. As a pastor of a big church nearby once said, there are 400 fine churches in Singapore. Surely, all the 400 churches come in different physical shapes and sizes. I may also add that there are village churches around the world with only a handful of members who, together with their "lowly" (in foolish human eyes and by city standards) shepherd, may well be spiritually like the poor woman with only two copper coins who



gained the praise of Jesus. By comparison, the LCS with members numbering in the thousands and worship services scattered across the island is a big church. In my mind, JCC is neither rich nor poor, neither big nor small; it has just the right measurements of wealth and size so that, by the grace of God and

His Holy Spirit's guidance, we have no excuse to see ourselves as worthless or to lose ourselves to misplaced contentment.

As I reflect on the 37th anniversary of JCC, I reflect on JCC as a piece of good work (by the Lutheran Church) that has produced fruits in the 30 over years of her existence. (Whether we see the fruits or not is a different issue.) I am first a Christian; second, a Lutheran; third, a member of Jurong Christian Church. Unless there is a valid reason for me to move out of JCC, or the LCS, and settle elsewhere to serve the Lord as he calls, I shall not move just for the sake of wandering. If a rolling stone gathers no moss, then a wanderer ... (Can you help me to fill in the blanks?)

