



Jurong Christian Church

The Vine Committee

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Editor's Word

12 December 2010. Today at the Dialect Service, the Rev John Chin gave a simplified explanation on why Christmas is celebrated in December.

He mentioned that in the beginning, it

was a celebration for the Sun god and while the peoples were celebrating, the Christians had nothing to do, so someone decided that Christians should celebrate the birth of Christ instead. Over time, the celebration of the Sun god diminished and Christmas became the main reason for the celebrations in December.

He acknowledged that the actual birthdate of Jesus is not known but it is probably not in December as it is too cold for the shepherds to be out in the fields at night during this time of the year. So if we were to celebrate Christmas on its actual date, we will have to put away any ideas of a winter wonderland, dashing through the snow and a white Christmas.

Let's say you are the first baby of the New Year, born at 12.01 am. Do you celebrate your birthday at precisely 12.01 am every anniversary? Is it okay to celebrate your birthday at some other hour of the day or even earlier or later than the actual date?

To those of us who do not celebrate Christmas because we do not know the precise date of Christ's birth, let's remember that after over 2000 years, people have not yet discovered the actual date. Are you still waiting? If the actual date is of great importance, it would probably have been mentioned in the Holy Bible.

For those of us who do celebrate Christmas, let us do so remembering that we are celebrating God's love for man, which caused Him to send His Son so that man can be saved. Christmas is the time to reach out to our loved ones and friends and even all mankind with the good news. This is the time when many people will come to church to find out what and why we are celebrating, so let us proclaim, "Joy to the world, the Lord is come."

Martin Cheah



WHAT IS CHRISTMAS?

In September, the PM wished all Muslims “Selamat Hari Raya Aidilfitri.” In October, the PM sent all Hindus greetings for Deepavali. Now in December, the PM wishes all Christians a Merry Christmas. It is as clear as can be that Christmas is to Christians as Deepavali is to Hindus as Hari Raya Aidilfitri is to Muslims. Each of these religious festivals has its great significance and uniqueness, hence a public holiday for it. We can understand more about Deepavali and Hari Raya Aidilfitri from our Hindu and Muslim friends, and they can understand more about Christmas from us Christians. Interestingly, and uniquely, Christmas is a Christian festival that is also widely embraced and celebrated by non-Christians every year. Why do Christians celebrate Christmas? This question seems to be a no-brainer, but it is worth contemplating if we recognize the fact that there are Christians who do not celebrate Christmas. Those who don’t celebrate (a minority) claim pagan backgrounds to the celebration, that Jesus was not born on 25th December, it is not a Biblical doctrine to celebrate the Lord’s birth and that truth and falsehood are intermingled in the Christmas observance. They further claim the greater relevance of celebrating Christ’s death, commemorating the death that purchased our redemption.

Many old folks, like both my parents, do not remember the actual dates of their birth. If they know the month but not the day, their D.O.B. would most likely be regarded as 1st of that month for all practical purposes; if they know the year but not even the month, then their D.O.B. would be regarded as the 1st of January. One of the practical ways for their children and grandchildren to express their love would be to celebrate their birthdays on whatever reasonable representative date in lieu of the actual D.O.B. that is unknown. Likewise, those who are born on 29th February may have their birthdays celebrated thrice every four years not on their actual D.O.B. Do all the birthday celebrations on the alternative dates lose their meaningfulness, even if the alternative dates happen to be coinciding with some other disagreeable memorials, festivities and the like?

All the four Gospel writers plus Paul and other epistle writers thought it important enough to put on record the events surrounding the birth of Jesus Christ for the remembrance by all. When Christ was born, an angel of the Lord appeared to Mary and Joseph, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, to bring them good news that would cause great joy for all the people. (Luke 2:8-10) Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, “Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests.” (Luke 2:13-14) It was manifestly a momentous event fulfilling the prophecy in Scripture. A prophesied event – the coming of a Saviour – came true against all the human obstacles (or rather, the obstacles placed by Satan) in the

form of hindrances and hardship, and subsequently prevailing over a king bent on assassinating the baby Jesus. All this came to pass as foretold. Is there no meaning at all for Christians to remember such an amazing event that brought boundless joy to earth and heaven? If we commemorate the death of Christ on the Cross on Good Friday, and the Lord's resurrection on Easter Sunday, whether or not it was exactly on the particular day (Fri/Sunday) or date that the crucifixion and resurrection took place (as some quirks would like to split hairs over), surely it is valuable to cherish the Lord's birthday event on a fixed date (if the actual date cannot be determined) for all Christians to be regularly prompted to recap the noteworthy issues dotted on the scarlet thread of redemption in the narrations stretching from first page to the last page of the Bible. Connecting the dots of happenings linking how Christ came (virgin birth as prophesied) to how he left (Blood on Calvary) is but a segment of the scarlet thread that gives us a more evocative appreciation of the message that God has for us about His redemptive grace and plan than just a single dot/event (like celebrating the death of Christ) would. There are other commemorative events on the Christian calendar. It is my wish that these events taken together would inspire us to explore and grasp the whole string of the scarlet thread. Surely, the birth of Christ is one extraordinary event worthy of a focal point in our memory – hence, Christians celebrate Christmas even if the Bible does not decree it! When Christians celebrate National Day for their country, examination success for themselves, teachers' day for their teachers, etc., they do so for the right reason; there is really no need for the celebration to be specifically mandated. There is nothing really so dreadful or scandalous that most Christians celebrate Christmas for good reason even if opponents deign to criticize.

Here is a nice poem by Benjamin Graber:

LIGHT CONQUERS DARKNESS

**If you're in a darkened room,
And a small candle is lit,
The darkness retreats away
From light the candle emits**

**If two rooms are side-by-side,
One is dark, the other, bright,
And a door opens between,
The dark is conquered by light!**

**So when your life seems dark,
Just remember this law:
Light always conquers darkness!
Soon the darkness will withdraw,
And your heart will become bright,
As it is filled with the light.**

Copyright © by [Benjamin Graber](#)

One of the objections (by the hair-splitters) to Christmas celebration is that it originated with pagan sun worship. Do Christians visualise Jesus as the Light that conquers darkness? The decision by the Church to supplant the raucousness and insobriety of the pagan rituals can be pictured as introducing a candle in a darkened room. When the candlelight replaces the darkness, we don't try to remove the candle on the opinion that it is associated with the darkness. We would need our head examined if we claim that the candle is just a front for us to cover up the darkness, that we actually mix up the light with the darkness, that doing so is contemptuous of the good light (candle) just like replacing a pagan festival with Christmas to commemorate Christ's birth is objectionable because Christianity becomes 'contaminated' by the bad darkness of pagan rituals in the background to the Light. It can't be dreadful or scandalous for Christians to replace a pagan festival with a Christian festival if it is all right to replace darkness with light.

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God ... In him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.” (John 1:1-5) Truly, as Christmas is celebrated, the Light shines into our Life and we sweep away the darkness before it. It is inane to harp about the darkness and say the Light shouldn't have come to replace it or be mixed up with it.

Meaningful as it is for Christians to celebrate Christmas for the right reason, it is nevertheless true that there is a mix-up existing. The commercial world propagates the idea that Christmas celebration is about fun, partying, boozing, business opportunities and the like. While Christians welcome non-Christians into the celebration mood and enjoy interacting with them for the camaraderie, it would be appreciated if everyone understands that CHRISTmas as the word reveals clearly is about CHRIST and not Santa Claus. CHRIST is the central figure and, as the PM recognises in his greetings, CHRISTmas holds a special significance to Christians. Santa Claus (or his female partner, Santarina) is just a peripheral figure for the entertainment of children mainly and it is harmless for him (or her) to be around if he/she is not misconstrued. It is good that on the occasion of CHRISTmas, CHRISTians and non-CHRISTian friends, colleagues or relatives can have the holiday opportunity to come together for some simple pleasures like having a meal together, building IRCC rapport and exchanging good wishes.

Wishing all a wonderful Christmas!

John Lee



WRITER'S BLOG

Something happened to me on Friday 10th Dec 2010. Joo See

and I were on leave and we went down to the market to have breakfast. At first she said we were just going for breakfast, so I did not bring along the trolley. Once she entered the market, there was no stopping her. She came out with bags of vegetables, eggs, meat and even plastic wares. As I was carrying all the stuff, after some time my fingers grew numb and I had to change hands. My advice to you is change hands carefully if there is a bag of eggs.

Of all the bags, it was the bag of eggs that dropped to the ground. Like Humpty Dumpty, all the king's men could not put the eggs together again. Like the parable of the juggler who dropped the glass ball, we must not drop the thing that can break. The lesson to learn here is not to carry too much until your fingers grow numb from the weight, bring a trolley. Actually, I suggest to you that you should not weigh yourselves down with so many ministries that your family life suffers. I am not suggesting that you do nothing but certainly, that you must live a balanced life, time for God, Family, Work and Ministry.

Why do I separate time for God from time for Ministry? Well, many of us are like Martha who spend much time on Ministry but not on God. Time for God, as I see it is to spend time on reading the Holy Bible, mediating, listening and praying. Time for ministry is to do the Great Commission in various ways, singing, ushering, preaching, outreach, mission, Sunday School, BB, GB and the list goes on.

Maybe you want to split hairs and say that I put Work before Ministry but actually, I put it as Work and Ministry. If God has placed you in a certain place, like He put me in Tiger Brewery, then I must do my Ministry there, so should you wherever He has placed you. You are not placed as a secret agent for God, so much so that your colleagues do not realize that you are a Christian. You are there as the salt and light. (Matt 5:14-16)

Anyway, there was some good that resulted from the broken eggs. I had butter cake to eat the next day. Do I want to draw the conclusion that if you sacrifice your family life for God's work, you will be rewarded? (Matt 19:29)

I can't really conclusively say so. One day, my boss came up to me and said, "You pray but see your daughter still end up having to study in Australia." I mentioned ministry in your place of work, well, I have suggested that she pray

when she needed healing and other helps. Now she is telling me that prayer does not work. I must admit that at that moment, I was stumped for an answer. I remained silent. Later the same day, an opportunity came up for me to rebutt her comment. The topic on cancer came up and I mentioned that my father-in-law died from cancer even though we prayed. I told her that we all must die regardless of how much we prayed but that my father-in-law had a peaceful and painless passing. In other words, my daughter's studying in Australia is according to God's will and it must be for the better. (Romans 8:28)

I can't see it or explain it now but maybe four years later, the answer will come to me. I have to trust my Heavenly Father that if I asked for a fish, He would not give me a snake, or in this case, crocodiles in the river due to the floods in Queensland. (Matt 7:10)

Joo See seems to see things more positively. She reminds me that God is never late but always on time. She read this from the book "When God doesn't make sense" by Dr James Dobson. Even when Debra failed in her first attempt at the English test and thereby lost a chance to secure a room in the university dorm, Joo See feels that it is God's guiding hand which led us to find a room for her in the home of a pastor friend of Dr William Chang, who was with us for only a short season as God had planned.

For me, I see all these as obstacles preventing Debra from following her dream. Firstly, failing to get the required pass mark in English by 0.5 points only, that delaying her acceptance by the university and also delaying her application for a room in the dorm. The rising Australian currency and also news of heavy rains and floods in Queensland. For us who only see the underside of the tapestry, we can only know the whole picture in due time.

Many of the people who shared at the Thanksgiving Service on 31st December, shared from hindsight after they have gone through their valley experience and are now on the mountaintop looking down and able to see God's hand throughout their journey. However, Dorothy shared her testimony even while she is still journeying through the valley experience.

Her courage and trust in her Almighty Father truly makes me want to end this writing with the quote:

*Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: **Rejoice!** Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. (Phil 4:4,6-7)*

Martin Cheah

JCC Rebuilding: *Coincidence or divine moment?*

In the April 2008 AGM, we moved a motion to explore the possibility of rebuilding our church. After many months of dialogue, learning from other churches, meetings and planning, we have come to a critical junction: to make the decision whether to proceed with the application of URA Provisional Permission (PP) for our proposed new building (with planning parameters of plot ratio 2.24 and 7-storey). This application will formally kick start the rebuilding timeline. Within 2-3 years we will have to commence the construction of the new building.

Before we say yes or no, we surely would like to ask ourselves: Is God here? Is He leading the whole process of rebuilding? Are we following His path? In the past months, we had prayed and are still praying and seeking God for His direction and providence for the rebuilding. Now is the appropriate moment to sense and interpret His leading.

For me personally, looking back, I sense and interpret His leading by the following:

1. The appearance of Audrey

At one point in time, our planning process required us to source for four architectural firms to present their proposals for our new church. When we were about to call these firms, a brother from Chinese section recommended Audrey from Orchard Road Presbyterian Church to help us. She is the Chief Architect of Land Transport Authority. She came, looked and agreed to be our technical advisor. Through her we got assistance from Assistant Professor Limin and Associate Professor Thomas. Together, they came up with the planning parameters. They are passionate about this new church. On their own accord, they went and met the relevant officers and presented our case for a 7-storey new church to JTC.

Coincidence or divine moment?

2. The appearance of abundance

The professionals proposed the planning parameters: plot ratio 2.24 and 7-storey. The existing guidelines for the two parameters are 1.4 and 4-storey respectively. This excess of 0.84 plot ratio can be translated into 30,238 square feet and is worth millions.

Can we call this something extra - **abundance**? This abundance enables us to design an ideal and full-function church (yes, including providing

funeral and columbarium service, if we wanted it); to share our extra with LCS and others, as land for religious use, is so difficult to come by nowadays.

Coincidence or divine moment?

3. The appearance of Providence Presbyterian Church

News of our rebuilding a new church leaked. They came knocking at our doors. With millions but not a place to call their own, they ask for our generosity to let them in.

The Tamil Methodist returned to JCC for worship and ministry recently. Pastor Jiva told our pastoral staff that he dreamt of seeing many people coming to JCC as he was climbing up the steps of a high building of JCC.

These remind us of our early history as the place for Christians of all denominations to congregate.

Coincidence or divine moment?

4. The appearance of unity

The emphasis of unity in JCC is put to the highest place beginning early this year. We managed to have combined prayer meetings, ministry leaders and combined council retreat, combined efforts on fundraising dinner and Christmas outreach 2010.

Now, as we consider to progress to rebuilding a new house for the Lord, has He been preparing us for bigger things to come?

Coincidence or divine moment?

I am not in a hurry. I can wait. I shall wait for JTC and URA approvals for the planning parameters of plot ratio of 2.24 and 7-storey. For me, the two approvals confirm that all pieces fall into place. When that happens, we are ready to go! If not, we will go back to the drawing board again.

Together we are serving Him!

Pastor Oh ximi

Chairman
Church Rebuilding Committee



The Season of Advent

November 28 this year marks the first day of the Season of Advent, which is the beginning of the church year. Lasting four weeks before the Christmas Season on Christmas Eve, it is a season of preparation, anticipation, and hope. The word “advent” comes from the Latin word *adventus*, which means “to come” or “coming”, in which during the Advent season, the church will observe a season of preparation at the beginning of the church year (as opposed to our Roman calendar) for the coming Christmas season, perhaps the most celebrated time in the world.

The season of Advent is a time of preparation and yearning for the presence of Christ. In addition to the celebration of our Lord Jesus Christ’s first coming (Luke 2:11), towards Christmas, the church and her congregation will also observe a time of anticipation for His second coming (Acts 1:11), a hope that Christ will come back once again.

While many of us will use the season to busy ourselves by preparing and planning for Christmas events or gifts for loved ones, Lutheran churches often encourage their congregations to refrain from Christmas celebrations until Christmas Eve to emphasize the yearning and preparation for the presence of Christ, a challenge for many Christians in probably the busiest time of the year.

Here are a few suggestions to take note for the coming Advent:

- **Jesus as the focus.** Amongst the Christmas tree, the gifts and the Christmas stockings or Santa Claus (the constant themes leading to Christmas), the central figure should always remain on Christ. Without Christ there will be no Christ-mas, and time should be set aside for Him through Bible study, prayer, repentance, and fasting.
- **Introducing the nativity scene, especially to children.** In the days leading to the Christmas Season, do encourage reflection on the nativity scene by having Bible study, skits, even model making (stable, empty manger, animals, shepherds, Mary, Joseph etc)
- **Remember the Giver not the Gifts.** In the season of giving, we often forget about our Giver of all good gifts (James 1:17). The season

can be observed by remembering that the good gifts have come from Him and therefore we have all that we need in Him.

- **Serve the community.** As Jesus came and went out to the community to serve us so out of His love for us we should be compelled to serve others to show our love for Him. Amidst the time of busyness, do take the time to serve both our brothers- and sisters-in-Christ, as well as the non-believers, be it through contributions of your talents or words of encouragement or monetary. There are many campaigns supported by both churches, non-profit organizations and government agencies to reach out to the needy, so do feel free to find out and contact them to ask how we all can help.
- **Love.** Do take the time off the busyness of our lives to be with our loved ones, be it your family, your relatives, friends, church members, even people you might have lost touch for a while. As God is Love, we should use this season especially to show our love and care for one another.



Travis Wong

Brother Khai Seng passed away on 10th December 2010. Alas, poor Khai Seng, I did not know him well, a fellow of infinite jest, of most excellent fancy. I remember that when we first met, it was many years ago at a retreat in Malaysia. He was quite a fun person, as most rotund people are. Over the years, we got to meet once in a while when he dropped by JCC.

He had struggled with his illness for many years but now he is healed and with his Maker. May he continue to be jolly in heaven sharing jokes with Jesus.

Things I learn from being a father in 2010

In a few more days, 2010 will be the past and 2011 will be the New Year to look forward to. It's also more than a year since I have been blessed to have my dear son Zechariah, whom I can spend time with other than my beloved wife Jessica.

It is sometimes amazing how the young can teach the old, but part of the amazing journey of trying to bond with someone other than my wife is really about learning from one another. And I have learnt a lot about myself through my son more than I probably could for the past few years.

Here are the three of the most important things I learn in 2010 through my son:

True love has no terms and conditions

Will you love someone less who sometimes do not return your love, especially on days when you need him/her most? Or when he/she throws a tantrum or screams or kicks a fuss? Will you give up and hold back your love when someone you love doesn't do whatever you want? Will you love someone lesser when he/she becomes a burden at times, distracting you from the work you have to do to meet tight deadlines at the worst possible time?

The truth is, there are times when I will get upset when things don't go according to plan. It's great to see the kid being so cheerful and bubbly and making days really bright for my wife and me. It's not so great at times when he wants your attention. But one thing I do know about all these is that despite my son simply being a year-old baby, I do not love him less than when he was just a newborn who slept a lot. I will love him as much when he ends up playing soccer even if I would love him to play basketball/baseball/American football; or when he prefers to play the guitar more than learning classical piano; or any other time when he cannot meet my expectations because he is his own man. I will worry like all parents will of course; I just do not need to let my worry or my expectations hinder me from loving him more. And I intend to have two more kids! Much to the horror of my wife, who just wants one more.

I believe that is what true love is about. There are no terms and conditions attached to it. People shouldn't love another only when their loved ones meet a certain need or expectation. I cannot imagine not loving Zechariah even when he doesn't want me to hug him or kicks me when I insists (I just love hugging him). I will love him even if he spends all our money on milk or necessities because he grows so fast. And I will love him even if he is not like me. Love to me is like a stake for which you give your all. I choose to give it my all without knowing what I will get in return.

God's love to all of us is the same. He loves us but He gives us the choice to reciprocate. He knows what is best for all of us but He lets us choose whether we believe so or not. If the Almighty was willing to allow His son our Lord Jesus Christ to show that He loves us regardless of who we are or we are not, showing love unconditionally for Zechariah and my loved ones is the least I can do.

I can choose to not take things too personally

Anyone who knows my family very well knows that Zechariah prefers my wife to me. It's quite simply a matter of bonding, when Jessica, being the mum and on maternity leave when he was born, spent a lot of time with him and the bonding between mother and child grew. It's not however a matter of lack of trying by me. Unless you are a parent, it may be unavoidable for you to construe that I have not tried hard enough when you notice Zechariah usually leaping over from me to my wife's side upon seeing her. My relatives, including my parents, jest that Zechariah prefers playing with his mother and toys to allowing me to hug him. I have heard unpleasant comments from others.

But seriously, do we really need to justify everything in this world to make sense of it? Wouldn't I throw aside my work if I know that my son gets sick or, in moments like that, needs me and his mother around? Is he a lesser son to me for bonding more with his mother? Would I prefer his younger siblings to him in the future because of it? Should I take the words of others to create doubts in our relationship-building or should I just disregard them? My wife knows how much my son enjoys having me around when we are the only ones at home. To me, that's good enough for me; there is no need to entertain reservations over Zechariah's relatively different bonding levels with his parents through the stages of his life.

I used to take things very personally when I was younger. I would be sensitive to everything others said about me and, whether they were unfounded or not, would grow all bitter and miserable. It was a really depressing time for me.

Ever since I got married and especially since Zechariah was born, however, I realized that if I choose to, I can choose to not get too sensitive like a wound spring, and really be at peace about that. I can just take things a little bit easier if I choose to instead of being a bull in a china shop, where I will just run around like a headless chicken at the slightest of issues. I have learnt how to let go of certain emotions. When I pray that my Father will refresh my mind and soul after a hard day's work, I will actually mean it by surrendering the control of harbouring such negativity off me, just so my son does not have to deal with a bitter dad. And I believe also that I am a better servant in my vocations because of the renewed mindset.

You can and will do anything for your loved ones

I will never forget the day when I resigned my dream job. 12 hours prior to that, the doctor has told us that Zechariah had urinary tract infection, a condition considered serious for baby boys. Therefore, he had to be hospitalized. I remember I was very upset upon hearing that, not because I was worried about him being sick. Work at that time was piling up like crazy and I felt that no one would be willing to take over my work because of the situation and so I got very upset. As soon as I saw how frightened he was being in a foreign place in the middle of the night, I realized how wrong I was in ever thinking that. The problem was NOT my son or the work. The fault was mine. I was addicted to work and what happened to my son exposed that addiction. A few days after managing to hand over my work, I told my bosses exactly about my issues and I resigned shortly after from a management position that I had spent a decade working towards.

Many people thought I was crazy. I thought I was crazy. But it was the right thing to do. I could no longer explain my way out of saying that I'm willing to give everything to my job while reluctant to do the same to my family. I needed to get rid of my addiction to work so that I can be a better worker while still involving myself in the community and in my family. The issue is not the long hours I put in, but rather as a result of that, I have become somewhat inhumane and reluctant to be a loving person again. And that has to change for me.

It's been a few months since I have resigned. I have since taken on contract work from agencies while continuing to clock an average of 85 hours a week. However, whenever my family needs me, even on things that are as simple as my son wanting me to hug and carry him for a minute's walk in the living room, I can gladly do so at a moment's notice. My father has since been diagnosed with terminal cancer and therefore needs me even more.

I'm thankful for that fateful night when the Almighty exposed a part of me that I did not want to confront, and it's because of that, I'm willing to spend more time with my loved ones than just doing work that seemed very dear to me in the past. But in return, I have gotten back my humanity. Losing my dream job may have been a massive loss for me but it's a sacrifice that I would gladly take if I need to do it all over again.

Travis Wong

Outreach Programs in December 2010

The Outreach Committee planned 2 events almost back to back. One on the 19th December and the other on the 22nd December. The earlier event was an Outreach Dinner held at Joy Garden in SAFRA Jurong. This event was a combined effort by both sections and an invited speaker gave a short message. By God's grace, 10 people accepted the invitation at the end of the message.



Some of us were involved in both events and that meant rehearsals almost every day of the week leading up to the events. At first, the project seemed to falter as volunteers did not turn up for the rehearsals. However, at the last moment, they all did not fail to give their best and surely they must have planted some seeds.

The latter event was a choral presentation at the Pasir Laba Camp, where Pastor Anthony gave a short explanation of What is Christmas. There was no altar call but surely the army boys enjoyed our presentation. The team which went was very excited after the event and they felt very joyful and willing to do it again if opportunity knocks again.



I could write long, long stories about how we struggled through the rehearsals but it is forgotten once the presentation was done and the team felt the joy of serving the Lord. I will let the photos tell most of the story.



Rehearsals started at 3 pm on 19th Dec before the dinner at 7 pm





The performers.....



Welcoming the guests.....



Pastor Philip Huan



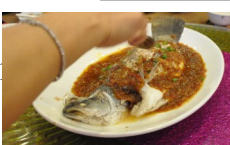
Revive Band
Chinese Choir
Dialect Singers
Skit performance
Dancers



Friends & relatives, guests.....



19th December 2010



The food.....





22ND DECEMBER 2010 @ PASIR LABA CAMP



Enjoying army food for lunch.....



Performing for our army boys



Christmas Message
Pastor Anthony Lim



Delivering a Christmas message....



Receiving a token of appreciation



Merry Christmas to all



MISSIONS GOES FORTH

27th November @ LCOR

LCS organized a Missions Sharing event to share with all the congregations about the missions work which the LCS is currently undertaking, eg. in China, Mongolia, Cambodia and Thailand. The various pastors shared about their mission work and their prayer requests and support needs.



JCC is not currently very active in missions, however, for this event, we provided Mongolian food for the tea break. Several ladies from JCC got recipes from the Internet and cooked up

the various dishes like Mongolian Beef, Mongolian Dumplings and even Mongolian Fried Rice.

Let me just tell the story of Iris, who cooked a dish of Mongolian Dumplings called BUUZ. Iris and her family had planned to go on holiday to Japan during this time but because of her great love for Mongolian Mission, she pre-cooked the BUUZ and froze it. On the day of the event, one of her cell group members, Se Ping, went to her house, collected the frozen BUUZ and brought it over to LCOR. At LCOR, Se Ping had to steam the BUUZ one by one for the tea break. The people enjoyed our version of Mongolian food and I hope the ladies will be blessed for using their cooking skills for God's work. Thus far, our ladies have tried cooking Cambodian and Mongolian dishes, surely they will be able to cook anything given the recipes.



Martin Cheah



Mongolian Dumplings



BB Cambodia Updates

Hi JCCians, BB officers and Primers

Grace and peace to you all!

Firstly, I would like to apologise for the late updates (4 months, since August) on the work I am doing for God in Cambodia. It has been a busy and fruitful time.

I led teams from YMCA, from Citibank and SP Optometry, which have been great blessings to the people in Cambodia.



There were also teams from Grace Church, 3 BB companies, NUS Alumni, Seng Kang Primary School, Boon Lay Secondary School and Hwa Chong JC.

I was also involved in helping to set up the 1st Phnom Penh Company at Methodist School of Cambodia.



BBLC had another phase of upgrading of flooring, electrical installation and an additional toilet. Truly God have been providing and never failed to answer our needs in making the school a better place for the students to learn and also allow us to sow seeds into their heart.



We presently employ 2 local teachers and 2 part time staff. They are Christians and serving faithfully, they are attending the local church here. They are given training in teaching and also doing maintenance of the centre.

The teaching staffs are much more confident on the syllabus now. We also conducted our own first test on the students. Most of them made great progress in the test compared to the first

round of tests. We also collected a small fee from the students (50 cent a month) to ensure that the students are serious and committed. We also monitor their attendance to ensure discipline is upheld.

1st BB Company at Methodist School of Cambodia had successfully held their first enrolment with 140 Boys, and 6 officers. Presently I am supporting them in their drill training. I have to make 12 hours trip to join their Saturday parade. I go there twice a month.

We are also working out a 6 year training program for the Boys with Singapore companies supported by Methodist Churches and Methodist Mission Services.

Most of our local NCOs are from local NGO orphanage that sent them to study at the Methodist School of Cambodia.

I am able to experience God at work daily and walking closely with Him in a foreign land where the harvest is plentiful but laborers are few.

This verse speaks to me personally and I would like to share it with you.

The preparations of the heart belong to man, but the answer of the tongue is from the Lord. All the ways of a man are pure in his own eyes, but the Lord weighs the spirits. Commit your works to the Lord, and your thoughts will be established.

Proverbs 16:1-3

God is teaching me how to worship Him in whatever I do and to put Him in the centre of my life. Dealing with the locals is not easy at all as corruption is a way of life in Cambodia, teachers and principals are all doing that. To stand firm and do God's will is like steering through storms and it takes daily effort.



Continue to keep me in prayers and hope to see you all when I come back at end February for a two week break.

Chak Muri

THE ROOT OF BITTERNESS

by Os Hillman

"See to it that no one misses the grace of God and that no bitter root grows up to cause trouble and defile many." Hebrews 12:15

The enemy of our souls has a very specific strategy to destroy relationships. Whether these relationships are in business, marriage, or friendships, the strategy is the same. A conflict arises, judgments are made, and feelings are hurt. What happens next is the defining point of whether the enemy gains a foothold, or the grace of God covers the wrong.

When a root of bitterness is allowed to be planted and grown, it not only affects that person, but it also affects all others who are involved. It is like a cancer. Breaking Satan's foothold requires at least one person to press into God's grace. It cannot happen when either party "feels" like it, for none of us will ever feel like forgiving. None of us feel like talking when we have been hurt. Our natural response is to withdraw or lash out at the offending party. It is only obedience that allows God's grace to cover the wrongs incurred. This grace prevents the parties from becoming victims who will seek compensation for their pain.

The next time you are hurt by someone, realize the gravity of the crossroads where you find yourself. Choose grace instead of bitterness. Then you will be free to move past the hurt, and a root of bitterness will not be given opportunity to grow.

1.1.11 @ 11.11

What do all these numbers mean? It is the date and time of Alexis and Ching Kit's wedding at Yishun Christian Church.

Rev Dr William Chang, the presiding minister, reminded Kit to not forget important dates, like birthdays and anniversaries. I am sure with such a memorable date, he will not forget.

May we wish the happy couple God's presence and provisions in their married life.



My only lament is that when our young people get married, they leave JCC to follow their spouses to their churches.

Irwin Kao and Samuel Tan followed their wives and now Alexis will follow her husband.

On the bright side, it means that there is an ambassador of JCC in the various congregations that they move to. May they give a good report of JCC.

Martin Cheah