

A branch of the.....

the Vine

Multi media ministry

Aug/Sep

For internal circulation only

Volume 4/2011

The Vine Committee

Editors:

Martin Cheah
mart5003@yahoo.com
 John Lee
jpblee@gmail.com

Publisher:

Nick Wong
digi_ics@yahoo.com

Writers:

James Chandiah
 Preethi Jebaraj
 Andryl Leong
 Tony Koh
 Joyce Tan

Photographers:

Edwin Yeo
 Pek Wei Chi



On 24 August 2011, Steve Jobs, said, "I have always said if there ever came a day when I could no longer meet my duties and expectations as Apple's CEO, I would be the first to let you know. Unfortunately, that day has come."

Number 110 on Forbes list of the world's billionaires (Bill Gates is still holding top spot), he is a very rich man. Neither of them claim to be Christian.

Some people estimated that Bill Gates had given away US\$26 billion to charity. However Steve Jobs is not on

record as being a very philanthropic person. Maybe he does not broadcast his charitable acts.

I watched on TV an interview in the Singapore Flyer, where a rich Buddhist lady was responding that she does good deeds with a selfish motive because she is paying back some karma. Maybe not all Buddhist think this way but certainly some do.



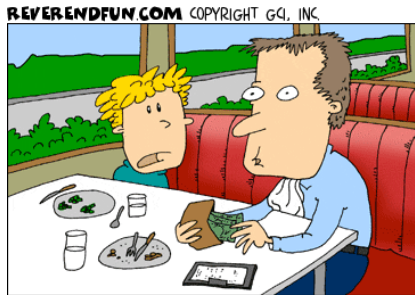
So why do Christians do good deeds? Matthew 5:16 records Jesus as saying, "In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven." Titus 6:18-19 says, "Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share. In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life." 1Peter 2:12 says, "Live such good lives

among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us."

The Bible tells us that we too have an ulterior motive for doing good deeds, so that the people around us will praise God. Is there any difference then between our reason for doing good deeds and those of the world? The obvious difference is that we are doing good deeds out of love for the God who first loved us and we want to glorify His Name. The world does its good deeds so that their own names will be remembered, like some hospitals, trust funds, schools and companies.

“There is always the danger that we may just do the work for the sake of the work. This is where the respect and the love and the devotion come in - that we do it to God, to Christ, and that's why we try to do it as beautifully as possible.”
Mother Teresa

As I jokingly mentioned in the last issue of The Vine, if the lottery winning couple were to donate \$20 million to JCC, we might have to change our name to theirs. However as Christians, when we donate to the rebuilding of JCC, we do not expect to have our names being praised but that God's name be glorified as Solomon did in 1Kings 5:5, *“I intend, therefore, to build a temple for the Name of the LORD my God”,* because *“My father David had it in his heart to build a temple for the Name of the LORD, the God of Israel.”* (1Kings 8:17).



Thanks to Shirley Ostrander
HOW COME THE WAITRESS GETS 15% AND GOD ONLY GETS 10%?

So dear brothers and sisters, why do we want to rebuild JCC? Is our motive correct? Is it due to pragmatic reasons because we have to make millions of dollars in repairs so we might as well rebuild the church? Or is it because we want to keep up with the mega churches.

Therefore the rebuilding of JCC must go hand in hand with the transforming of ourselves to be Christ like. Let us not forsake our first love. (Rev 2:4) Hold fast to the Lord (Deut 11:22-24) (Isaiah 56:6-7) and let Him rebuild us.

Martin Cheah

2012 Calendar of Events

New Year's Day	1 January 2012	Sunday
Chinese New Year	23 January 2012	Monday
	24 January 2012	Tuesday
Good Friday	6 April 2012	Friday
Labour Day	1 May 2012	Tuesday
Vesak Day	5 May 2012	Saturday
National Day	9 August 2012	Thursday
Hari Raya Puasa	19 August 2012	Sunday
Hari Raya Haji	26 October 2012	Friday
Deepavali	13 November 2012	Tuesday
Christmas Day	25 December 2012	Tuesday

LWM EVENTS - 2012 (Tentative)

JANUARY

LWM Pastors and Lay Leaders Training & Planning Retreat

FEBRUARY

Community Project with Phum Krus community and school(s)

APRIL

Visit: Overseas group

JUNE

Visit: Overseas Group
Medical Project (hospital to hospital)

AUGUST

Children Camp + Night evangelistic movie (community)
Youth Camp

OCTOBER

Visit: Overseas Group

DECEMBER

Medical Mission – Mobile Clinic / Hospital Projects



SISTERS ISLAND - FISHING TRIP

9th August 2011 - It was the morning of Singapore's 46th National Day. About the same number of us boarded a bus at JCC and headed for Marina South jetty where we jump on board a ferry for a 45 minute ride to Sisters Island. These are two small islands to the south of Singapore.

The island we landed on was the smaller of the two and was almost deserted except for three or four other visitors. Besides us, there was also ants grasshoppers and butterflies. I did not notice any other creatures on the island.

It was a breezy day and even as the fishermen among us waited patiently for a bite, the rest of us were lazing around the shelters having a time of fellowship and BBQ.



Is there anything spiritual about this event? It seems like just an ordinary event, we had a safe boat trip, enjoyed a breezy day, did not get bitten by mosquitoes or sandflies, enjoyed a good meal and fellowship and caught a few small fishes.

Practically a non-event if we do not thank God for all the

blessings and protection. Probably, we would only see God at work if we had caught some big fishes and also converted the few people that were on the island with us.

However, God works silently and mysteriously as in the case of Siti, the Indonesian maid, who works for Lissa and Freddie. Every Sunday, she faithfully escorts Freddie's mother to the Dialect Service and sits with her throughout the service. I don't know if she understands Hokkien but she is observing our Christian attitude and service. After eight months, she surprises Lissa by telling her she wants to be a Christian.



God works in the ordinary like in the story of Naaman the leper. *But Naaman went away angry and said, "I thought that he would surely come out to me and stand and call on the name of the LORD his God...."* (2 Kings 5:11)

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. (1Peter 4:8-10)

With the above advice, go forth and be fishers of men.



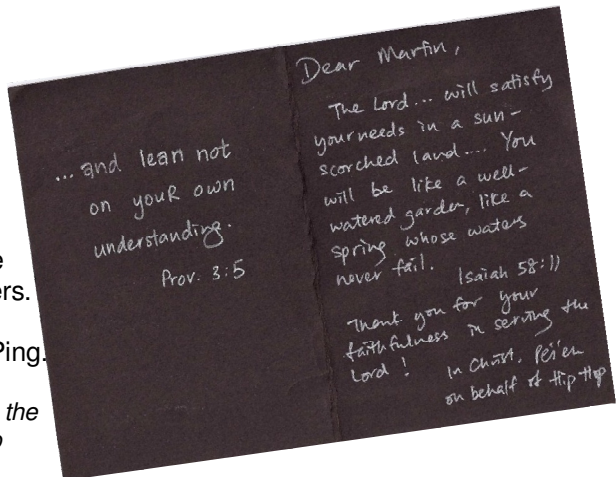
Martin Cheah



THE CELL GROUP PAGE

HIP & HOP CG

Aug 2011 – The Hip Hop CG organized Project Encourage (with tea & scones) where cell members draw cards and pen some words to encourage and affirm one another and people/leaders. Accompanied by home-baked scones from Peh Ping.



"Let us hold unwaveringly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful.

And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another - and all the more as you see the Day approaching."
Hebrews 10:23-25

Taman Jurong CG

Sep 2011 – Some of the Taman Jurong CG went on a kelong retreat. Here are some pictures of their bonding activities.



ONE BODY

by Os Hillman

"The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body. So it is with Christ" (1 Cor 12:12-13).

Imagine with me for a moment that you have won a very expensive car. However, in order to receive your prize, you must agree to an unusual requirement. You must agree to remove one major component in that car in order to receive the gift.

Which component will you remove?



Will it be the steering wheel?

Perhaps it will be the left front tire or the front seat or the two headlights. My illustration may seem ridiculous, but you get the point. Unless you have the complete car and have the ability to use all of its components, your ability to benefit from that car is going to be severely limited. The Bible says you and I are part of a larger Body - the Body of Christ. We each have our own body, but we are also made up of a larger Body that has a unique function to play. When you are not functioning as God intended, the entire Body suffers because you are not fulfilling your prescribed function.

When you function in a way that is not directly connected to the larger Body, you are only fulfilling a small portion of why the Manufacturer made you. There is a greater mission that you must fulfill. Today, the Body of Christ is fragmented and seeks to do things separated from one another. Our individual church "silos" stand alone - often as monuments to man instead of the greater mission of reaching the city.

Jesus knew the key to fulfilling His mission was getting His larger Body to work as one. "I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me" (John 17:20-21). What is your part in the overall mission? Are you fulfilling your prescribed function as designed by the Manufacturer?

GB visit to Labrador Park

13 August 2011 – The 51st coy GB from Shuqun Primary School paid a visit to Labrador Nature Reserve.

It was a cool morning when the buses departed from the school to the park. We got off the bus at Carpark A and took a walk to the one of the first sites of the treasure hunt. It was the cannon at the top of the hill. There in the open, it suddenly rained. Out came the umbrellas and ponchos but many of the girls came without rain gear. Three or four had to huddle round one umbrella as the whole troupe made its way downhill to shelter.

The rain stopped as suddenly as it came but many of us were already partially soaked. Is there a lesson to learn here? Pray for good weather but come prepared for showers. I remember that we also encountered rain in this park during one of JCC's family day some years back. Just coincidence, I am not drawing any conclusions from this.

Anyway, the rest of the time we had fine weather and the girls had fun exploring the park and playing games.





THE DIALECT MINISTRY

Like a flowing river, the Dialect Ministry rolls along by the power of God and not of man. There are no man made strategies and plans, just dedication by the team and the results are certainly joyful and unexpected most of the time.



On 7 August 2011, we had 1 baptism and 2 transfers of membership. In the same

month we received news of Lissa' helper coming to the Lord through the Dialect Ministry.



Praise God! My Indonesian helper accepted Christ yesterday – **16 Aug11**. I prayed with her the sinner's prayer.

Her duty every Sunday is to bring my mother-in-law to Hokkien service. She has been here for 8 months already. She shared with me how Christians are different and so loving, always talking of love. I have been sharing with her on the Good News and asked her tell me when she is ready to accept Christ. I can see so much joy in her face after she accepted Christ.

All glory be to God. Pray with me to help her grow in the Lord. I gave her a Malay Bible to read and am finding materials to have Bible study with her.

I want to thank Peter Cheong and his gang who must have been showing so much love and care to touch her life.

Lissa Low

The man baptised was Bro Tan Sye Teng who passed away 23 days later on 30th August. Praise the Lord that Bro Tan is now present with the Lord. Indeed we

continue to trust that God in His good time will save all the friends and family members who join our Dialect Service. It is His work and not ours that we may not boast.

marina barrage

It was the Hari Raya holiday and about 90 persons boarded 2 buses at JCC and headed to the Marina Barrage for a day of fun and games.

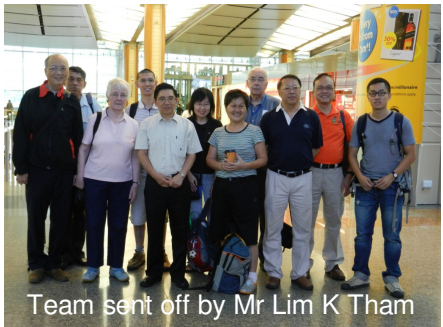
The tour was organized by Peggy on behalf of the Dialect Ministry. The team from the Dialect Ministry brought our elderly friends and their families and showed them around the Marina area, including the Marina Bay Sands.

Historically, Hari Raya would be a rainy day, but we enjoyed fine weather throughout. The sun hid behind the clouds so my photos turned out a little hazy. Here are some memories of that day:



A CHURCH HOPPING LIKE NO OTHER

I went on church hopping recently, and it was a valuable eye-opener. I set off from home on the 5th of August. The church-hopping with 9 other brothers and sisters in Christ actually started the next day, with our first stop at Cai Lay Church in Cai Lay Province.



In subsequent 4 days, we were to cover Tan Xuan Church, Cu Chi Church (near the famous/infamous Cu Chi tunnels – the formidable battleground of Vietnam War) and An Ha Church. Then we proceeded to Baria-Vung Province and visited Tan Hiep Church in Long Thanh, Xuyen Moc Church and finally Hoa Hiep Church.

By now, you should have already been clued in that my church-hopping was in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. I was in a 10-member team on a Bible distribution trip organized by the Bible Society of Singapore. It was a first time in this mission for everyone, including our team leader and the Vietnamese co-coordinator. What this means to us is that it was an eye-opener to the needs of the rural churches in Vietnam.



Our church-hopping was premised upon our intention to be a help, a giver rather than a receiver. As we hopped, we were fully cognizant of being sent forth from a home base to reach outwards and not inwards. By this, I mean that in

this trip, Christians from varied congregations in Singapore travel united for a common outreach mission knowing fully well their spiritual support base (home base) where God blesses them to be a blessing to others.

Proverbs 11:25 tells us, "The one who blesses others is abundantly blessed; those who help others are helped." (MSG) This truth pans out in our experience that when we set out with the right cause, God works. If we had gone out with the wrong self-seeking motivation, discounting the benediction of the spiritual foundation of a home base, from where prayers and supplication enjoin us to reach out to God for his grace in our humble service, the effect of the mission would be different, and neither we nor the churches we visited would have spiritually benefited from each other.



The Bible message applies to everyone. As much as the team made the effort to share our blessings, we received blessings in return. Our spiritual vista is expanded. As much as our Vietnamese brothers and sisters made their humble effort to share with us their blessings, God also dispensed blessings to them through us. The way others look at us who dwell in a city of abundance (as they visualise our prosperity), they miss out the fact that we have our struggles to live. Conversely, as we look into the eyes of a people whom we reckon as in relative poverty in a developing country, we can easily observe the fact that despite the perceived scarcity of provisions, there is joy as needs are met and lives go on daily. What is the key difference between them and us? In a way, we are all not spared the typical toils of life; yet they (in the developing country) find joy in the sufficiency of needs being met while the affluent in a developed country has endless wants that never satisfy.



God can provide his way even if we humanly are unable to reach every corner of the mission field. The churches where we managed to share our blessings humbled us to recognise

the blessings, and lack of, we have from God so that we are always in a position to share, and to receive (not by desire but by God's grace), giving thanks more and complaining less, and to learn from the little ones (whom Jesus never turned away) whose cheerfulness over simple games and gifts is both infective and inspiring.



May we continue to be channels of blessing – channels through which blessings flow bi-directionally so that all in fellowship in Christ stand to prosper together spiritually.

Prior to my planned trip to Vietnam, I shared about it with my Jurong West Care Group, and I was glad to have their prayers with me, especially giving me a measure of assurance that God would be with me to maintain my stamina through the whole mission and bring me back safely to home base. It was a church



hopping like no other; it makes me appreciate my home church – Jurong Christian Church – all the more for blessing me to be a blessing.

We are such a wonderful family in Jurong Christian Church. May God bless you too, as you reach out to bless others.



SHALOM!

John Lee



SEASONS OF CHANGE



I had this book, “Growing strong in the Seasons of Life” by Charles R. Swindoll, for a long time. This book uses the four seasons to offer fresh and vital insights for those who take time to think and reflect. Let the short and easy-to-read stories coupled with scriptures, be an encouragement to you.

As I was reading a chapter under the Season of Reverence – winter, a reflection titled “Expectations”, caught my attention. How true that it reveals the disappointments brought about by expectations and the desires that dissolved into an empty, unfulfilled dream.

I quote a portion of the reflection.

“After you’ve heard a few stories of disappointment, they begin to sound painfully similar. As I spin some records in my memory, I hear several sad songs from different voices. Listen with me for a moment to their wistful echoes:

I’m not happy with my work. When I got a job, I never realized it would be like this.

Marriage has become a drag! On our wedding day, I thought it would be all so different. It’s nothing like I imagine at all.

She was once a friend of mine. I reached out, helped her, loved her, and gave myself to her. I thought the least she would do was to respond the same way to me.

We had them over for dinner more than once and they never did reciprocate. We didn’t even get a thank-you note. Talk about disappointment!

He asked me out several times. I felt I was more than just another date to him. I really anticipated a deepening romance... but it never occurred. I was hurt.

Man, I chose this college, thinking that it would provide me with an ideal education. Now here I am a senior, but I’m not as nearly prepared as I thought I would be.

The discipleship group was nothing like I expected. I anticipated one thing and got another.

We came to this church with high hopes. Expecting great things, we threw ourselves into the programme without reservation. Now we’re disillusioned with the whole thing.

Glad we had children? Hardly. You know, we thought having kids was going to be fun – a downhill slide. You can’t imagine

how happy we are to see them leave the nest. They really let us down.

God called me into the ministry. He later led my family and me into pastorate. We were burning with zeal and bursting with hope. But after ten years, the fire's gone out. The delight just isn't there anymore. I'm frustrated.

Yeah, we just got back from Europe. No, it wasn't that great. Nothing like we thought it would be.

Recognize the tune? The scratchy sounds on the disappointment side of the disk are well-worn. Self-made bitterness, resentment, and pessimism ooze from the grooves. It's played year after year and we've heard it – or sung it.

It's time we switched to the flip-side. We need to take an honest look at this painful thorn that blurs our vision and conceives our disappointments. EXPECTATIONS! We erect mental images which are either, unrealistic, unfair, or biased. Those phantom images become our inner focus, rigidly and traditionally maintained. Leaving no room for flexibility on the part of the other person (allowing no place for circumstantial change or surprise) we set in mental concrete the way things must go. When they don't, we either tumble or grumble... or both.

The result is tragic. As our radius of toleration is reduced, our willingness to accept others' imperfections or a less-than-ideal circumstances is short-circuited. And, worst of all, the delightful spontaneity of a friendship strained. The chain of obligation, built with links of expectation, bind us in the dungeon of disappointment.

With all due respect to the beloved hymn we've sung half our lives, I'd suggest we change the title to "Blest Be the Tie That Frees."

We need to give one another stretching space – the room to respond and react in a variety of ways, even as our infinite Creator molded a variety of personalities. This will require a ritual burning of our list of expectations. For some of us, it could make quite a bonfire. It will also mean stop anticipating the ideal and start living with the real – which is always checkered with failure, imperfection, and even wrong...let's serve one another in love (Galatians 5:13)"

My dad celebrated his 70th birthday in September this year. My family wanted to throw a big celebration to invite relatives and friends for his birthday. We thought that is how someone who is 70 years of age would like it to be.

On the actual day of his birthday, my dad had dinner with his family at a vegetarian restaurant. The white-haired man had decided that having his family for his birthday is all he wanted. He wanted to see his daughters who have grown-up and married to be happy and healthy.

We thought my dad would be happier with a more elaborate celebration. We had expectations and had imposed our expectations on him thinking that this is what he wanted.

I reflected. It is time to be real and embrace God and live a life by the Spirit. The Love of God will see us through our lives, the way that it should be in His Love.

24 Sep 2011 – Some of us went to Sam's house



to visit his father, Mr George who has been feeling weak and is now staying there. He looks frail and unsteady



but otherwise in good spirits and good health. Sam promised to bring his father back to JCC in November.



Martin Cheah



HARD TRUTHS

“Lord, who may dwell
in your sanctuary?

Who may live on your holy hill? He whose walk is blameless and who does what is righteous, who speaks the truth from his heart ...” (Psalm 15:1-2, NIV).

“For I tell you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven.” (Matthew 5:20).

“All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.” (Rom. 3:23).

“Whoever keeps the whole law and yet offends at one point, he is guilty of breaking all of it.” (James 2:10).

God, what am I going to do? I can't possibly meet your standard! I've already blown it! I need mercy!

“God made Christ, who never sinned, to be the offering for our sin, so that we could be made right with God through Christ.” (2 Cor. 5:21, NLT).

“This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe.” (Rom. 3:22)

“For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God...” (Eph. 2:8).

You will encounter many people who are trusting in their “efforts” to get them to heaven, who believe their good deeds can outweigh their bad ones, or who believe that God will let them in because of their sincerity. Unfortunately, He's looking for perfect righteousness.

And the only way to gain that is to ask for mercy through Jesus - to believe in him and begin following him.

This is the hard truth, Jesus said, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.” (John 14:6)

It is hard for those who do not believe but to all those who “believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, you may have life in his name.” (John 20:31)

BAPTISM

GIANELLA TWILA MUZE

the youngest daughter of Humphrey and Gift was baptised on 11 Sept. 2011, exactly one year after she was born.



We welcome her into the family of God which worships in Jurong Christian Church.



"I tell you the truth, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of



heaven. Therefore, whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

And whoever welcomes a little child like this in my name welcomes me."

Matthew 18:3-5

HOUSE BLESSING

22 Sep 2011 - Some of the Dialect Ministry Team went with HOM, Peter Cheong to perform a house blessing for an elderly lady who lives in the same block as Mr Khoo. She lives alone with her maid.

The team brought along food, drinks and song sheets. Peter translated the house blessing



ceremony from English to Hokkien and the team sang some Hokkien songs as we went through the various rooms with prayer and blessings.

Our elderly sister was very happy and invited



us back for Christmas carolling.

After the service, we had an abundance of food and refreshment and had to takeaway the leftovers.



Peter had to rush off for a meeting while the rest of the team helped to clear up the house before leaving.



Martin Cheah

