

The Vine Committee

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In this issue of The Vine, the editor had to keep his words short because we received a deluge of writings on the APCC. Our young people have shown that their writing skills are well honed and may be capable of replacing John and I one day. Altogether

there are nine writers for the APCC event which occupy more than half of The Vine. I decided to put all their writings in the same issue because it is a good example of reading about the same event from nine different perspectives. It is like reading the 4 Gospels. Many critics have claimed that there are errors in the Bible because the 4 Gospels are not the same in reporting the events of Jesus ministry.

Well, here are nine writers writing about the same event and though we can see a similar thread through all their reports, they are all different in their individual styles and perspectives. Does it mean that the event did not occur because all nine

writers did not write exactly the same details? If you read through all the articles like we did, you will notice different emphasis by the various writers just like the 4 Gospel writers. Hope you enjoy reading all the articles and draw the same conclusion that the event did really happen even though some writers did not mention some of the activities in their writings.

Three months of 2013 has just passed by and a new Pope has been elected. Is he the last Pope as prophesised? Is he Pope Francis I the Argentinian or Pope Peter the Italian as prophesised?. Apparently, his parents are Italians and St Francis of Assisi was born Giovanni di **Pietro** di Bernardone (source: Wikipedia). Well if time is really running out, then what are you doing? *“Sow for yourselves righteousness, reap the fruit of unfailling love, and break up your unplowed ground; for it is time to seek the LORD, until he comes and showers righteousness on you.”* (Hosea 10:12)

Martin Cheah

YEAR OF THE SNAKE¹

Luck, “人日”and Orphidiophobia¹

Chinese everywhere welcomed the Year of the Snake – at least this is what we heard and read in the news – with raucous celebrations with firecrackers and fireworks where these were allowed. Ushering in the Year of the Snake, Chinese temples were crowded with worshippers seeking good fortunes. The Chinese were very creative in coming out with hundreds of colourful greetings and auspicious expressions associated with the Snake. The following is one:

**迎來蛇年頭，必是好兆頭，
煉出大塊頭，換上新行頭，
拿出蛇勁頭，趕上強勢頭，
賺足蛇彩頭，蛇年有奔頭！**

The snakes must be gladdened (or mistaken) by the human welcome, as they slithered out of hibernation to bask in the glory of their anticipated grand reception that comes round only once in 12 years. One of them was a mite impatient; it decided to show its great presence ahead of the new lunar year on a parking lot at Jurong West St 52 on Jan 5. Another one 2.5m long paid a visit on the very 1st day of the New Year (Feb 10) at a void deck, also in Jurong West. No prize for guessing what grand human receptions they received. A 3m-long python thought that it was smarter to avoid the unwelcome at Jurong West by coming out safely within the Year of the Snake and at a different place. It decided to head towards the window of a Student Care Centre in Ang Mo Kio on the morning of Feb 18. Unfortunately, the 9th day of the New Year was still not quite auspicious to this reptile which was quickly bundled off unceremoniously by pest control officers. Subsequently, there have been other sightings of snakes in this urban jungle. It is not surprising, but these denizens of the reptilian world should be



wise to the fact that while the Chinese have one in every twelve years named in honour of them, they are not really welcome to slither up uninvited in inappropriate places among the human population. They will be welcome with food and lodging in the zoo.

¹ Fear of snake

I welcome the Year of the Snake just like I welcome any new year, not because it is assigned any animal name. To be sure, I don't welcome a snake in my house in the Year of the Snake just like I don't welcome the presence of rats in the Year of the Rat. I don't know what luck I can associate with a snake, a rat or any other animal. At least, the big and bold headline "**Year of the Snake sees factory output slithering down**" (MONEY page, Straits Times, March 5) does not spell good luck. Maybe time is still early, and many Chinese still believe that in time all the good-luck wishes of the New Year greetings will come true.

Last year, it was the Year of the Dragon and many believers of Dragon luck happily answered the government's call for more babies. They will know the "not-so-lucky" implications when the time comes for their dragon children to vie for places in pre-schools, primary schools, secondary schools and so forth. Of course everyone hopes for the best but the best that will be for them will have little to do with luck, only realities.

In The Vine (Feb 2012 issue), I wrote that the dragon is neither a creature to be worshipped nor an object for idolization, and the dragon of Chinese mythology has nothing to do with the dragon that is mentioned in the Book of Revelation. In similar vein, the snake in the Chinese zodiac has absolutely no connection with the serpent that is mentioned in the Bible. However, Christians do (or ought to) dissociate themselves from the idea of luck (in association with animals, things or happenings). Ecclesiastes 9:11-12 (MSG) tell us:

¹¹ I have seen something else under the sun:

The race is not to the swift
or the battle to the strong,
nor does food come to the wise
or wealth to the brilliant
or favor to the learned;

but time and chance happen to them all.

¹² Moreover, no one knows when their hour will come:

As fish are caught in a cruel net,
or birds are taken in a snare,
so people are trapped by evil times
that fall unexpectedly upon them.

Let's consider re-writing verse 12 as follows:

Moreover, no one knows when their hour will come:
As workers face retrenchments in their jobs,
or students are happily settled down in good schools,
so people are faced with bad times or blessed with good ones

time and chance happen to them all.

Luck that people believe in hinges on their belief in a supernatural determination that they can hope to change by conscious acts or by praying to gods. However, the idea of chance in Scripture is that nothing happens by accident, but events that are good or dreadful run their natural courses and happen to all. The “chance” in Scripture is different in meaning from the word as it is used in “game of chance” and from the word “luck” as in the delusory belief that some people are born luckier than others.

Interestingly, on the seventh day of the Lunar New Year, I received a few sms greetings. One of these is as follows:

年初七“人日”听人说，要是在这一天收到一个祝福
会富足一年，幸福一生，所以我要送给您最诚恳的祝
福，祝您快乐幸福，健康长寿！人日快乐。

A Chinese belief is that the seventh day of the Lunar New Year is a special day called “人日” (mankind’s birthday). I welcomed the greetings for happiness and good health, but with a different understanding of “人日”. I reciprocated with the following greetings in good spirit:

人日的祝福:

(Blessings on Mankind's Birthday)

祝福你

這一天如光般燦爛.....

從清晨到夜晚

時時充滿快樂時刻

祝福你

這一天帶給你最美好的事物.....

來自許多朋友的祝賀讓你的心快樂地歡唱

期望在另一個里程碑中同樣有智慧與你同在

勇氣也將引導你朝向明確的目標前進

(May this day bring you the most beautiful things

Your heart sings with joy as friends congratulate you

*Wisdom stays with you in your next milestone
Courage guides your way towards a clear goal)*

祝福你

這一天在所有計畫要做的事上事半功倍並且上帝的祝福也一路與你相伴

(May this day bring success to your plans and the Lord's blessings be with you all the way.)

Regarding the origin of “人日” (Mankind's Birthday), ancient Chinese records say that heaven created all living things in seven days: 1st day, created the chicken; 2nd day, the dog; 3rd day, the pig; 4th day, the goat; 5th day, the cow; 6th day, the horse; 7th day, mankind; 8th day, grains. (The 8th day was added later.)

Since the Bible records that God created the Heaven and the Earth in six days, and rested on the seventh day as He handed over the care of the Earth to man, some studies in the past argued that the ancient Chinese people had come into contact with the Bible or that ancient Jews had reached China to spread the idea. In the course of time, the actual message of the Bible became buckled. Very significantly, this Chinese belief in creation is very distinct from the mythology about **女媧造人** and **女媧补天** (the ancient goddess Nüwa creating mankind and repairing the wall of heaven).

I don't buy the “人日” idea according to the Chinese tradition, but I sense that a part of this Chinese description of so-called mankind's birthday after the creation of other living things has the effect of reminding me about the true story of God's Creation as described in the Bible. Being a Chinese, I could not avoid mingling with Chinese friends and relatives in the festivity of the new year and sharing good wishes (the usual stuff: good health, success, happiness, etc.), and among the good wishes I share with you readers of the Vine, these would still be good wishes even if you are non-Chinese:

*May wisdom stay with you in your next milestone
Courage guides your way towards a clear goal
May you succeed in your plans
May the Lord's blessings be with you all the way*

No human culture is perfect. Chinese culture is imperfect and attracts criticisms of superstitions and ungodliness just like other cultures. There are even purported Christian cultures that contain elements of wrongs because of man's sinful

perversion of truth. Sometimes, distortion of truth comes by way of over-extension of what Scripture says (i.e., we assume the position of Scripture saying more than what it actually does); at other times, the distortion comes by way of a contraction of Scriptural teaching (i.e., we pick and choose favourite portions instead of imbibing the full context of the Word). In the Year of the Snake, we don't have to shrink away at every mention of the snake; we don't have to avert the sight of snakes in the zoo or trying to understand their behaviour or holding them in our hands (if they are not of the poisonous or unsafe variety). Although the serpent is a symbol of evil in the Bible, this serpent (Satan) is not equivalent to the creatures of the reptilian family that God created among all the animals.

Snakes do have their role in ecology and their venom has benefits in medicine. In John 3:14, Jesus made a positive comparison of himself being lifted up, to the snake that Moses lifted up in the wilderness. In Matt. 10:16, the Lord mentions a positive quality of shrewdness that is worthy of His followers to emulate from snakes; and in Hosea 7:11, we learn that even a gentle creature like the dove (which we would not balk at) has its negative quality too.

It is never the intention of God for us to hold a rigidly negative view of all snakes even as we are to be spiritually on guard against "the snake" in Gen. 3:1. In the Lunar New Year of the Snake, let us be wise to discard the superstitious elements of Chinese tradition, including the idea of luck, but let us not over-extend the message of Scripture beyond its rightful context and succumb to ophidiophobia. Did God really say that we should run far far away from these snakes found in Singapore: reticulated python, mangrove pit viper, dog-faced water snake, banded krait, etc.? (Yeah, we have lots of snakes in Singapore!☺)

JOHN LEE

1 Apr 2013 – Some of us attended the funeral of Charlie's wife Wendy, who was a



member of our Chinese Section. Charlie used to attend our English service some years back but has moved on to another church. The wake service was at the Garden of Remembrance off Jalan Bahar. It is a beautiful and serene location although rather quiet surrounded by cemeteries.

Wendy was quite an artist as a number of her paintings were on display in the funeral hall.

Rest in peace, dear sister.





JESUS
is my
healer.



Ephesians 2:8
By grace you have
been saved through

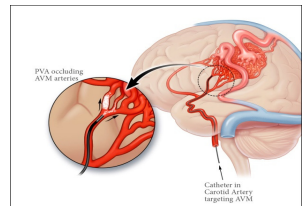
faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God.

By God's Grace, my hubby Cassidy and I planned for a 4-day free-and-easy vacation in Shenzhen, Zhuhai and Macau. Cassidy was supposed to come back to Singapore on 21st Jan before my business meeting at Macau from 21st to 25th January 2013. I fell sick on 20th January 2013 about 9pm at The Galaxy hotel in Macau.

Just as we prepared to pack our luggage bag for Cassidy to fly back the next day, I felt a sudden severe pain on the left side of my head and left eye. This was followed by vomiting and diarrhea. By God's Grace, Cassidy was still around with me and thus was able to make arrangement for me to be rushed to the nearest hospital just opposite the hotel.

I was diagnosed with bleeding on the left side of my brain. Thereafter, I was rushed to another hospital, "Kiang Wu Hospital", in Macau where there were facilities to deal with my condition.

Upon reaching "Kiang Wu Hospital" a CT scan showed intracerebral hemorrhage at the left temporal region. The next morning, which was 21st January 2013, a cerebral angiogram was performed. It confirmed that the bleeding was due to a rupture of an AVM (Arteriovenous Malformation) at the left temporal region.



After being informed of the cause by the surgeon, Cassidy activated prayer requests for me and by a leap of faith we committed to our Lord to have the operation done on 22nd January 2013.

On 22nd January 2013, at 12 noon I was pushed into the operating theatre. By God's grace and His healing hands, I was pushed out of the operating theatre after 6 hours. Miraculously I was still conscious of the surroundings and able to see Cassidy and my brother-in-law who had just travelled there from Singapore to be with me.

Thank God and all prayers from brothers and sisters in Christ. I was so blessed with speedy recovery, with just 2 days under observation in the ICU. Recuperating well from 25th to 31st Jan, I was flown back to Singapore.



Psalm 103:1-3 *Praise the Lord. O my soul. And all that is within me, praise his holy name. Praise the Lord, O my soul, and forget none of his acts of kindness. He forgives all my sins. He heals all my diseases*

Proverbs 4:20-26 *My child, pay attention to what I say. Listen carefully to my words. Don't lose sight of them. Let them penetrate deep into your heart, for they bring life to those who find them, and healing to their whole body*



Taman Jurong and Jurong West CG are tasked to organize this year's FAMILY Day. The two CGs met one Sunday to discuss and share out the workload according to the CG's talent pool.

Within our two CGs there are many experienced event organizers, those who organize BB camps and those that arrange Dialect Ministry outings.

God willing, this will be another great event. Do make yourselves available to have fun as a family.



Reflections on JCC's APCC 2013 Theme: "Prayer"



It was an honour to be able to attend the Annual Pulse Concentration Camp. Despite attending the camp for the second time, it was an amazing experience and will forever be so in my memory. I felt that I could be closer to GOD and with PULSE. Having different age groups together enabled us to bond well and get to know one another more. My whole cell (W.I.L.L) attended the camp. It was great for cell members to grow closer together like a family.

I picked up many useful ideas that would help in my life. Prayer, conversation and confidence were what I picked up. There are many ways to interpret what prayer means but to me, prayer means talking to God or having a conversation with him. Attending this camp has helped me develop a habit of praying with confidence whenever, and wherever I go.

There is no right or the wrong way to pray as long as you do it wholeheartedly. God always loves us because we are his children. There is no place we can't pray. We can pray in the train, bus or anywhere. The one awesome thing about prayer is that we can pray anytime to God. Why? Because God is our almighty Father who is always with us wherever we are. No matter what situation we are in He

I thank God that everything ran smoothly and He blessed us with good weather throughout the camp too. Through this camp I learnt a lot more about prayer and how important it was. I learnt that prayer was not a one-time thing but a daily activity that we should do without fail no matter where we are. I learnt about interceding for people around me as I have been called to be a priest of God! I also grew much closer to God and our relationship was brought to a higher level. It is also during this camp that I really understood how great God's love was for me and how insignificant I was. After this camp, I also felt that prayer was not as boring anymore and it became more natural to do. And of course, I grew closer to the awesome people in JCC too! Last but not least, the sessions and prayer activities were all very enriching and inspiring as well.

Bernice Lee



is always there to assist us and never once will abandon us. He would guide us along the right path if we seek him.

We were given our own private time with God through the activities that had been planned out by the committee members. One of the activities was called the Prayer Walk. We were led into a dark room that was only lighted by candles. The candles guided us to stations with instructions on what we were tasked to do. It was a memorable moment. I felt that God was there at the time watching us talking or entrusting to him about our problems, seeking help and guidance. I prayed for my brother that he would one day seek God for guidance and that God would lead him to the right path to move forward in life.

The next day, we went to the Pagoda at the Chinese garden. It was the moment that we learnt how to pray for different things such as Singapore, the poor, etc. Praying for many things made me realise how blessed I am to have God our Almighty Father, and his one and only son Jesus Christ to die for our sins that we are forgiven. He has blessed me with a happy family that would always be there for me, supporting me all the way. Friends would comfort me and cell leaders would always remind me that I am never alone and that God would always be there to lend us a helping hand. In the bible it is written (1 John 1:9) that if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

David was an example we can learn from to have confidence in God. Despite being small, his faith and trust in God was humongous. (1 Samuel 17:45-46) David said to the Philistines, "You come against me with sword and spear and javelin, but I come against you in the name of the LORD Almighty, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied. This day the LORD will deliver you into my hands, and I'll strike you down and cut off your head. This very day I will give the carcasses of the Philistine army to the birds and the wild animals, and the whole world will know that there is a God in Israel."

With this confidence we can achieve anything and everything as long as we



have faith and trust in him.

Thank you, the organising committee, for making this camp a memorable and fun camp. I shall definitely go participate the next time it's up again!

Kimberly Lam Kin Jheng

Indeed, it was a great pleasure to be able to stay away from the busy society to attend the Annual Pulse Concentration Camp 2013 (APCC '13). This was my second time attending this camp. It was a great experience as I experienced God's love and got to know how majestic He is. It was also a great time to fellowship and bond with the different age groups in PULSE, enabling us to know one another better.

Through this camp, I have learnt many points. Being confident, forgiving and prayerful were some points I picked up. What is Prayer? Prayer actually has a lot of meanings. However, I feel that prayer is not an activity or an application. It is a life found in a person as he/she is spiritually free to communicate with God at any point in time. There is no formula in praying; a willing heart is all that is needed. There's a saying, "No one works unless someone prays." So what is hindering us from praying? God is always there to listen to our prayers. No matter how helpless you are, if you pray and believe, there will always be a solution. Prayer should come as naturally as breathing.

This camp gave us plenty of personal time with God. The first activity we had was the Prayer Walk. We were led into a dark room. It was only lighted with candles. There were tasks given at each station. The stations were named according to A.C.T.S, which stands for Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving, and Supplication. One of the stations that impacted me greatly was the Confession station. We were supposed to write down the things that were hindering us from closeness with God on an ice-cream stick. After confessing, we were supposed to break it and throw it into a black box. At that moment, I felt relieved. If we repent, we are forgiven, and God will remember our sin no more. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness." - 1John 1:9

Furthermore, in one of the sessions, we learnt that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. For example, Romans 9:1-3 says "I speak the truth in Christ – I am not lying, my conscience confirms it

through the Holy spirit- I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart. For I could wish that I myself were cursed and cut off from the Christ for the sake of my brothers, those of my own race.”

The only way we can genuinely and effectively intercede is out of a heart of compassion, contrition and desperation – a heart that pounds with the sufferings of others as though they are our own.

Lastly, as we pour out our hearts to God, we should be even more concerned with seeking His will than we are with receiving the answer we want. That’s where the grace and the strength come from.

“Prayer is not a technique.
Prayer is not a methodology.
Prayer is not a matter of “steps one, two and three.”
It is our coming to a Person and being saturated with the communion of His great and glorious presence.”

Ruth Lee

The theme for the Annual Pulse Concentration Camp this year was Prayer. The camp started off with a prayer walk where individuals were given a slow and personal time with God. The walk was guided, with the framework A.C.T.S. – which stands for Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving and Supplication.



I was grateful to have the opportunity to slow down and adore our Almighty God, to give thanks and to reflect on the mistakes I had made during the course of the week and to confess all these before the Lord. Often, due to our busy schedules, we spend minimal time with the Lord. The walk has allowed me to be drawn closer to God and

to meditate on His goodness.

We also had another prayer activity at The Chinese Garden, where we were given prayer pointers to pray for ourselves and for the world. I appreciated the chance to pray together with my group. This prayer activity helped me to widen the scope of my prayer, and taught me to see

that prayer is not only about me and the people around me, but it is also a channel for me to intercede for nations.

Another thanksgiving I have is for the opportunity to take part in the games. As a group leader, I was happy to see that most of us were sporty in participation despite the fact that we would be getting rather dirty with mud on our body.

From the camp, I learnt that we can now approach God with confidence through prayer. Christ's sacrifice is our qualification to enter God's presence. We can have a relationship with God because Christ has died on the cross and cleansed us from all our unrighteousness. It is comforting to know that it is God's desire for us to have a relationship with Him and that we can now freely enter His Presence. The prayer activities led me to see my identity as a child of God and that God has a plan for all of us way before we were even born. It is indeed pleasant to know our future is in the hands of our Father, who is the same yesterday, today and tomorrow.

I thank God for the camp committee, who spent lots of time and effort in planning the programmes. I also thank God for the opportunity to draw near to Him and fellowship with His people.

Hannah Koh

The theme for this year's APCC was Prayer. In the two days, we really concentrated on praying!



The first event of the camp was having a personal prayer walk with our Lord through a labyrinth. Through this walk, we had personal meditation, praise, thanks and confession to The Lord. I felt that I was drawn closer to The Lord and I knew deep inside me that there is a God whom I could truly trust through life's thick and thin.

After this event, we had our first session conducted by Reverend Anthony. I learnt that prayer, simplified, is talking to God. But at a deeper level, it is entering into God's presence. Prayer is communion, communication and contact between creature and creator. It is also an expression of a relationship between God and us. Sin was the hindrance between us and

God. Jesus Christ is our qualification to enter into God's presence. Through Jesus Christ, God has finally called us to come close to Him.

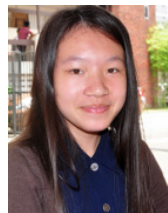
On Day 2, we had 2 prayer activities and 2 sessions with Reverend Anthony. The second prayer activity was praying to God in silence and reflecting on what God did for us. We were shown videos and one video hit me very deeply. Though I had watched it countless times, it still left me with deep remorse and guilt. The video, summarized, is about a man sacrificing his son in order to save many lives and these people did not even know about the sacrificed son, which in our case is our Lord Jesus Christ. All of us Christians were saved through Christ but there are still many people who are in the dark about the Saviour Jesus. We prayed for 1 hour plus and through this activity, I felt that prayer really is essential in our life.

The third prayer activity during the camp was going to the Chinese Garden's 7-level pagoda. As we advanced up the levels, our prayer field widened as we went from self to church to creation. Through this activity, I felt that I was too selfish at times when I prayed to God as all I prayed about was mostly about myself. But after this activity, I realized that there was so much out there to pray for!

The second session with Reverend Anthony taught us that we are God's chosen priests and we are called to intercede. I learnt that in the New Testament, Jesus Christ is our High Priest. Whether we are 'allowed' to enter into God's presence is decided wholly by the High Priest, who is Jesus Christ. I have also learnt that I have Christ's sacrifice, Christ's righteousness and Christ's identity.

The third and last session was about praying effectively. I learnt about the difference between the "Prayer List" Priest and the Identifying Priest. I also learnt that we need to pray according to God's will. We can do so by using the Lord's Prayer, Praying for the Harvest Field, Restoring the House of Prayer for all nations and using the ten-fold claim of Colossians.

All in all, I feel that this camp was really fruitful for me as I really learnt a lot about prayer and really identified myself with God.



ALYNA KHOO

The annual pulse concentration camp 2013 was truly a time for me to draw closer to God, through the theme of the camp – Prayer.

Like everyone else, I've always thought that prayer is just a form of communication between God and Christians. However, through the sessions, I learnt that prayer is much more than plainly talking to God! It is about encountering God. I learnt that before God calls us into a conversation, He calls us into a relationship with Him and into His presence. At times we may be faced with the spirit of intimidation, fear and disbelief, as in the Old Testament. Thus, we become afraid to come before God. However, instead of letting these fears hinder us from prayer, we should look at Christ's sacrifice and know that God remembers our sins no more, and that He knows that we are given Christ's righteousness and a new identity, so that we can have the confidence to approach God in prayer and converse with Him!



Also, we are God's priests, chosen to intercede with God on behalf of man, and with man on behalf of God. I learnt the importance of intercession, and the significance of it, that intercession can save many lives! Lastly, I learnt to pray according to God's will, with the help of the Holy Spirit.

Apart from the sessions, the camp also allowed me to apply Prayer through the various prayer activities!

First, the prayer labyrinth which was held on Friday night. It helped me to be still as I came before God in Adoration, to Confess my sins, knowing that He forgives; in Thanksgiving, for the things He has done; and also in Supplication, to humbly ask God for help in my Christian walk. (ACTS)

The second prayer activity helped me to interact with God, as we were given time to reflect and know truly how great our Father is, that he is the creator of the earth and the universe and everything in it; how the God, who is our sovereign, all-powerful king, is our Father who loves us and sent his only son to die for us; and how he is merciful to us and faithful. At the end of this prayer session, we got to write a letter to ourselves, reminding us who God is to us. This was what I wrote to myself:

"Dear Diana,

I am writing a letter to remind you about who you are. You are a child of God, a precious possession of His. He is your Father and He loves you so much. In Him you can find security, for He is almighty and powerful. He is the God who reigns over creation. He is sovereign, yet merciful. He forgives you from all

your sins and he wants to reconcile with you so badly. He sent His only son down to die for you and He promises you all His blessings. His love is immeasurable, indescribable, and humanly unattainable. Put your trust in Him. Turn back to Him and repent if you have sinned because He forgives. Talk to Him, tell Him your problems because He is your friend. Give thanks and submit your life to Him and persevere patiently as you work for God!"

The third and fourth prayer activities got me to apply what was taught during the sessions, about the importance of intercession. We interceded, not only for ourselves, but also for creation, world, government, nation, church and our families. We stood in the gap to ask God to bless his creation and everything in it. Also, at night we interceded for Jurong Christian Church, for the different ministries such as adult, youth, kids, Girls' Brigade, Boys' Brigade, etc. It was a special experience for some of us, as we prayed in groups around the 7-storey pagoda in The Chinese Garden as well as with candles around the church. Most importantly, we had the chance to intercede as priests.

We also had time for worship, singing praises to God; and for games, with such fun dirtying ourselves in friendly competition under the hot sun, building strong bonds with one another in Christ!

All in all, APCC 2013 was an awesome camp, which strengthened my relationship with God and with people! I cannot wait for the next APCC!

Diana Koh

APCC, also known as Annual Pulse Concentration Camp, is an annual JCC youth camp that teaches the youth on various aspects of Christian living. For APCC 2011 and 2012, the themes were Word and Worship. This year, the theme of APCC 2013 is Prayer.

I would like to thank the committee members. Without them, APCC 2013 would not have been possible. I want to thank God for each of them as they put in their time and effort to make this camp a success. Indeed, to plan a camp is very tiring, especially when you have to cope with your studies and other important matters. Nevertheless, it is evident that the camp was a big success and I want to thank God for that.

I would also like to thank the preacher, our JCC Reverend Anthony, for taking time to plan for the sessions. To come up with sermons or lessons is tough enough, but to come up with fun and interesting activities to facilitate the lessons would be even more challenging. It must have taken a huge lot of effort. I want to thank God

for Rev Anthony for his hard work in trying to teach the campers. I am sure the campers learnt a lot through his passionate teachings.

I would like to thank the campers as well. Without the active and eager participation of the campers, this camp would be dead. It was really a blessing to see the campers know God, experience God and come together to have a good time of fellowship. They also persevered through the camp even though there was a bit of rush. Thank God that they were cooperative and obedient.

I would like to thank God for the smoothness of the camp that everything managed to work out fine. The weather was perfect, we were able to do the prayer activities smoothly and the campers were able to play some games in the open. Thank God for answering our prayers. Even though time was tight, the camp still ended on a happy note with the campers enjoying a memorable experience. Thank God for everything.

I have learnt a lot through this camp. First of all, the theme for this camp is prayer. Through this camp I have learnt that we are God's priesthood. I learnt that we can have confidence from the fact that if we ask anything according to His will, He will give us. This enables me to pray confidently to God, though not all my prayers will be answered since God may not plan for that to happen. He may want me to go another path that he has planned for me. (Jeremiah 29:11) I have learnt that in prayer, we have to listen carefully to the voice of God. We should not always ask for things but hear what God has to say to us.

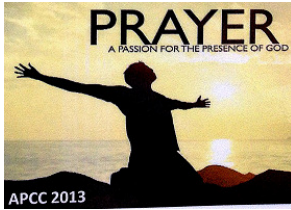
Through this camp, I learn the importance of unity. If there wasn't any unity among the campers, there would be conflicts and the mood for the camp would be affected. If there wasn't any unity among the committee members, the camp would be split and no definite instructions could be given. Unity among the people is important to accomplish tasks.



I am looking forward to next year's APCC. Hope that it will turn out as fun as this year's.

Gabriel Lim

APCC, a.k.a. Annual Pulse Concentration Camp, is meant to be a camp to train and prepare the youths in JCC to be mature Christians through W2P2 (Word, Worship, Prayer, People). This year's APCC theme is Prayer. I enjoyed this camp a lot as it not only enabled me to bond with the other youth members in JCC, but also served as a platform for me to draw nearer to God through prayer, a form of communication, without any worry and disturbance from studies and other matters.



There were plenty of prayer activities and sessions that allowed me to be in constant communication with God. As I usually worry about how to pray and what to pray, I have learnt from this camp the different areas that I can pray about; like the world, different ministries in the church and much more. Not only that, I know that God already knows what we want to say even before we even say it, so we don't have to be afraid when talking to him. Unlike in the past, when the high priest was the only one being able to communicate with God and furthermore in great fear, I felt very fortunate to be able to communicate with Him openly without any fear of being struck to death for any small mistake I made.

There were different kinds of prayer activities. Some were meditative and personal when in communication with God; others were active and in a group. As it is written in Matthew 18:20: "For where two or more gather in my name, there am I with them."

The prayer activity that I liked most was the one at the pagoda. There, I was able to experience the different levels of prayer: self, family, church, nation, government, world, creation.

At each level, my group and I used various methods of communicating like worship, prayer and sharing. The situations and questions set at each level enables me to have an overview of what the world is facing, what we should pray for and more.

For thanksgiving, I would like to first and foremost thank God for the wonderful weather during the camp that the schedule could run smoothly and also for His guidance and communication with me along the way. Next, I would like to thank all the APCC committee members for the hard effort, sweat and determination that they put in in order for us to enjoy and benefit from the camp. Without them, the camp would not have been a success or even be organized in the first place. They enabled me to know the importance of prayer, how crucial it is to be in constant communication with God and also gave me time to be set aside just for me to be alone with Him.

To Reverend Anthony, thank you for the sessions that you have given as it helped me understand about the confidence in praying to God and the knowledge of how God can hear us as we are called to be His priest and we are supposed to

intercede for people. Finally, my fellow youths in JCC, I appreciate those who set aside their hectic schedules for this camp and I would like to thank especially my group mates for being such active players in the team, also contributing unconditionally. I really enjoyed my time spent with all of the members in the camp and I look forward to next year's APCC camp! The thought of the theme 'People' keeps me anticipating what will come out next!

Clement Lim

This year's APCC camp had the biggest impact on me, for several reasons.

First of all, I was chosen to be a group leader this year. This was the first time I was given a leadership position in a camp. This meant that I had to lead a group of people through not only the games and activities but also to guide them in daily devotions and reflections after each lesson. This gave me valuable experience in leading others and also allowed me to learn much more about prayer, which is the camp's theme.

I would like to thank my group members, namely Clement, Bernice, Song Yi and Caleb for being such wonderful group members, actively sharing during devotions and participating enthusiastically in every activity. I would also like to thank my mentor Evania for helping me along during lessons and prayer activities when I wasn't sure how to continue.

I would also like to give a big thanks to the organizing committee for the camp, who have put in many hours planning the camp and ensuring that everyone had a great time of fun and more importantly learning many things about prayer. Through this camp I learned so much more about prayer. Before the camp, prayer was more of an obligation for me, something my parents would make sure we did. After the camp, however, I learned that prayer is so much more and now prayer is something I look forward to. I hope that next year's APCC will be just as awesome as this one!

JONATHAN GOH

Good Friday 29 Mar



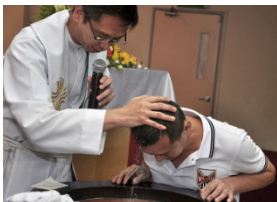
In a simple but dramatic enactment of Jesus on the way to Calvary, we had a commanding looking Roman centurion following behind a frail looking Jesus, carrying his cross to Calvary.



There was a heavy downpour that day around 3 to 4 pm reminding me how sad a day it was.

Martin Cheafi

The Photo Page



In the month of March, JCC celebrated Easter. The Dialect Ministry celebrated its 5th Anniversary. There were baptisms and transfers, GB enrolment and a whole host of activities. Here are some of the photos.



Sunday Worship Services:

- 9:00 am Youth Service (MPH)
- 10:45 am Adult Service (Sanctuary)
- 10:45 am Sunday School
- 3:30 pm Hokkien Service (MPH)