

The Vine

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The Vine Committee

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HOM'S Reflections

I just discovered that there is a saint for procrastinators, St. Expeditus, a Roman centurion who was martyred around 303 AD, for converting to Christianity.

According to legend, the day he decided to become a Christian, the Devil took the form of a crow and told him to defer his conversion until the next day, but Expeditus stamped on the bird and killed it, declaring, "I'll be a

Christian today!"



The only reason I mentioned this story is because I am a procrastinator. In a 1992 study, it is estimated that 80%–95% of college students engage in procrastination. Did you know I have this habit? Well, it is quite obvious. The Vine always comes out at the last minute or even later. I am sure editor, John Lee, gets quite anxious at the end of each month, chasing me to complete it.

Some people think Jesus is procrastinating His return but the verse states that He is just being patient. *The Lord does not delay His promise, as some understand delay, but is patient with you, not wanting any to perish but all to come to repentance.* 2 Peter 3:9

Aren't you glad that He is patient because we are all procrastinating carrying out His Great Commission.

I can process the photos I take and upload to YouTube within two days but I take a long time to write for The Vine. This is according to the definition of Procrastination in Wikipedia. It is the practice of carrying out less urgent tasks in preference to more urgent ones, or doing more pleasurable things in place of less pleasurable ones, and thus putting off impending tasks to a later time, sometimes to the "last minute" before the deadline.

I must try to break the habit. With two big fund raising events in October, it should give me enough inspiration to write.

Martin Cheah

THE GREATEST DANGER - David Wilkerson

The greatest danger we all face is not being able to see Jesus in our troubles—instead, we see ghosts. In that peak moment of fear when the night is the blackest and the storm is the angriest, Jesus always draws near to us, to reveal Himself as the Lord of the flood, the Savior in the storms. *“The Lord sitteth upon the flood; yea, the Lord sitteth King forever”* (Psalm 29:10).

In Matthew 14, Jesus ordered His disciples into a boat that was headed for a storm. The Bible says He constrained them to get into a ship. In other words, He insisted that they get into the ship even though it was headed for troubled waters; it would be tossed about like a bobbing cork. And where was Jesus? He was up in the mountains overlooking the sea, praying for them not to fail in the test He knew was coming.

Later He came to them, walking on the water (see Matthew 14:25). But not one disciple recognized Him! They did not expect to see Him out on the water in the middle of a storm. Never, ever did they expect Him to be with them or even near them in a tempest.

At least one disciple should have recognized what was happening and said, “Look, friends, Jesus said He would never leave us or forsake us. He sent us on this mission; we are in the center of His will. He said the steps of a righteous man are ordered by Him. Look again. That’s our Lord! His is right here! We’ve never once been out of His sight!”

There was only one lesson to be learned—only one. It was a simple lesson, not some deep, mystical, earth-shattering one. Jesus wanted to be trusted as their Lord, in every storm of life. He simply wanted them to maintain their cheer and confidence, even in the blackest hours of trial. Just one simple but very important lesson!

“I am with you always, even unto the end of the world” (Matthew 28:20)

Sing unto the Lord!

Two wonderful nights at Michael Card Concert

As the music filled the auditorium of Covenant Evangelical Free Church (Woodlands) on 3 and 4 October 2014, the fund-raising concert also became a channel for Christians and Non-Christians to gather and know more about God – Our Lord Jesus who made all things possible in His Time!



Two of my friends attended the concert on different days. Both of them felt that the concert was great. One of them said, "...It was good to see people from different churches coming together and give what they wanted to give for the fund-raising concert. There are so many churches involved in this fund-raising effort! The NJCC is for Christians no matter where you come..." The songs from Michael Card brought tears to her eyes.

The other said that \$25million is a lot of money required for the rebuilding of a church. The concert was a good way to raise funds by remembering that God has given us all that we need and it is time to give what we can in time, effort and/or money.

For me, it was the sharing from Michael Card about how God worked in the life of Michael's son and his mother that brought a strong awareness that God works all things in His time. Even in Michael's life, he had to wait for God and let God work through the lives of his family members even through tough times. His songs tell the story of his life as a Christian and he knows that the best he can do for the gift that God had given him is through his music. Through his songs, he has dedicated his life to encourage other Christians by telling them the story of Jesus through his life experiences and the experiences of people he knew.



It was heart-warming to see so many of our brothers and sisters-in-Christ come together on both nights, serving in ways that they can. Indeed, for Michael Card's concert, it is a Journey of Love for us through the love of God!

Joyce Tan

THE MICHAEL CARD CONCERT

When the concert was first proposed, the Fund Raising committee almost turned it down because they did not think we had the experience, the location or the manpower to carry out such an event.

However on reconsideration, they took up the challenge and God proved Himself faithful. The cost of bringing Michael Card to Singapore was borne by LCOR and the location for the concert was provided by CEFC Woodlands. Even the manpower was partially fulfilled by sister churches.



The committee assigned the event to bro Young Kwang to manage. He quickly formed his team out of people from JCC, LCOR and BLC. At first, the team proposed to charge concert-goers 2-tier pricing. Then Bishop Kee came up with a radical proposal to give away the tickets free and have a freewill collection instead.



If anyone had wondered about the feasibility of this proposal, then the final collections speak for themselves. We managed to raise more than \$100k despite the fact that Israel

Houghton was also in Singapore at that time. We knew about this from a very old friend, Betty K, when we ran into her at Clementi Hawker Centre.



Based on my estimates, if we had charged \$50 per pax, we would probably only raise \$25k. Even when it was free, we could not get full house on both nights. Studying the money we received, there were many \$10, \$5 and \$2 notes which would mean that many did not even give as we may have expected but these

were compensated by those who gave more than \$50 and also there were 2 cheques of \$10k each.

Money aside, from these 2 nights, we managed to share our vision with more than 84 churches in Singapore. If the people bring our vision back to their churches, we may receive even more as the churches share the same vision. The topping to the cake was Michael Card who will also share our vision with his home church in the US.

From this concert, we now have the experience of organizing a large scale event and that should be useful for future events that will come along.



As the chief chargehand for the event, I was tasked to transport the collection back to the church on both nights. On the first night I thought 1 big envelope was sufficient and we brought back more than \$30k. The second night I decided to bring a bag pack and it was also filled with more than \$70k. Someone joked with me that I should have brought a



bag big enough to carry a million dollars. Did my lack of faith limit God's generosity?



Martin Cheah

God's Hand in Michael Card...

Thank you for praying and publicizing the Michael Card Singapore Tour, part of the SE Asian Tour. I could really feel the prayers of the saints and the favour of God over a week when the haze stayed away, the rains did not fall (it was my prayer although the plants are thirsty now). On 25 Oct, there was a dawn prayer and worship at Skye Park Marina Bay Sands, and the heavens opened up. My deep desire at that open heaven moment was that the Michael events of the coming week (1 - 5 Oct) would bring pleasure to God, - that would be enough for me. Two eagles were flying while the banners flapped strongly in the wind with dark clouds hovering over MBS but only a countable number of rain drops sprinkled. It was an amazing moment of dedication of Singapore to the Lord, and for me, a moment of dedicating the week ahead.

The horse has been made ready for battle, but the victory belongs to the Lord. So many unimaginable doors opened to send posters, to distribute flyers, all in the nick of time. Timing, favour and stamina. Thank you for praying for health and open doors. Churches whose names I was not familiar with (and we have been in the radar of churches for a long time), popped up for registration for the Biblical Imagination on the book of Matthew. About 163 people came.

Willing hands were mailing out free concert tickets, many working into the wee hours of the morning. It looked like nobody was sleeping if you were on one of the several whatsapp groups. Lots of new friends were made over the phone conversations, with personal attention to requests of people interested in attending Morning Prayer, Biblical Imagination Workshop or Concerts. The energy and sacrifice of the Jurong Christian Church was unbelievable. Watching their enthusiasm and initiative was infectious, Ushers, traffic wardens, the crowds: the love and energy was amazing. 891 on first concert night and 1080 on the second night from 84 church groups gathering to worship at CEFC: all this made the preparation time spent worthwhile. The fund raised met its target: \$100,000 (the total for rebuilding is 25 million). Hoong An turned on his usual dry humour as emcee. I didn't know he had met Michael 18 years ago, in Tennessee on his way to



Florida. He can't even remember why he was there.. but see how God joins the dots for us years later. There were non-Lutherans encouraging their friends (who have completely no connection with the JCC rebuilding) to give generously. That's the "speed of trust": Friends who trust friends who trust some of us when we say "God is in this".



Michael Card is not first a musician nor singer of songs. That is a side gift. His main calling is a (student and) teacher of the Word. At the Biblical Imagination workshop, he said, "If you go home and open your Bible, I win". So if we didn't really get the content of what was taught, but it made us hungry to read the Word, he has succeeded in his mission at the BI. He does make us hungry for the Word, and we are grateful. Someone asked him what translation of the Bible he uses. He had been using NIV, but now he has changed. If one uses only one

translation, one can literally finish the sentence when one reads the first part of a verse. That's not good, as we are not able to discover new thoughts as much. So he has changed to another translation. He also says (and those in my generation concur) that we should use a HARD COPY Bible, keep to one, and not just the electronic one to swipe. Write notes on it. He fills his Bible with notes, and then he gives to one of his children. He has four children. He is now making notes on one Bible and when it is full, he will give it to his granddaughter. (Bibles of great men have the value of the recorded ideas and revelations which the next generation can treasure).

On the Saturday concert, he dedicated a song "Joy in the Journey" to the two Myanmar maids in our homes who served them. He dedicated a song "Fellow Prisoners" to the persecuted church, saying that although there is much bloodshed and suffering (in the Middle East and elsewhere), we should celebrate the courage of the people who'd rather die than to deny Jesus.

Michael hopes to come back to sing at the new Church Hub when it is rebuilt in Jurong. Bishop Terry Kee shared the steps of how God has led him and the Lutheran Church in this Journey of Faith. Michael is touched. I sent to him excerpts of Prime Minister Lee's Rally when he spoke on developing of Jurong Lake Gardens District, and mentioned that the New Science Center will be the jewel of the Jurong Lake Gardens District. Ps Anthony asks, "Will the New JCC be the spiritual jewel of the Jurong Lake Gardens District?"

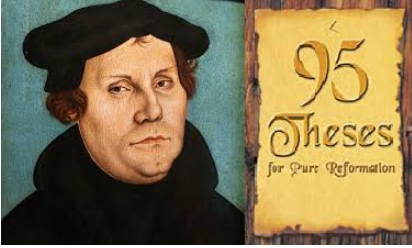
Having hosted numerous Christian leaders and missionaries over the last 37 years, I was very encouraged to see the humility, the simplicity and joy of Michael and his team. They remind me of the old time missionaries whom we used to host. And I bow in worship to God, for the divine connections, the beauty of His holiness and for the privilege to participate in the works God had prepared for us to do (Eph 2:10). Your prayers and support have borne much fruit.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jpJO792P-Xc&list=UUKfwDGQVU69D5mUwOHUQdw>

JEAN

PROUDLY A LUTHERAN



Friday, 31st October 2014, is the 497th anniversary of the Reformation Day (counting from 31st Oct 1517 when Martin Luther posted his Ninety-Five Thesis on the door of the Castle Church in Wittenberg, Germany.

I still remember what Rev. Edmund Lim¹, the first Singaporean pastor of Jurong Christian Church, once said, “Once a Lutheran, always a Lutheran.”

If you are a Lutheran, then you are a Christian. The simple reason is that a Lutheran professes the Christian faith, so you can’t be a Lutheran if you are not a Christian. Therefore, I would like to give Rev. Lim’s statement this interpretation, “Once a Christian (Lutheran), always a Christian (Lutheran).” This is my wish for every Christian to hold fast to the faith. It is a wish; but, facing the reality of spiritual struggles in a world fraught with the stresses from sin, it is a sad note that there are Christians who fall; and for those who are still faithful to their profession of faith, the relentless spiritual battles are disconcerting indeed.

If you are not a Lutheran but keep the Christian faith, you are still a worthy brother or sister in Christ to me whether you confess the Methodist, Presbyterian, Baptist or any other Christian denominational distinctive. Just like we can be all Singaporeans yet having varied distinctives of races; or being all of one race, yet having varied dialectical distinctives; there is value for us to note our unity in the body of Christ and yet respect (not resent) the variances of our unique denominational persuasions. On the foundation of the unity, and with personal denominational persuasions as our reference positions, we can have sharing of perspectives and discussions to understand ourselves and our brothers and sisters in Christ better with regards to the variety of convictions. This is like having individuals with their own religious beliefs as their starting points converse with one another with a spirit of openness without offence.

If you are proud to be a Singaporean, you don’t have to feel shy about it, without being condescending towards other nationalities. If you are proud to be of a certain race, you don’t have to feel shy to show your pride without being contemptuous of other races. **Similarly, if you are a Lutheran, why must you be shy about openly proclaiming your Lutheran convictions while still being respectful to**

¹ Rev. Edmund Lim is now ministering in a Lutheran Church in America.

friends who come from other Christian denominations? In any nationality group, there can't be citizens who are not sure to what nationality they belong. Similarly, in any racial group, it is a given for every member to know his/her racial heritage. In this vein, I feel that it is good for every Methodist, every Presbyterian, every Baptist, every ... (fill in whatever denomination appropriate) to be familiar and comfortable to share his/her knowledge of the denomination he/she belongs to. It is also good for a "non-denominational" Christian to be able to share his/her personal conviction of being "non-denominational".



The celebration of Reformation Day is not a celebration of Martin Luther, but a celebration of Protestant Christians' liberation from bondage to the unholy excesses of the Roman Catholic Church. I do not feel shy to announce to people that I am a Lutheran. I am not uncomfortable with myself being a Lutheran and being reminded of my Lutheran heritage - **the legacy of faith proclaimed by Martin Luther that salvation is by God's grace through faith in Jesus Christ, and cannot be bought.** It was the Roman Catholic Church's sale of indulgences in the late medieval period that provoked the Reformation. Here are the core Lutheran beliefs:

Sola scriptura (By Scripture alone)



As Lutherans, we value the teachings passed down by Martin Luther. We uphold that only the Bible should be used for doctrine. This in fact is the formal principle of the

Reformation laid down by Martin Luther. The Scripture is the final authority on all matters regarding salvation and holiness – above human leaders (e.g. the Pope), church traditions and creeds. Everything a Christian professes or instructs ought to be supported by the Bible.

All Scripture is God-breathed and fully sufficient to equip us for good work. (1 Tim. 3:16-17)

Sola fide (By faith alone)

F.A.I.T.H – Forsaking All I Trust Him

We are justified by faith, not by self-afflictions, asceticism, fasting or buying indulgences. We cannot do enough by our own effort of good works to please God.



Good works exude from our profession of faith and not vice versa.

“It is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes. For in the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed – a righteousness that is by faith from first to last.” (Rom. 1:16-17)

“Abram believed the LORD, and he credited it to him as righteousness.” (Gen. 15:6)

Sola gratia (“By grace alone”)



G.R.A.C.E. – God’s Riches At Christ’s Expense

With our sinfulness, our salvation is unmerited but granted to us by divine grace.

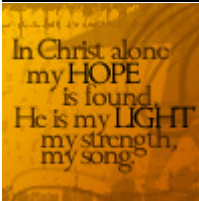
“The mind governed by the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God’s law, nor can it do so. Those who are in the realm of the flesh cannot please God.” (Rom. 8:7-8)

“It does not, therefore, depend on human desire or effort, but on God’s mercy.” (Rom. 9:16)

Martin Luther said, "If any man ascribes salvation, even the very least, to the free will of man, he knows nothing of grace, and he has not learnt Jesus Christ aright."

The Lutheran theology of the sacraments (Baptism and the Holy Communion) underscores the sacraments as sacred acts of divine institution (not humanly instituted rites) with the grace of God present in them and given for believers.²

Solus Christus (“Through Christ alone”)



Jesus said unequivocally, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.” (The word “except” is worth emphasising.)

We don’t earn salvation by kissing the feet of the Pope or by gaining special favours from the Bishop.

² Reference: Article XIII: The Number and Use of the Sacraments, vv 3–4, Apology of Augsburg Confession, The Book of Concord

Soli Deo Gloria ("Glory to God alone")

**GLORY TO
GOD ALONE**

יהוה

I am the LORD: that is my name:
and my glory will I not give to another,
neither my praise to graven images.
- Isaiah 42:8

It is not uncommon to hear Christians saying: “I like the sermons preached by that pastor,” “Church XYZ is a great church with a very charismatic leader,” “Mary Tan is a great servant of God doing great for her ministry,” etc.

Even in the Bible, we read about great men of faith and achievements. Let me just mention one: Moses delivering the Israelites out of Egypt.

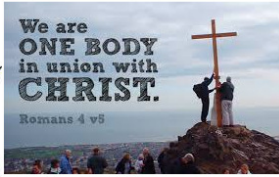
As a Lutheran, we remind ourselves constantly of Martin Luther’s exhortation, “Soli Deo Gloria/To God alone be the glory!”

We go to church not because the praises of particular men in that church have got into our heads. We go to church to worship and praise God and give Him all the glory and honour.

Whatever we do and whatever that happens, we give glory to God alone, not for the praise of our ministry leaders or the exaltation of our pastors.

It is good to know why we are called Lutherans and what our core beliefs are. Such beliefs are principles that do play significant roles in guiding our spiritual lives even though we do not take them as gospel on their own; but inasmuch as the principles are validated by Scripture (*Sola scriptura*), then we know that we are not walking on the wrong track. The distinctives of our denomination provide us a platform of personal convictions to develop our grasp of the Christian faith as we engage in mutually edifying conversations with friends who have their own distinctive convictions.

Here I can only briefly state what being a Lutheran means, and why we can keep shyness at bay in declaring to others that we are Lutherans. As we celebrate the 497th anniversary of Reformation Day, we know how we Lutherans have been guided in our faith by a heritage that has passed down for centuries. More details of the Lutheran heritage are contained in the Lutheran Book of Concord, which is a collection of creeds and confessions attesting to a doctrinal unity committed to the Gospel of Jesus Christ.



Besides the creeds and confessions, our Lutheran liturgy (which has been simplified somewhat in the Singapore

Lutheran church) actually focuses worshippers' attention on the Word of God and the Life of Jesus, and guards us against the distractions afforded by human digressions and weaknesses. The liturgy ensures that the worshippers inevitably will hear and confess God's Word regardless of the worship leader's and the preacher's performance. It may escape non-Lutherans that there is an important reason for our preacher's lectern to be located on one side of the altar (unlike in some other churches) instead of right at the centre of the pulpit so that the preaching of the Word (essential as it is) does not usurp the central spotlight of our worship; i.e., Christ himself.

Being proudly a Lutheran is not to challenge the beliefs of our brothers and sisters in Christ of other denominations; it is just like being proudly a Chinese Singaporean is not to undercut the greatness of heritage of other nationalities and ethnic groups. Unity in diversity – “unity without uniformity and diversity without fragmentation” – there is beauty within that we can all share for mutual blessings as we give glory to God for an agreeable tapestry of Christian communion.

John Lee

“Singapore thou art the Antioch of Asia, called to be a blessing to all nations”. (Billy Graham, Evangelistic Crusade at Singapore Indoor Stadium on 6 December 1978).

And he left for Tarsus to look for Saul; and when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch. And for an entire year they met with the church and taught considerable numbers; and the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch. Acts 11:26

It was in Antioch that the idea of sending missionaries out to convert the heathens was born. It was the place where Saul (with Barnabas and John Mark) set out on his first commissioned missionary journey.

Two things happened at Antioch, we got the name Christians and the idea of sending out missionaries. Which one did Billy Graham mean for Singapore? The obvious is that he meant for Singapore to send out missionaries but maybe he meant that Singapore was a Christian country. Whichever, has this prophesy come to pass? Do we need to fulfil God's purposes? Will His purposes come to pass regardless of what we do? Consider these when you next hear Singapore is the Antioch of Asia.

Martin Cheah

JCC Golf Challenge 24th Oct

On Deepavali, all the helpers of the Golf Tournament were in church to finalize the planning of the event and to pack the goodie bags. Those who do not play golf were at a loss to understand what their positions required of them. Let's hope we all will be able to get it right on the actual day.



It had been raining the past few days which worried the team because the event depended on fine weather. The day arrived and God gave us great weather for golf. The haze was low as the sun shone throughout with a breeze cooling us in between. Arriving at RCC at 9:30 am, the team got to work immediately getting the logistics ready before the golfers arrived.



The golfers started streaming in around 11:30 and



the registration team were busy giving out the goodie bags. We took turns going for lunch so that there were team members always around on duty to receive the guests.

After lunch, we gathered for a group photo after which the golfers got into their buggies and moved off. The photographers were also brought to their stations, Nick at hole 1 and myself at hole 10. There I stood in the open hot field for the next 3 over hours. Thank God for the cool breeze.





reward is the joy of the Lord. *'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness! Matthew 25:23.*



Martin Cheah



<http://youtu.be/h-Q3-yTPQaE>

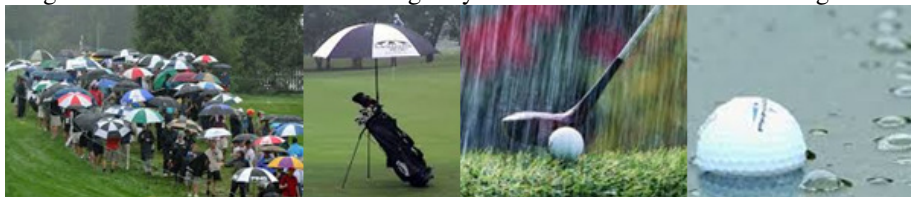
JCC Rebuilding Project – Fundraising Challenge



When we organized the Michael Card fundraising concert, it was our first time. With no experience, we placed faith in God and “gave it a try”. We put faith in God to give out free tickets (instead of selling them) and we kept our palms together in earnest prayers. God was faithful. The concert, pulling in many helpers and supporters from our sister congregations and other churches, reaped a great success. We surpassed our fundraising target for that two-night concert on 3rd and 4th October and we gained very valuable experience in organizing an event of that scale.

It was not time for the JCC Rebuilding fundraising committee members to rest their tired minds and bodies, or to rest on their laurels. Another fundraising event, The JCC Golf Challenge, was emerging in the same month. To be exact, the very important date was 24th October and it was preceded by a rainy weather. Someone asked, “Do we have a Plan B for wet weather?”

Fact was that we couldn’t think of any better plan B than to tell everyone, “Pray for good weather.” Scenes went through my mind – scenes like the following:



Would the fundraising Golf Challenge be a washout, given the rainy weather up to the event eve? There were those who shared hope:

- Martin Cheah said confidently, “Don’t limit the God who controls the weather.”
- Peggy Tan added in her usual energetic spirit, “I am reminded of my dialect outings. God always gives rain at right timing and venues as He is the controller of everything!!!”

(Note Peggy’s confidence level with the triple exclamation marks she added for good measure.☺)

Fundraising committee members had synchronized prayers for God’s blessings. Indeed, God is faithful. As Peggy said, He always gives rain at right timing and venues. And so it was great sunshine throughout the day of our Golf Challenge.

It was my first time helping out on a golf course. Samuel Chong stayed in the vicinity of the 16th hole to monitor the landing of golf balls while Yew Moi and I stationed ourselves at the Tee Box to hand out drinks and encourage the golfers to part with more charity money by donating to participate in a novelty game. In this game, a donation of a minimum \$10 would entitle the golfer to one attempt to strike a ball from the Tee Box to reach within a 5m-circle around the hole whereby he would then stand a chance to win a bottle of good champagne (valued at a retail price of \$800) in a draw. The novelty game was mainly fun and I was glad to note the generosity of the players in opening up their wallets for a good cause (of supporting JCC in the rebuilding project).



As a non-golfer watching the golfers showing off their skills, the vast open golf course was a wonderful sight to behold as I stood in the middle of it (for the first time). The comfortably warm sunshine did not make me sweaty, but enabled me to relish learning a thing or two about the games being played. I was glad to note the warmth of the players in each flight whose object was not just to win but to play like gentlemen and ladies while enjoying the company of one another. Sir Pelham Grenville Wodehouse (15 Oct 1881 – 14 Feb 1975) said this with humour:

Golf... is the infallible test. The man who can go into a patch of rough alone, with the knowledge that only God is watching him, and play his ball where it lies, is the man who will serve you faithfully and well.

I am prompted to think with some seriousness:

JCC 2014 Golf Challenge was part of an infallible test of our faith in our fundraising effort for the rebuilding of God's house. With hardly a fraction of the huge financial sum we need, we can be said to be going into a patch of rough with the knowledge that God is watching how we "play our game" (act in the correct way pleasing to Him), how we are standing up to serve Him faithfully and well.

The availability of Michael Card for a fundraising concert was an offer to us by The Lutheran Church of Our Redeemer at short notice while the fundraising

committee was busily engaged in organizing the Golf Challenge. Understandably, we had our tensions with regards to whether we should take up the kind offer and be able to pull off the concert with meaningful gains for our JCC rebuilding project. After all, we had no experience organizing a concert for fundraising and doing so would require a lot of sweat scouting for a suitable affordable venue and assembling a large force of volunteers. We were not left alone. God sent help. Sharing our burden, The Covenant Evangelical Free Church offered us free use of their well-equipped worship sanctuary as our concert hall. It was our first time but we succeeded against our inexperience – by God’s grace.

The Golf Challenge was also our first time, but God was all-seeing and all-caring – granting us fine weather and a fine golf course at Raffles Country Club with supporters from different church denominations and even pre-Christian supporters buying into our cause. In the end we managed to sail past our fundraising target comfortably.

On the day of the Golf Challenge, I had an interesting surprise when someone from a friendly denominational church asked me whether Jurong Christian Church has any connection with the Seventh-Day Adventists. Of course I gave him the right answer that we have nothing to do with the Seventh-Day Adventists. It was an opportunity for me to share with him how JCC has already been hosting worship services by other denominational churches. I am glad that our various fundraising efforts are actually opportunities God gives us to make known the existence of JCC as a congregation under the LCS umbrella and how we conduct our mission for Kingdom purpose in harmonious collaboration with brothers and sisters who share our Biblical faith in Christ Jesus.

Our JCC Rebuilding Project Fundraising Challenge is ongoing. A fundraising dinner is around the corner. More fundraising activities will be planned. The call has been out for more brothers and sisters to step forward.

Some of you are waiting on the sidelines, undecided. Some of you are raring to lend your effort and skills to the Fundraising Committee – with the knowledge that God is watching how we “play our game” (act in the correct way pleasing to Him), how we are standing up to serve Him faithfully and well.

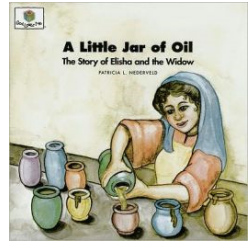
Am I right?



John Lee

Fund Raising or Faith Raising?

The Holy Bible has many stories of how God provided by multiplying a small quantity. In the Old Testament we have stories about widows who have nothing left and yet their little oil never ran out (read 2Kings 4:1-7 and 1Kings 17:1-15). In the New Testament we read about the multiplication of 2 fishes and 5 loaves of bread (read Matthew 14:13-21).



What do these stories do to your faith? Are they just stories in an ancient book, maybe even just fairy tales? Do they have any bearing to real life in the 21st century? Isn't it better to depend on TOTO or 4D? At least the little you put into TOTO or 4D can become a large amount.

John Lee always reminds me of the poor widow who offered the 2 copper coins. I believe that God works on percentages. The poor widow was praised because she gave 100% of what she has. How many of us can do that? In the above stories, all those who experience God's miracles gave 100%. However we tend to limit ourselves to 10% or slightly more.

So as we try to raise funds over the next 2 to 3 years, I think that God is trying to raise our faith instead. Without faith it is impossible to please God (Hebrews 11:6) so we need to have greater faith. Are we ready to move in faith or to continue by sight? If you use a GPS, you will experience slightly moving by faith. The GPS will tell you to turn and you just follow. In most cases you have no choice because you do not know the direction but you trust it to lead you to your destination.

Even as we carry out all the fund raising events, we have to trust that God will provide us with success in raising the needed funds. We have experienced 2 successes already and surely we will close the year with a 3rd success.



Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding – Proverbs 3:5

Martin Cheah