

The Vine

A branch of the.....

Multi Media Ministry

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The Vine Committee

Editor:

John Lee
jpbislee@gmail.com

Printer:

Nick Wong
digi_ics@yahoo.com

Writers this issue:

Goh Young Kwang
Christina Ang
John Lee

Photos:

Martin Cheah
Nick Wong

HOM'S Reflections

In the last issue I mentioned that we only need to ask and the money will come in. An interesting story appeared in the newspapers early in November. This is about a

Vietnamese tourist who bought an iPhone 6 and was alleged taken advantage of. A few days later a number of people raised close to \$16,000 in a crowd-funding campaign to help him defray the cost.

Crowd-funding, what is this? *Crowdfunding is the practice of funding a project or venture by raising monetary contributions from a large number of people, typically via the internet* – Wikipedia.

In our fund raising activities, we have inadvertently applied the crowd-funding principle without knowing it. With 84 churches made aware of our need for funds through the Michael Card concert event, there are many contributions coming in.

Here is a sample list of contributions received for your encouragement to know that God is working on our behalf through individuals and organisations. A non-Lutheran church donated \$10,000; a pastor from another denominational church voluntarily rallied his church leaders to agree to donate \$20,000; just last month, a couple from LCOR offered us \$10,000 and some friends of a LCOR member added \$4,000; a JCK parent chipped in with \$2,000 ...

This is not an exhaustive list, because it is obvious that I cannot list every giver here. The point is that by God's arrangement, help is coming to us from all directions, not just the Lutheran community; and the help is both with regards to absolute cash contributions and substantial non-cash support in the forms of services and sponsorships such as in the Michael Card Concert and the Golf Challenge. We are not alone..

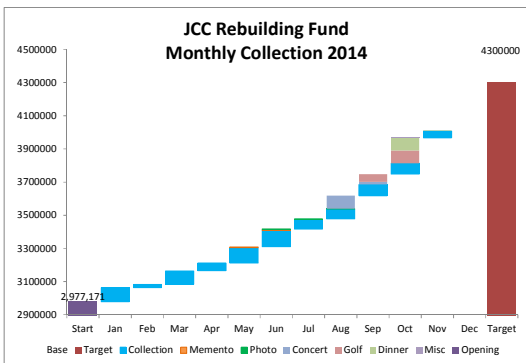
However, I am sure some of us are rather impatient. Why doesn't God give us the \$25 million in one day? It is like saying, why must I wait nine months for the baby to come out? Many of us may have heard the parable of the butterfly. It goes something like this: A man noticed a butterfly struggling to get out of its cocoon and decided to help by cutting open the cocoon. The butterfly came out but could not fly because apparently butterflies need to struggle through the cocoon to strength their wings.

My daughter who is waiting for a job offer in Brisbane in the short time before she has to return to Singapre, reminded us, If we trust God, we also have to trust His Timing.



If God dropped \$25 million into our laps today, think of what would happen. We would stop praying for sure. We would stop giving above our limit and learn not to be generous. We will stop meeting and working with each other from the 2 language sections and with other congregations. Thus Christian unity will not be built up. We will not bother about fund raising events and thus learn nothing about organizing and carrying out big events. We will just sit back and like the butterfly in the above parable, we will not be able to fly.

So God has a purpose in delaying His provision to us. We learn to pray, to work in Christian unity, to grow our organization skills, to give to the max, to discover our talents and to grow our faith and trust in God's perfect timing. All these skills will be needed when we move back into new JCC and grow the church.



The chart shows how we have slowly raised funds from our collections and through other fund raising activities.

"I've got so much work to do today, I'd better spend two hours in prayer instead of one." — [Martin Luther](#)

Martin Cheah

Editor's Comments

on HOM's Reflections

I have to exercise faith in two ways. The first way is to offer the best I can bring to the table to attain the result I want; not distressing myself by others. In fund raising, we just offer our best in giving to God generously in proportion to our faith, without need to measure ourselves against the giving by others (e.g. fellow brothers and sisters in Christ). If others don't measure up to expectations according to my fallible perspectives of them, and I become discouraged in my own giving, then my giving cannot be considered to be faith-based, but other-people-based. In fact, we can be both faith-based and other-people-based. How? By challenging ourselves to raise our level of faith whereby our giving in proportion to our faith will grow to cover the gaps. This may well be the way God wants to use us, and He will bless us more abundantly to be a greater blessing to NJCC.

The other way of exercising my faith is to rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation and constant in prayer. (Rom. 12:12) In fund raising, our faith should not let us be discouraged by others, but be challenged to patiently and prayerfully wait upon God that He will move by His timing that our fund raising target will be met in His way whereby the "sum total" of the faiths and of the givings in accord with the individuals' proportions of faith will not let us down in the end that matters. This exercise of faith was indeed shown vividly in the Michael Card Concert when we decided to trust God by faith in giving out free tickets and we easily accomplished our desired outcome by the combined proportions of the combined faiths in the audiences over two nights.

If we care to exercise our faiths in the two ways in our fund raising, we should have no reason to be discouraged.

John Lee

The Vine – November 1989 to 2014

25 Years of Writing

"If you want to change the world, pick up your pen and write." — [Martin Luther](#)

MICHAEL CARD IN CONCERT - A JOURNEY OF FAITH

A Personal Reflection – In God I trust

An excited Pastor Anthony announced to the New JCC Fund Raising Committee, fondly called Fund Raisers, that someone at our sister church,



Lutheran Church of our Redeemer (LCOR), was sponsoring a very famous American gospel singer for a five-day engagement in Singapore. LCOR proposed to organise a one-day concert in aid of our fundraising in their sanctuary. However, sitting capacity was only 300. Caught up in the excitement of such a fundraising opportunity, I

boldly proclaimed that we should use a much bigger hall to cast our net wider, a hall of at least 1,000 seats. Everyone agreed and Chairman Alan stared right into my eyes:

"We are already planning two major fundraising events for 2014; both are ambitious and require much planning and manpower and it is now mid-July. Can we pull this off? And, who is to chair the organising committee? "

Something tugged at my heart and without engaging my head, I blindly volunteered to chair on condition that I would be relieved of the other two events. Years ago, when I first served in Kids' Church and English Council, my sense of duty was that God had given me so much training and experiences in planning and execution, it is only good stewardship that I should do so. However, immediately, I realised the complexity and scale of the project with only 3 months to organise it.



Where to find such a venue? Who is Michael Card? Admittedly, I did not have a clue. There was some fear of how to cater to the ego and eccentricity of such a celebrity from America. What is required to organise a concert? Another confession, I am a musical zero and definitely cannot sing for nuts. My engineering training started working overtime; how much would it cost to get the show on the road? Cost of hosting Michael Card team, cost of venue, cost of publicity, cost of hiring professionals, cost of equipping and feeding the required helpers? How much to price the tickets

and would we sell enough? Now, the cold sweats – anxious about the legal requirements and the licenses that might be needed for such a major public entertainment event!

God is truly real. He wants willing hearts and not necessarily capable hands. At the thank-you dinner, a day after the concert, I remembered Michael Card asking me, “What is one thing you learn after such an experience?” My answer was, “Trust in the Lord. Trust in the Lord that He will provide the resources, the people to come forward to help, the audience to fill the hall and raise the target monies.”

God provided one man, Michael Card, so willing to serve and be used as an instrument to spread the gospel through his singing and be a co-worker for our New JCC. He and his team are such humble servants that even when we could not provide hotel accommodation and Jean (member of LCOR) graciously housed them in her home, he was alright with it. Quoting Jean, “All my years of hosting missionaries and God’s servants, I have not hosted such a humble person.”



God provided two super ladies, Jean and Adeline. Jean tirelessly promoted the concert to so many churches, Christian centres/bookshops, prayer groups and everyone that she knows. Together with her hubby, Jeam, they were such gracious hosts that Michael Card was well pleased to be pampered in a home. Adeline, our worker behind the scene, worked late into many nights, responding every 15 minutes to countless emails requesting for tickets, delivering and posting tickets, recording and liaising with over 84 churches. Such a wonderful servant, quietly working and without the slightest complaint.

God provided three supermen as well. I don't think we can find a more creative, more hardworking and more cooperative worker than Jonathan. He was a one-man act that designed the posters/tickets, and also designed and created the



publicity videos. His works were so professional that many asked, who did we engage for such great works? God really provided the inspiration and energy for him despite his deep involvement in another major project at his workplace. Having attended a few IDMCs at CEFC and also their Sunday services, we realised the enormous task of staging such a large scale event. Again, God provided two more supermen, Alvin and Khai En; to plan and execute the concert with more than a hundred volunteers.



They just took on the tasks bravely, planned the execution, briefed and managed the volunteers and were ready to charge forward. Both were always cheerful, full of smiles and exceedingly helpful.

God provided over 84 churches that supported the concert.

God provided almost 100 volunteers who served both nights; everyone was cheerful and knew their tasks well. All guests were amazed at the friendliness and hospitality of the volunteers from the moment they approached the gate from the road until they were ushered to their seats. I remarked that this is the standard of CEFC for their Sunday services and LCS congregations should emulate this standard.

For the first night, as the countdown approached, butterflies were flying in my stomach. Would the people who took the 1200 tickets appear? Tickets were free, and many had advised that with free tickets, many would not turn up. For myself, there was no time to panic, with so much to oversee; dinner for everyone was delayed



by an hour and insufficient; there was anxiety about whether a traffic jam would arise at the main road and whether the worship team was ready. God provided 900 attendees for the first night which was a weekday. Everything went smoothly. Jason and his worship team did a great opening time of songs that led on seamlessly to the launching of the concert by

Michael Card. Listening to the concert brought such joy and peace to myself and everyone in the audience was well pleased. Thanks be to God. Our target was to raise \$100 000; we were thankful for the \$38,000 love offering collected on the first night.



With the kinks from the first night ironed out, we were able to enjoy the second night better. It was almost a full house with 1,100 in attendance. During the collection for the love offering, the committee members were on our knees praying at the back. With our knees on the ground, God provided \$65,000. Therefore, in total from the two nights, our fundraising surpassed the \$100,000 target.

On reflection, I can see the grace of God through so many willing hands. Jason was super, even with his busyness preparing for his own wedding within three weeks of the concert. Pastors of JCC and LCS were willing to serve as volunteers; traffic marshals, ushers and crowd control. Peggy, with her ever present laughter and cheerfulness, was a joy to be around. What a joy to work with members of our Chinese section; Janet, Khai En, Wei En and many others! The generous giving of CEFC was a humble experience. The first statement from their senior pastor, Terry Chua, on the first night was, “Is there any area we could do better to serve you?” What a servant church!

Michael Card’s remark, “I am here to serve, tell me what I can do to help your fundraising.” He is looking forward to come to New JCC in 2017 to celebrate with us and will even bring a few friends.

Goh Young Kwang

Editor’s Note

A large-scale concert planned and organised at short notice, in competition for time and effort with two other ambitious fundraising events. Only by God’s grace could success be achieved as the committee roped in almost 100 volunteers. Thanks to Young Kwang for capably leading the team, and thanks to each and every one among the volunteers (too many to name one by one) who willingly served for the purpose of the NJCC project, not the least for God’s glory.

John Lee

Outing organised by Dialect Ministry – 29 October

Labrador Park, here we come, all 43 of us!



How could we miss this wonderful blessed opportunity of great sunshine with cool sea breeze for a dose of morning exercise and some games that even Rev. & Mrs Chung joined in?



Adding to the pleasantness, we had a large shelter all to ourselves for us to assemble in praise of God as we sang a few Hokkien hymns, among which was the title WE ARE ONE FAMILY IN JESUS. It was just a day in a week, but we knew and expressed in chorus by another hymn

that it is *jin jia ho* (very good) to trust in Jesus all the days of the week.

Truly, from the pictures, would you not agree that we can really trust Jesus for all His blessed provisions that we are able to enjoy ourselves like one big family?



We could have stayed longer at this beautiful nature park, but for our typical *kiasuism* trait; we chose to have our early lunch at the Tuckshop@Harbourfront to beat the lunchtime office crowd.

We had an enjoyable meal of roasted delights. Then, after a short time of strolling around, we had a group photo taken in front of two Ferry-ticketing offices before proceeding with our ongoing trip to ...

No, we did not board a ferry for a trip to Batam. Instead, we boarded our favourite ferry-on-the-road, a very reliable bus that would ferry all of us safely to another tourist attraction – Mount Faber.



Wow! Mountain-climbing for senior folk. After having a great view of the sea from Labrador Park, it was simply unimaginable excitement, especially for first-timers, to take in a panoramic view from atop one of the highest peaks in Singapore. Can you see in one of the pictures three brave and respectable elderly mountain-climbers standing together at the precarious edge of a building against a background of lush greenery with a cableway above stretching all the way to Sentosa? ☺

Breath-taking views aside, there are also simpler sightseeing pleasures for a relaxing time with one another and, perhaps, for a good photo moment under a Bell of Happiness.



Singaporeans love shopping, so the organiser of this outing could not help adding some shopping destinations to the itinerary.

Anyway, after a good time on a mountain, it was time to get back to sea level; off to Pasir Panjang Wholesale Centre followed by

Song Fish Dealer at Fishery Port Road.

Finally, with the shopping added to the excursion, the organiser felt relieved that there was no complaint from the “tourists” who hailed from Jurong Christian Church. Cheerful smiles, a gift and other purchased “barang barang” in hand and a warm bye-bye until we see one another again!

This was the last excursion organised by the Dialect Ministry for 2014. Keep your ears open for news of the next one to come in 2015 – The Great Chinese New Year Shopping Trip!

Thanks to Deacon Peter and his Dialect Ministry Team for being a blessing.

Thanks to God for all things good!

John Lee

Historic Moments

There were many weddings this year 2014 and especially over the last few months but for the record, Zheng Lin and Si Jia, who had their ceremony on 22nd November is the **last wedding**



to be held in the current JCC building.

I was there to witness the whole wedding from the bride's house to the church. The games played by the bridesmaids were relatively simple compared to some which I have seen.

Though we know who are the last couple to get married in

JCC the editors have no idea who was the first. Do any of our readers know?



The **English Library** was decommissioned on 1st December. All the books were packed into individual bags to be given out on Christmas Eve. The English Library will only be started again in the New JCC.



The Life of a Prodigal Son

Xu Laifa

in

Night-Market Life

(A Taiwanese TV drama now showing on Mediacorp Channel 8)

Stage 1 (Hard life as a well-behaved child)

Laifa, Youhui Youzhi, Ruyi, Dafeng and Xiaoxuan were six children who grew up in a night market environment. The children became school mates and buddies, dubbed as “The Golden Hexagon” signifying their bonds as they were of similar age and shared common interests.



Xu Laifa

Laifa's father indulged in gambling and drinking. Laifa worked hard selling chewing gum in the night market for some income, but the money was gambled away by his father. Despite a hard life with little family warmth, Laifa maintained his docile personality, principled in his ways. He would not accept alms from people who offered him money in lieu of buying his chewing gum. Despite being struck down by leukemia, he remained steadfast in his filial piety and worked hard in his studies.

A hard life did not change Laifa's principled personality. He aspired to do well when he grew up so that he would be able to give his family comfort in life.

Stage 2 (Promising life as a doctor squandered for greed)

Laifa graduated from medical school and became the pride of his parents.



Supposedly, having a promising career should be a great recompense for the hardship he went through. His childhood pal, Ruyi, a tender-hearted girl, had become his girlfriend. She took good care of him and had even supported him financially through his medical studies. A contented life was very much ahead of him.

Alas, while a hard life in Laifa's childhood motivated him to work hard and seek a good future, he as an adult with a loving supportive

girlfriend and a future of promise turned a potentially good life upside down with an obstinate pursuit of instant success through chicanery.

He broke off his relationship with his sweetheart, Ruyi; married the wealthy daughter of a hospital director and schemed his way to swindle the hospital of its financial resources. After being found out, he didn't stop at divorcing his wife but went further to con yet another lady, Xiuxiu, with his sham love, to make use of her for revenge and scheme a takeover of the hospital's ownership.

Abandoning his parents, ditching his friends, making enemies and trying out all unscrupulous tricks up his sleeve for wealth and fame, the devious Laifa as an adult was a bizarre changeover from the principled Laifa as a child.

Stage 3 (A repentant life)

Laifa's childhood cancer relapsed, and got worse by spreading to his brain with a very bad prognosis. In loneliness, ostracized by friends and hounded by enemies, he found himself in abject despair.



Having crossed mountains and ridges, struggling along to seek success, Laifa in his self-reflection realized that he had been such a fool only to

appreciate pain and regrets as a lonesome soul.

Laifa's personality changed again – this time from bad to good. He resolved to do good deeds to make amends for his past misdeeds, and finally became accepted back with love by friends and family. He married Xiuxiu (this time with true love) and, with encouragement all round, went on his way to seek the best treatment for his ailment, with hope of recovering and living an upright life as a reformed person.

A life of changes

The only constant in life is change. I suggest that this is about change IN life, not OF life. Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum (the PM of the UAE) shared his theory:

“My theory on life is that life is beautiful. Life doesn't change. You have a day, and a night, and a month, and a year. We people change - we can be miserable or we can be happy. It's what you make of your life.”



Change can be for good or for bad. Look at Laifa:

- Despite a hard life, and suffering from leukemia, he did not change for bad. Instead, he became more resolute to study hard and aim for his dream of giving a comfortable life to his parents. He succeeded in his studies and became a highly skilled doctor.
- Despite a promising future as a highly skilled doctor, success with a good childhood sweetheart and family, a happy life was his for grabbing if only he would steady his footsteps going forward. Instead, he changed for the bad with impatience for fame and fortune, thus throwing his principles to the wind.

In the story of Laifa, bad circumstances were cause for one to be good whereas good circumstances became cause to turn bad. How ironic!

As a Christian, when you are in the hardship circumstances like those of the child Laifa, let Deuteronomy 31:6 speak to you:

“Be strong and courageous. Do not fear or be in dread of them, for it is the Lord your God who goes with you. He will not leave you or forsake you.”

However, once you become blessed to grow up like Laifa with an accomplishment in career, you would be wise not to follow his bad misstep but instead heed the wise words of the late Emanuel James Rohn (an American rags to riches motivational speaker):

“The twin killers of success are impatience and greed.”

As a child, Laifa was a poor child but well-loved for his good behaviour, but when he grew up he became a great disappointment for all the despicable means he used for his selfish purposes and became more and more disconnected from his friends. Even his own father regarded him as a stranger. Heartwarmingly, he later not only repented but went out of his way to do charitable deeds.

What a person – loved and hated and then loved again! Any family with a child would wish the child to be like the adorable Laifa in his childhood and the contrite Laifa of later years living up to the expectations of family and friends.

Lessons from the “parable of Laifa”

If you have been following the tv drama “Night-Market Life”, you know that it is an intense story of friendship, love and betrayals, of relationships made and broken due to human foibles. Yet, even as a story, it does tug at viewers’ hearts because it reflects real-life situations regarding human foibles, regrets, remorse, atonement, forgiveness and re-acceptance in that order (pardon a level of dramatic licence for a bit of exaggeration). The “parable of Laifa” bears the following lessons:

- Circumstances can affect us positively or negatively. The choice is ours; adverse circumstances need not obstruct our success but we may be stumbled in good circumstances through sin.

Reading Rom. 12:2, you can tell yourself not to be conformed to the circumstances we face “but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.”

- Covetousness inevitably lands us in trouble. (It is one of the 7 deadly sins in the Bible.)
- We can turn our back on our kinship with family, but the kinship we abandon is always there to receive us back if we truly repent.

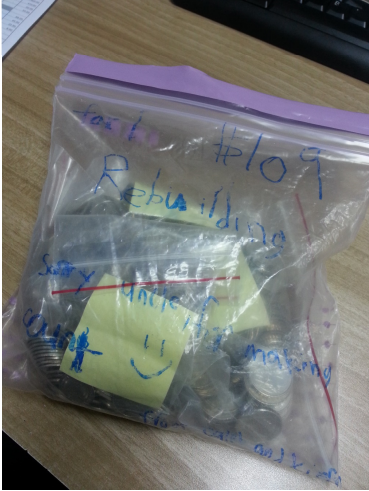
“Men are born to sin...What does matter most, is not that we err, it is that we do benefit from our mistakes, that we are capable of sincere repentance, of genuine contrition.” — [Sharon Kay Penman](#), [The Sunne in Splendour](#)

- True friends will not resent the fallen who have decided to come back.

“To be a Christian means to forgive the inexcusable because God has forgiven the inexcusable in you.” – C. S. Lewis

John Lee

Coins – a story



Received this bag of coins in the offering one Sunday. What caught my attention was the childish handwriting on the plastic bag – **“For rebuilding \$109. Sorry uncle (referring to the charge hands) for making you count. From C & K (2 young boys)”**

I think the chargehands had a challenging time counting the coins, and making sure they did not mistake the new 50 cent coins as the new 20 cent coins. They had better eyesight than me. And I believe as the chargehands counted the big bag of coins, and as I counted to verify the amount, they, like me, did it with joy, simply because these 2 boys gave with a

willing and cheerful heart. I can imagine their excited faces as they broke their piggy banks to give it to the Lord.

“While he was in Bethany, reclining at the table in the home of Simon the Leper, a woman came with an alabaster jar of very expensive perfume, made of pure nard. She broke the jar and poured the perfume on his head.” Mark 14: 3

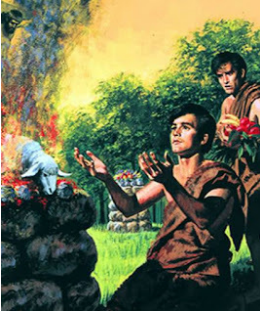
Christian Ang

It is interesting that in this whole Fund Raising ordeal, I have been made aware of the value of coins. Firstly, John keeps reminding me of the 2 copper coins story, then there were many recent reports in the newspapers regarding people who pay with bags of coins, one was a refund to a customer with \$1,000 in coins and the other a car dealer was paid \$19,000 in coins.



In the Straits Times on Saturday 8 Nov, there was an article on the legal limits to paying in coins. Did you know that for coins below 50 cents you are limited to pay only up to \$2 and for 50 cents, the limit is \$10. However, there is no limit for \$1 coins. Well now you know.

The above story from Christina reveals the love of giving by two young boys who gave all they had. Although it was all in coins, I am sure God was happy to accept it. Does God impose a limit to how much we can give in coins? I don't think so. In the other cases, the people paid in coins out of "revenge" or wrong motives but these boys gave out of love for God's Glory. Do I have a Bible verse to support my opinion? *People look at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.* 1Samuel 16:7



When we offer to God, we should reflect on the story of Cain and Abel. As Deacon Peter mentioned, it could be because Cain had a "tidak apa" (Malay for "indifferent") attitude in his offering that wasn't pleasing to God.

I feel that we need to give our first and best to God. I think that Cain kept the best for himself, and then gave to God what he could, just to appease God. Well, there is no such thing as appeasing God. You should always strive to give God your best. – James Clouse

Does this mean that we should give God only coins? Only the other day I noticed a 10 cent coin on the pavement and didn't bother to pick it up. How many of us will bend down to pick it up? Will God do so? Yes if our hearts are right with Him. So when we give God our coins, our hearts must be in it, like the old woman who gave her 2 copper coins.

And He sat down opposite the treasury, and began observing how the people were putting money into the treasury; and many rich people were putting in large sums. A poor widow came and put in two small copper coins, which amount to a cent. Calling His disciples to Him, He said to them, "Truly I say to you, this poor widow put in more than all the contributors to the treasury;... Mark 12:41-43



Martin Cheah

My farewell message

It's hard to believe that The Vine has been around for the last 25 years. When I look back in wonder, I wonder how we managed to stick to the job for so long filling up the pages of The Vine with stories and photos and not knowing if it is read. Yes there were times when we did get feedback about some of the stories. Only a few days ago, I received an email mentioning someone who quoted a statement from the HOM Reflections. Wow, I am now writing quotable quotes.

This was the first article I penned 25 years ago.

REFORMATION FESTIVAL

by *Marin Cheah*

A funny thing happened to me, on my way to the Reformation Festival. Remembering that Pastor Chang said, "you cannot miss the Yishun Christian Church because it is near the MRT at Yishun", I proceeded to take the MRT without actually finding out where the church is located. From the platform of the Yishun MRT station, I suddenly realised that the church was nowhere in sight, and that it could be in any direction from the station.

As I slowly stepped out of the station I strained my eyes against the dim lights from the shophouses, for a direction. I took cautious steps, and prayed for guidance. Looking around for a phone book, I found none, but eventually my feet led me to the light path, and I found the church. Thank God.

The Lutheran Church celebrated the 472nd anniversary of the Reformation on 31 October 1989, at the Yishun Christian Church. The service had many musical items presented by the various Lutheran Church Choirs. Although not listed on the programme, the English choir of our church also presented an item. Though it was an unexpected call to perform, the choir did quite well; thanks no doubt to all those practices for the Christmas Rally.

The message for the evening was presented by Rev. Choong Chee Pang. He spoke in English and also translated his own message into Mandarin. The essence of the message was extracted from Romans 12:1-2. The main point of the message was the lack of full-time

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workers in the church. Rev. Choong made an appeal that when the Reformation Festival comes around again next year, there would be more full-time workers in the Lutheran churches. The collection for the night went to the Building Fund of Trinity Theological College and S'pore Bible College.

After the service, refreshments provided by a family from the Yishun Christian Church, in memory of the late Dr Myron Danford, who was the first pastor of the church, were served.

Though there was a large crowd at the service, only a handful of members from the English Section, excluding the English choir were present. I pray that even if we are not called to full-time ministry, we could be more participative in the activities of the church. In the words of the writer of Romans, "I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God - this is your spiritual act of worship".

3

Has my writing style changed in the last 25 years? I guess not much. I still write only short reports about events and add a Bible verse or two, if applicable. My focus really is to report the news from a spiritual perspective, if I can understand what God is trying to tell us from what is happening around us.

For instance, I think that God is teaching us unity in our rebuilding efforts but maybe I am wrong. Only time can tell.

Looking back 25 years I guess I was wrong about what I wrote then. In fact, now we don't even have an

English Choir anymore, so probably even less participation in activities of the church. So I am not a prophet.

In about 7 months' time, I will be celebrating my 62nd birthday. Should I retire from The Vine even as I face the legal retirement age?

I have been working in my current company for the past 33 years, even longer than on The Vine. When that day comes, I will probably have to give a speech and I wonder what I am going to say if it is to be my last chance to address my colleagues. Do I get maudlin and reminisce about the past 3 decades? Should I take this opportunity to share the Good News?

We can justify our decisions not to follow the Great Commission by saying that God did not make all of us evangelists, the situation is inappropriate for the Gospel to be shared, we will be casting our pearls before swine, I don't know many Bible verses and many more reasons. However two questions that always haunt me are: "Am I my brother's keeper?" and "Will God hold me accountable?"

Obviously, if I was a secret agent Christian or undercover Christian, my colleagues will expect speeches about long life or wealth. However, they know I am a Christian so are they expecting a different speech? I myself will have to consider if the Good News be diluted by jugs of Tiger beer? What shall I talk about in my farewell message? I hope readers of The Vine will chip in to give me your opinion or share a similar experience over the next 6 months before I get the opportunity to deliver it.

Should I talk about my colleagues' foibles and idiosyncrasies, like their extreme drinking binges to the point of getting drunk and doing crazy things, their smoking and gambling?

Do I highlight their faults and failures, their office politics, nepotism, apple-polishing which result in people being pressurized to leave?

Will it be appropriate to show them their failures or "sins" as the 2nd step of the 4 Spiritual Laws suggests? Then introduce them to the Good News, that God loves them, which is the 1st step of the 4 Spiritual Laws and continue into the 3rd and 4th law which identifies Jesus as the only way and our response to Him.

Well, I hope to receive some response from readers.

Martin Cheah

The Last Fund Raiser Event

To some this is the last Fund Raiser event. They have put in all their time and energy into the 3 fund raising events in 2014 and are completely spent. We appreciate all their efforts and hope like batteries, they can be recharged and rejoin the fund raising efforts for 2015 and beyond.



Cheers to our faithful Fund Raising Team for their successful events in 2014 which is estimated to have raised more than \$300,000. The team came together in February and within 10 months had gone through many trying and exciting times.

We remember that it is not our efforts but God's blessing that we were able to go through these times. Can we continue to trust God for the many more times we have to go through these problems before we finally raise the needed funds?



I am with you and will watch over you wherever you go, and I will bring you back to this land. I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you. Genesis 28:15

I keep my eyes always on the LORD. With him at my right hand, I will not be shaken. Psalm 16:8

Martin Cheah

The Fundraising Dinner

29th November 2014 - JCC was all dressed up to welcome more than 600 people to a grand dinner party. We thank God for the fine weather. Here are some photos to remember the occasion.

