

The Vine

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The Vine Committee

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HOM'S Reflections

There was a 7.8 magnitude earthquake in Nepal on 25th April 2015, killing thousands. Singapore sent a relief team which included one of our church members, **Lian**

Khup. Do keep him in prayers that God will use him mightily for His purposes.



Another group of people in hard-

hats were the construction crew which has started to work on the rebuilding of JCC, the latest artwork was revealed at the AGM on 26th April.



Pray for Lian Khup and these construction workers that God will keep them safe as they do their work.

Recently, there was an incidence of the moon turning red and now there is an earthquake. All these are natural disasters which can be explained scientifically. However in the context of Revelations 6:12, *"I looked when He broke the sixth seal, and there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth made of hair, and the whole*



moon became like blood.”
Some people might be thinking the world is coming to an end.

Revelations 16:12, “*Then the sixth angel poured out his bowl on the great river Euphrates, and its water was dried up.*” Did you know the Euphrates river did dry up in 2009?



All these are signs pointing us to the return of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. We are not to try and guess or spend our time worrying about the timing of this event. We are to be prepared at all times.

During one of the DE sessions, people wanted to know which season we are in. Are we in the millennium, tribulation, one of the seals, or bowls, or horsemen? Can we really calculate the time of the end? We can only be comforted to know that despite all our troubles, Jesus is coming again to make it right.

Coming again, coming again,
Jesus is coming again!
Maybe mornin', maybe noon,
Maybe evenin' and maybe soon
Coming again, coming again,
Oh what a wonderful day it will be.
Jesus is coming again.

Martin Cheah

Photos from Maundy Thursday and Good Friday



From Jerusalem

Question: "What does 'maranatha' mean?"(1 Cor 16:22)

Answer: Maranatha is an Aramaic word that means "the Lord is coming" or "come, O Lord." The early church faced much persecution, and life for a Christian under Roman rule was not easy. The Romans required everyone to declare that Caesar was god. The early Christians knew that there is only one God and one Lord—Jesus Christ—and in all good conscience they could not call Caesar "Lord". This prompted the Romans to look upon them as traitors, persecuted them, and put them to death.

Living under those adverse conditions, the believers' morale was lifted by the hope of the coming of the Lord. "Maranatha!" became the common greeting of the oppressed believers, replacing the Jewish greeting shalom ("peace"). The followers of Jesus knew there would be no peace because Jesus had told them so (Matthew 10:34; Luke 12:51). But they also knew the Lord would be returning to set up His kingdom, and from that truth they drew great comfort. They were constantly reminding themselves and being reminded that the Lord is coming (Luke 21:28; Revelation 22:12). Jesus taught several parables on this same theme of watching and waiting and being prepared for His return (Matthew 25:1-13; Luke 12:35-40).

Today, as believers in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, we live our lives in the light of the knowledge that He can come at any time. We are to be ready when the call comes. Every day we should expect Him to come, and every day we should long for Him to come. Maranatha reminds us to keep our eyes on the eternal things of the Spirit. To dwell on material things is to be in constant mental turmoil. Looking down, we see the earth; looking around, we see earthly things. But looking up, we see the hope of the soon coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. To those who are discouraged today, Maranatha! To those who are worried today, Maranatha! To those who are filled with anxiety over the problems they are facing, Maranatha! Our Lord is coming!

Written and sent in HIS Love (from Jerusalem),
Shalom

Rabbi (Dr) James(Yaa'kov) Candiah

CAN A DEATH BE GOOD?



He died on a Friday. His death was inevitable; and even when it was imminent and expected, his devotees were not quite ready to accept the fact that it was time for him to go. When death finally struck, grief was greatly palpable in the air. Even if those who hated him had rejoiced at his death, it was really not to be the end of his time. He might have died, but ...

Steve Jobs once said that death is “Life’s change agent. It clears out the old to make way for the new.”

Let me share some thoughts on the few points mentioned above.

Why his death was inevitable

His death was prophesied. It was meant to happen so that we might live. “This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us.” (1 John 3:16) Yes, it was necessary for him to lay down his life as propitiation for our salvation.

When his death was imminent, his followers were not ready for it

When Jesus predicted his death the first time, Peter took him aside and rebuked him. “Never, Lord!” he said. “This shall never happen to you. (Matt. 16:22)

When Jesus predicted his death the second time, his disciples were filled with grief. (Matt. 17:22-23)

When Jesus predicted his death the third time (Matt. 20:17-19), it was unavoidable time for his disciples to sober up to accept the inevitable, to let



it be according to the Father’s will instead of trying to prevent Jesus from talking about it like Peter did earlier. Yet, there remained a lack of understanding of the meaning of the impending death, as shown by a mother’s request and the others’ response to his question (Matt. 20:20-22); and Peter was still quick to draw his sword at the Garden of Gethsemane when Jesus was being arrested.

His death not the end

After Jesus' crucifixion, the soldiers had no remorse but glee to divide up his clothes by casting lots. (Matt. 27:35) The priests who had wanted him dead must be satisfied that he would no longer be around to threaten their authority over the Jews. Unfortunately for them, they were dead wrong. His death was to usher in a New Beginning with his resurrection. Hence, Jesus' death on the Cross was good – not in the sense of granting his enemies' wish to end the challenge to their authority – as his disciples' faith became toughened and indestructible as they saw for themselves the fulfillment of everything that he had said and what Scripture had recorded. Truth is well-documented and will hold up to the challenge of lies.

The Death of Christ – our Life's change agent

When Steve Jobs said that death is Life's change agent, he was not specifically referring to the death of Christ. However, we can claim that the death of Christ was indeed our Life's change agent –



- “For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body ruled by sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin.” (Rom. 6:6)
- “For when we were in the realm of the flesh, the sinful passions aroused by the law were at work in us, so that we bore fruit for death. But now, by dying to what once bound us, we have been released from the law so that we serve in the new way of the Spirit, and not in the old way of the written code.” (Rom. 7:5-6)

With the death of Christ on the Cross, Satan is defeated, death has lost its sting and we have hope of eternal life.



Rejoice indeed for Good Friday and Easter!

Here I share a few lines (non-continuous) from the hymn “How Deep the Father’s Love for Us”:

“Behold the man upon a cross,
My sin upon His shoulders;
It was my sin that held Him there
His dying breath has brought me life –
I know that it is finished.”

We commemorate the Friday of Jesus’ crucifixion as a Good Friday, because that Friday was not the end but a part of prophecy in Scripture that was being fulfilled, and worthy of rejoicing as we acknowledge the greatness of God’s love that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. (John 3:16)

Without Good Friday, there would be no Easter, the next part of prophecy of Scripture about Jesus’ resurrection that was fulfilled – and we prolong our rejoicing that the Death of Christ on the Cross was good because it was merely a death in the flesh that he, quickened by the Spirit, might bring us to God. (1 Pet. 3:18 KJV) The followers of the One who died on Calvary’s Mountain might have the impulse to grieve; but on reflection, the death was our good fortune that our Great Father in heaven had in his plan so that we might look forward to a new life with hope.

Yes, Jesus Christ might have died on the Cross, but he did not pass away. He rose again. He is alive!



Mark 16:15

Watchman Nee said, “The resurrection gives my life meaning, direction and the opportunity to start over, no matter what the circumstances. Our old history ends with the Cross; our new history begins with the resurrection.”
What do you say?

John Lee

LIFE-AND-DEATH QUESTIONS



I was intrigued by a recent news report about a two-year-old girl in Thailand who died of brain cancer. Her parents decided to have her brain and body cryogenically preserved in the hope that one day there will be a cure and she can be brought back to life.

This is the first time I hear of this medical method for a person to be frozen in anticipation of scientific progress whereby she might be revived many years from now. I thought this only happens in science fiction and thrillers, not in real life.

Some questions float in my mind: Will the little girl retain her memories, and remember her family members when she comes alive in future? Where would her soul be in her frozen state? What's the difference between being revived from a cryogenically frozen state (a revived life in the same body) and reincarnation (a new life in a new body)?

Reincarnation is a concept more familiar to Buddhists. The faith of Christians is in the Biblical teaching that believers in Christ will go to Heaven and be reunited with God and live happily ever after.

“We are confident, yes, well pleased rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord.” – 2 Cor. 5:8 (NKJV)

When the soul is absent from the body of Christians, it is present with the Lord. The soul does not enter another body. There is no reincarnation.

We do hear stories about people having the experience of coming back from death. This is not about dying and reincarnating in another body. It is the soul leaving the body and returning to the body. Is it in any way like the case of Lazarus?



It is sad news that brain cancer strikes and the life of a sweet little girl is taken away from the body. Will she have the possibility of being revived by medical advancement to tell her experience of life beyond death?

Interestingly, Matheryn's parents have reportedly also signed up to be frozen upon their deaths, so that they can be revived with their daughter and breathe again

“when the technology is provided.” In that event, I wonder whether they will still be the same in feelings and all; and whether the girl will recognise their parents at their revival if they had died advanced in years.

The news provokes life-and-death questions (“touch wood”) that people usually shy away from. However, we cannot avoid the realities of life and death.

Sally Lee

Editor’s note:

Sally Lee has posed attractive questions arising out of a news event, but there are no easy answers.

While the Bible (in both OT & NT) have mentions of people coming back to life from death (e.g. the son of Zarephath in 1 Kings 17:17-22 and Dorcas in Acts 9:36-41, just to state two instances among many), these Biblical incidents have no direct similarity with the types of experiences described by modern-day return-from-death claims.

In the modern-day claims, there is yet no conclusive theory on whether they who “died and came back to life” were actually dead and raised from the death, or had merely been in a deep death-like unconscious state and were revived while their sensations of death might be just a product of their brain’s electrical system.

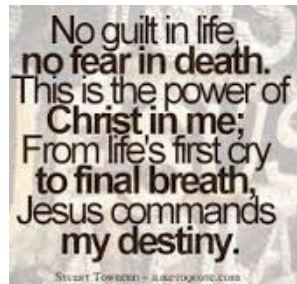
Clinical death, brain death, biological death, somatic death – science has attempted describing different “types of death” and arguments can still occur on what is “real death”. I turn to the NIV Bible and find these verses (Ecc. 9:5, 10):

“For the living know that they will die, but the dead know nothing; they have no further reward, and even their name is forgotten.

“Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might, for in the realm of the dead, where you are going, there is neither working nor planning nor knowledge nor wisdom.”

From the Bible, we learn that in true death, there is no memory, knowledge or wisdom.

So whatever “possible” outcome or conclusion to the cryogenic preservation of a lifeless body (whether the person is eternally departed or merely provisionally in inscrutable coma), we just leave it to God to advance our understanding (through science or otherwise) according to His will.



15+6 = 17?

Indian bride walks out of wedding when groom fails math test

March 13, 2015



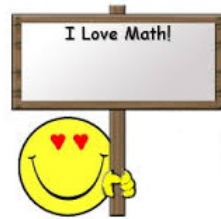
“In this Feb. 20 photo, Indian brides from impoverished families, dressed in wedding finery, wait for their grooms to arrive during a mass marriage ceremony in New Delhi, India, when 12 couples tied the knot in a single ceremony organized by a social organization, that would otherwise would have cost each family thousands of dollars. An Indian bride has walked out of her wedding ceremony after her groom-to-be failed to solve a simple math problem, police said Friday.

The question she asked: How much is 15 plus 6? His reply: 17. The incident took place late Wednesday in Rasoolabad village near the industrial town of Kanpur in northern Uttar Pradesh state. SAURABH DAS, AP”

You can read more at: <http://www.ocreger.com/articles/groom-654092-bride-wedding.html>

Actually, in my humble opinion, the groom was right in saying that $15 + 6 = 17$. Here is the proof:

$$\begin{aligned} 15 + 6 &= 15 + (4 + 1 + 1) \\ &= (15 + 4) + (1 + 1) \\ &= 19 + [2 \times \sqrt{(4 - 5)^2}] \\ &= 19 + [2 \times (4 - 5)] \\ &= 19 + [2 \times (-1)] \\ &= 19 + (-2) \\ &= 17 \end{aligned}$$



Unfortunately, he was too smart and his bride did not have the patience to wait for him to explain the complexity in his mind.

Anyway, the interesting news does provide an idea for traditional wedding door games – having a number game to “torture” the groom and the groomsmen. However, bridesmaids, please 手下留情 (do not judge too harshly); and groomsmen, please ensure that you do your math homework so that the bride will be very happy with the groom to walk together towards wedded bliss. Ok?



ANSWER IT
& BE QUICK!

$10 - 4 \times 0 + 3 \div 3 = ?$

A.) 1
B.) 11
C.) 6

facebook.com/epicstudies

John Lee

Unwelcome visitors – a message from God?

Lately there have been a lot of unwelcome visitors on this little red dot.



First, there were the rat families coming to stay at the green mount of Bukit Batok and various other places in our garden city. Then, the other day, 2 flower bees paid me an unwelcome visit, waking me up early morning with their buzzing wings. It was a startling experience encountered.

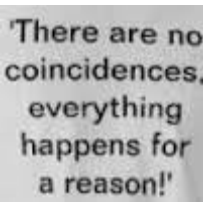


Now, I have read news about the sudden appearance of countless black beetles of a never-seen-before kind coming from nobody-knows-where and just dropping themselves dead in HDB homes.

It is not of historic plague proportions, but the unwelcome invaders coming one group after another still bring to mind the Biblical story describing the 10 plagues that God poured on Egypt, as a divine demonstration of power and displeasure designed to persuade the Pharaoh to stop his cruel bondage of the Israelites, and to let them go.



Were the unwelcome creatures' visitations triggered only by changes in the climate and environment or to signify God's displeasure with our sins in many ways? Maybe it is just my crazy imagination from watching too much TV and reading too many fantasy and science-fiction stories. Maybe the buzzing bees that came out of nowhere on a weekend were divine messengers to prick me out of my spiritual stupor, and signal God's displeasure with me for having not gone to church for some time. God is calling me to "GO". If the bees were God's messengers carrying a message to me, He did not seem to restrict Himself to that.



Recently, I met a primary-school classmate whom I totally could not recall. She remembered everything about me, but I remembered nothing about her. We exchanged numbers, and one day she invited me to her church's Good Friday cell gathering. She said she had seen me three times, and maybe there was some divine intervention behind the fact that we both stayed in the same neighbourhood yet only met recently; so she decided to invite me and my mom to join her Christian fellowship.



Do you believe in miracles? Surely, there are things that cannot be explained by human intelligence. I believe God is still involved in our human world, and is still at the centre of everything we do. It could be that He's trying to tell us something through our daily events.

Sally Lee

An Alphabet Soup

cooked by our in-house chef

John Lee

(A)		(B)ible	(C)an		
(D)ispel	(E)very	(F)rustration,			
(G)iving	(H)ope	(I)n			
(J)esus.		(K)eeP		(L)iving	
(M)eaningfully,	(N)ot	(O)verlooking			
(P)rayers		(Q)uickly	(R)endering		
(S)olutions	(T)o	(U)sual			
(V)exations	(W)hich	e (X)tinguish			
(Y)our	(Z)est.				

Romans & Ivy

LCS Missionaries to Thailand sharing their experiences

We struggle quite a bit and are still searching for answers to how we can discharge our ministry duties faithfully in view of the Thai culture. But this has taught us to trust the Lord even more than we do back home where things are more secure, controlled and dependable. I pray for wisdom as well as compassion as we go forth and administrate His work here. This is really coming out of our comfort zone (Singapore) and being in wonderland (Thailand). We often wonder what else could happen.



One time while eating at a stall, it started to rain heavily. Cockroaches big and small, about a couple of dozens, started coming out of the drains, scurrying around for refuge. Then came a piercing feeling on back of my neck. It was a roach! I swept it away. The last straw came when the storeowner told me, "There is a huge cockroach on the leg of your stool." I dropped my utensils and disappeared at light speed.



Thailand has never failed to amaze us. Indeed anything can happen. We no longer can be as sure as we were in Singapore anymore but praise be to God for that will set us on a journey of greater faith. We are thrilled and at the same time fearful, but whatever it is we know for sure that everything falls into His wonderful plan. We just need to be more patient and expect more surprises. So I must "trust in the Lord with all my heart and do not depend on my own understanding, seek His will in all I do and He will show me which path to take."



Pray that they will be able to pick up the Thai language, for health and wisdom to carry out the work set before them.

The above is an extract from their newsletter to LCS Missions Board.

THE STORY FOUND IN ALL 4 GOSPELS

Once upon a time, there was a small boy who was so stupid that he gave away his whole lunch and dinner to feed a crowd of about 10,000 people. All he had was equivalent to 2 fish burgers, ie 5 loaves of bread and 2 fishes.

It was early morning and the boy's mother packed a basket with some bread and fishes for her son to have his meal for the day. They lived in a town near the Jordon River, so likely fish was their common diet. The boy took the basket and went out to play.

When he saw a crowd of people going towards Bethsaida, he followed along curious of what was going on. Then he saw on the mountainside a man speaking and around him were 12 other men.

It was nearing dinner time and the boy was about to open his basket and have his fish burgers. All of a sudden, in front of the boy stood a man, who motioned to him, to follow him. The boy did not understand why but he followed the man up the mountainside.

When he neared the place where the 13 men were, he heard one of them saying, "Where shall we buy bread for these people to eat?" That should have given the boy a warning to get out of here because the people were looking for food. Before he could move, the man who brought him up said, "Here is a boy with five small barley loaves and two small fish."

He was trapped, surrounded by 10,000 hungry people and all eyeing his dinner. Should he quickly gulp down his dinner before the hungry mob takes it? After all, how could this little meal feed so many people?

Then he heard the man say, "Have the people sit down." The man said it with so much authority that the boy also sat down. The man asked the boy to give him his basket and the boy gave it, not understanding how it could feed so many people.

The man gave thanks for the basket of food and to the boy's astonishment the food kept multiplying until all the people had enough to eat. Then the boy recalled the stories his mother told him about the Widow of Zarephath.

When the boy reached home that evening and told his mother about the feeding of the thousands of people with just the basket of food which she packed for him, she could not believe it. She sent him up to his room, or at

least to his corner of the house, for making up stories. A few days later when she heard the people in the market telling of this incident and the amount of food leftover, then she believed her son.

In my retelling of this story based on John 6:1-14, do you agree with me that the little boy was silly to give up his food which was so meagre that it cannot possibly feed the multitudes? Shouldn't he take care of himself first? If you were the boy, what would you do?

Let's get into a time machine and travel over 2000 years into the future, the present day. Here we are at the crossroads of trying to raise \$25 million to rebuild JCC and the AGM has just passed a motion to borrow money from the congregation, interest-free. You only have \$10, what would you do? Do you say \$10 is so little, a drop in the ocean, compared to \$25 million? I might as well buy myself a fish burger meal instead.

Did the boy know that his 5 loaves and 2 fishes could feed more than 5,000 people? I mentioned that he heard the story of the widow of Zarephath but that was only presumption, he probably did not hear of this story before.

However, we are in a different position. We have heard of the widow of Zarephath and how God provided for her. We are also well versed with the story of the boy with the 5 loaves and 2 fishes. Do we have the faith to follow their footsteps or do we rationalize that these 2 incidents recorded in the Holy Bible are just stories of things that happened in the past and are not meant to be lessons for us to act accordingly.

I always wondered to myself, if I give \$10 how can it multiply until it achieves \$25 million? Well, John Lee is the maths expert, maybe he can figure out the numbers.

All to Jesus I surrender;
All to Him I freely give;
I will ever love and trust Him,
In His presence daily live.
I surrender all,
I surrender all;
All to Thee, my blessed Savior,
I surrender all.

Martin Cheah

Easter Sunday

5th April 2015.



The Kids' Church performed 2 songs with actions.

There were transfers of membership at the English service.

Followed by another 3 generation baptism at the Dialect service.

In all, a very happening day.



Rebuilding Fund Raising LOL@101



I happened to sit in on one of the Fund Raising Carnival meetings recently and was quite impressed with the young ones' enthusiasm and endurance as the meeting went past 11:00 pm. Many of them were in the midst of their exam periods or even about to be enlisted into National Service.

Despite their youth, they had quite a lot of organizational sense, with each individual or team taking care of the various aspects of organizing an event as complex as running a Carnival. These included the various government regulations, fire safety, food safety, the coordination of the games and food stalls, the design of the flyers and posters, etc.

Yes, they do need some guidance and input from the adults but on the whole, as Chairperson Janet mentioned, we should not restrict but guide them.

Noting that many of last year's events were considered untenable by some people and yet all were successes, like the Michael Card Concert and the Fund Raising Dinner, we must also trust that God will make the Carnival a success for JCC. *In their hearts humans plan their course, but the LORD establishes their steps* – Proverbs 16:9

Pray for these youths from both the Chinese and English sections that God will guide them and bless the work of their hands. Come alongside them and help them in their endeavours for the good of JCC.

Footnote, if you sit in on one of these youthful meetings, you will find that all of them are working with laptops, passing documents via Dropbox and thinking of using the social media for advertising and using code like **LOL@101**. I think my time has passed and I belong in the museum like those dinosaurs.

Martin Cheah



On the eve of Labour Day (30th Apr), Bethel and Jurong West CGs came together to pack the goodie bags with about 12 items which Outreach HOM managed to garner with her skills. About 20 of us were gathered at the MPH and using process line technology, we completed the task of packing over 230 bags in less than an hour.



We had been experiencing

heavy downpours in the afternoons over the past few days and the organizers were very concerned about how it would affect the **NSFD (Northern Sunset Family Day)**. We had prayed individually and as a group for fine weather. However we also decided to add a poncho as one of the items in the goodie bag. Was it due to lack of faith?

Sherine also wondered whether it was wise to buy a first aid kit for such a short event (3½ hours) where there was very little likelihood of any injury. Good thing she did because Joo See sustained a cut near her knee and needed to use the plaster from the first aid kit. I witnessed 3 participants falling down on the slippery, sloping grass field while playing the games. Fortunately, they did not sustain any injuries.



The next day, 1st May, we were all excited about the Family Day, but none were more excited than the Dialect members who came to church even before the Registration team could arrive. I was still at home watching TV when I received a call that some people had



already arrived at 101. I happen to live about 10 minutes from church so I was there soon after.

The registration process went smoothly and soon the people were on board the buses with their goodie bags, ready for the ride to Woodlands Waterfront Park.



The bus ride went without a hitch and we arrived at

the park and proceeded to the spot where the advanced party had “choped¹” with ground sheets. The weather was fine although there were dark clouds forming across the Causeway.

The first part of the program was a singspiration led by Tsu Ern and team. While we were singing, the rains were threatening to pour on us. However the first drops only came after we had finished singing. It wasn't a heavy rain, just a drizzle, but it did force us to seek shelter and take out the umbrellas and poncho. We waited about ½ an hour before the drizzle lightened and the games could start.



We had cool weather to play all the games in the open field. Congratulations to the young adults for organizing such interesting games, which many could take part and enjoy. The Indian workers who were all over the park enjoyed watching our people playing the games. Even as I was running all around the field about 2 times the size of 101, I noticed the Indian workers taking photos or videos of all the happenings. I wonder if it will be posted on YouTube, India?



¹ Similar to reserving a seat at the Hawker Centre with a packet of tissue.

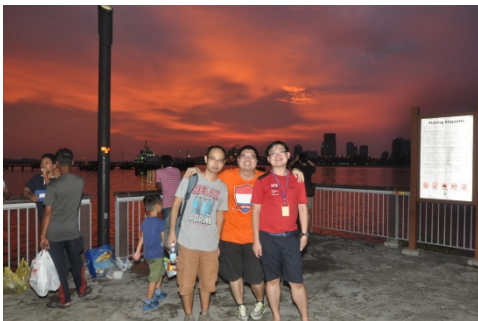
After the games we retired to have dinner. Just about that time, everyone



noticed a rainbow over the park. A sign from God or just a natural event due to the drizzle earlier? *“As the appearance of the bow that is in the cloud in the day of rain, so was the appearance of the brightness round about.”* (Ezekiel 1:26-28) The

rainbow, a bow without an arrow, is a symbol of the mercy of God.

Due to the cloudy conditions, we did not get a glimpse of the setting sun but we did get to see the colors in the sky as the sun set, hidden behind the clouds.



At 7:30 pm we called it a day and started back to JCC@101.



I apologize to Peggy's colleague for leaving him behind. I thought I was the last person up the bus and so we left without him.



Martin Cheah



BB ENROLMENT 2015

This year, on 19 April 2015, we had our Enrolment Day at 101 Yuan Ching Road, Jurong Christian Church's temporary premises, for the first time. On that day, we received awards or badges. Some of us were promoted too.



The Guest-of Honor for this year's Enrolment Day was Mr William Wong, Vice-President for Development of the Boys' Brigade in Singapore. We also invited our Principals from Shuqun Primary School and Shuqun Secondary School. Unfortunately, the Shuqun Primary Principal could not join us as she was unwell.

For this year, we had the commissioning of our Company's new Colours by our Chaplain, Reverend Anthony Loh. He reminded us that the Colours is a sign of GOD's presence with us in the Boys' Brigade.

Since we had a different venue for this year's Enrolment Day, it was quite unfortunate that we did not have enough space for our



Enrolment Parade. The awards were given out in one of the rooms. Nonetheless, we were all still excited to receive our new badges and ranks. I would like to thank the Officers for organizing this year's Enrolment Day, and members of the church for supporting our activities.

CPL Yee Kai