

Jurong Christian Church Retreat Pulai Springs Resort, JB (15 – 17 June)

ONE in Spirit, Family and Heart

Thank God for giving me the time and it was by His providence that I was able to attend this year's retreat! I was truly blessed by this retreat. I saw a glimpse of what it meant to be ONE in spirit, family and heart (which is this year's retreat theme) by the people around me, the new people I have met and through the messages by Rev Phillip Huan.

My retreat group had people that I have not met before and some whose name I do not even know. I got to know some relatively new members of the church who were really easy-going and friendly. In fact, it was one of them, Patricia, who started asking for our names before any of us did! I was ashamed that I did not take time and effort to get to know my fellow brothers and sisters in church and was encouraged by their initiative and heart to get to know each other better!

Besides getting to know them better, I was also able to spend time with my close friends in the youth ministry! During our free time together, we played board games, enjoyed the facilities such as the hot spring bath and heart-to-heart talk. We also had a meaningful time of deeper sharing, encouragement and prayers for each other during Rev Huan's preaching sessions.

Through the messages by Rev Phillip I learnt that the destiny of the church cannot be fulfilled if each of us does not use our gifts that God has purposefully given us. And our gifts cannot effectively fulfil the destiny of the church if we do not have the Holy Spirit and if we do not learn to love one another. It really spoke to me because often I feel lost, not knowing what to do in life regarding work, studies etc. and sometimes I feel insignificant and feel like I am not good enough. Though I still do not have a clear direction as to what God's will is for me, I was reminded that he gave me gifts (no matter how insignificant I think it might be) for his purpose and he has a destiny for me. If I ask in faith for an anointing by the Holy Spirit, it will enable me to do God's will with the gifts he has given me.

In the last message, Rev. Huan talked about love. In that message, one point that struck me was how reconciliation is of greater worship before God than other gifts.

“Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother or sister has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to them; then come and offer your gift.” – Matt. 5:23-24



It opened my eyes to see how the church cannot fulfil its destiny no matter how gifted we are if we do not love each other and allowed me to see how important it is to God that we love.

After this message, we went around to encourage at least 5 people (many more in the end), hug them and tell them that we love them with the love



of God. This short activity was really impactful and it brought me to tears as I realised how much love each of them has showered upon me and how much I lack in my love towards others. I was heartened when the adults also approached the youths to encourage and hug them. It was really a glimpse of being one in heart, in spirit and being one family! I was touched when a new friend Selvi pointed to me and offered me a hug. Though we barely know each other I felt the love from her and other new sisters I've met in

the group such as Patricia and Katherine who then came together for a group hug.

The retreat brought me closer to the people in the church and I have experienced God in this retreat in many ways: through the message, the people and the Holy Spirit!

I look forward to the next retreat and until then, may we all remember the things we have learnt and continue to worship the Lord and King we all serve.



Elayne Yam