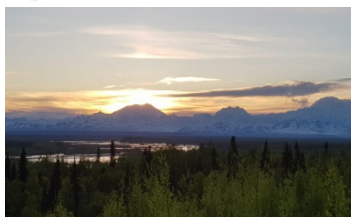




MISSION TRIP TO Kg SPEU, CAMBODIA

by John Lee



NATURE CALLS

by Joyce Tan



FELLOWSHIP OF THE BROTHERS

by Alicia Wong



The Vine This Month

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Cover Photo:
Baptism on 20th May



Brother Martin Writes

What would you do if you had 284 handbags? Well you could carry a different handbag a day but wouldn't it be a great bother to keep changing handbags? My wife has at least 5 or 6 handbags, some for special occasions, some for work and some

for marketing. However, whenever she changes handbag she sometimes forget to change all the items she is carrying inside to the other bag. So sometimes she forgets her handphone, MRT card or house keys.

Ecclesiastes 5:10 says, "*He who loves money will not be satisfied with money, nor he who loves abundance with its income. This too is vanity.*" This is why people always need more and more. Just one dollar more is the cry of the unsatisfied greedy heart. *The sleep of the working man is pleasant, whether he eats little or much; but the full stomach of the rich man does not allow him to sleep.* Ec-

clesiastes 5:12

Rev Anthony mentioned in one of his sermons last month that the number one question he gets at his baptism classes is, "How much must I pay?" I asked a newly baptized person if that was true and he said, "Well if you join as a member anywhere, you are expected to pay membership fees, so it is a logical question to ask." The Bible does say that you shall count the cost of discipleship, read Luke 14:25-33.

Perhaps we should mention that it is not a membership fee to be paid but rather a joyful duty to give. Giving is an individual matter before God as He enables and leads us to give. 2 Corinthians 9:7a says, "*Each one must do just as he has purposed in his heart.*" We should not be pressured to give more and more money.

Giving should bring us great joy, and it should not be something that we do reluctantly. 2 Corinthians 9:7b says that we should give "*not grudgingly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.*" The Scripture plainly states if we have the ability to give, then we should give. 2 Corinthians 8:12 says, "*For if the readiness is present, it is acceptable according to what a person has, not according to what he does not have.*"

So if you find that you have more than you will ever need, it is best to give the excess away for you have been blessed to be a blessing.

Martin Cheah

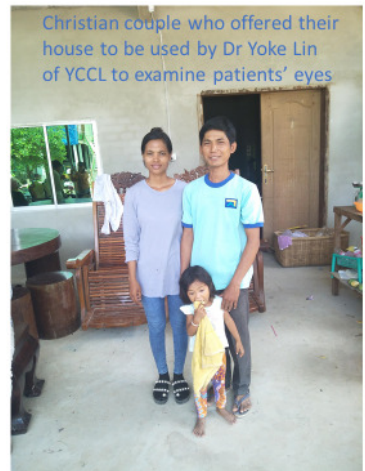
Mission Trip to White Lotus Village in Kampong Speu, Cambodia



I thank HOM (Missions) for inviting me to join him on a mission trip to White Lotus Village from 18 – 20 May.

White Lotus Village is one of several villages in the province of Kampong Speu. It was an enriching experience having sight of the potential missions ground where Pastor Sombo of a house church has the passion to grow the church and welcomes any support that he could get.

We had a good meeting in the house which belongs to a Christian widow. As Ps Sombo could not speak English, Ps Joseph who is a staff of LWM provided the interpretation. Ps Berta Law, a missions coordinator from the Hong Kong Church, was also present.

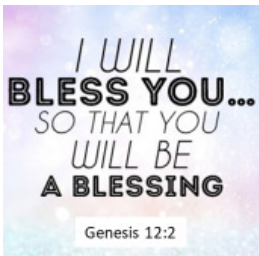


While setting off on the exploratory trip without any illusions of the outcome, I completed the trip with a better understanding of the missions work in Cambodia. Yet, we must confess that whatever man proposes, God disposes; and He blesses every work that accords with His will and brings glory to Him. This would include the expansion of His Kingdom on Earth.

As the HOM (Missions) deliberates with the Council on the matter, with the information gathered, members of the congregation must keep prayers alive while details are being ironed out so that JCC will make the best decision on what we can do to contribute to God's work on the mission field. **Every work has its challenges while we cherish hopes for good fruit from the harvest. We need to continually seek God for wisdom and guidance so that success will override failures.**



On the last day of our trip, we attended Sunday worship at the City Church in Phnom Penh. The experience of being one in faith, worshipping the same God with the Christian brethren in Cambodia, speaks splendidly of the fellowship we can have despite different languages and cultures.



Blessed to be a blessing! Once upon a time, the Singapore Church was a beneficiary of missionaries from afar. God has blessed us, and now is our turn to be a blessing to churches that are budding.

John Lee

Being a purpose-driven happy Christian

After my baptism, I felt excited and joyful. In a relaxed mood, I went window-shopping at West Gate, IMM, Big Box, JEM, and J-Cube. My window-shopping outing also took me to the Jurong East Library.

In the shops, there were beautiful clothing, shoes, bags and electronic gadgets. Apart from these attractions, I also passed by the restaurants, coffeeshops and food stalls that were desirable in their own ways.

Above all, it was God's will that I landed at Jurong East Library where I picked up a book from the Books Exchange Corner. The book – "The Purpose Driven Life" by Rick Warren – was recommended by Billy Graham.

It is a book that talks about being driven by God's purposes, not our own.

As I wandered through the places of shops and food outlets, I was finally driven to the library and to the book that carries a spiritual message.

Apart from the physical objects that we can purchase and count as blessings by their usefulness, God also wants us to receive spiritual blessings in abundance – grace, love, joy, hope, forgiveness, salvation, success etc. – to make us happy Christians as we lead a purpose-driven life with focus on Christ.



TEH KEAN PENG



At JCC Open House in March 2017, badminton was introduced as one of our interest-group activities.

Our first game commenced on 17th May 2017 with 5 non-Christians and 1 JCC member. We made a one-hour booking of 1 badminton court per week for 3 months.

By August 2017, interest in the badminton activity had grown so much that our badminton court booking increased to 2 hours per week. Not only so, we expanded our network of friends as we joined our badminton game with the players in the adjoining court.

On average, 3 – 5 non-Christians joined us in the badminton game each week. After the last game of 2017, we had a great time celebrating our friendship with ice-cream and apples



JCC interest group : Badminton
1st anniversary May 18

Time flies and on 16th May 2018, it was a greater celebration time for our one-year anniversary with lots of food after the game that evening. It was a sumptuous meal topped with a pear given out to each person after the feasting.



JCC Badminton Group last game of 2017

Over the one-year period, many among us have been converted from strangers to friends enjoying fun together in our regular weekly badminton game.

As we look forward to the time together every week, we continue to welcome new friends from the neighbourhood to join our badminton team.

Peggy Tan

PKS#1 – Visit to Bro Israel at All Saints Home in Jurong East on 21st May. This was our 3rd visit to this family, first at their home, then at NTFGH and this time at a nursing home.



We found out that he liked to play snakes & ladders but unfortunately none of us had that game. So we brought him a notebook and drew some lines and entertained him with Tic-Tac-Toe. We brought a smile to his face. At times human interaction is better than a handphone or computer game.

He managed to beat us after a few rounds of losing.

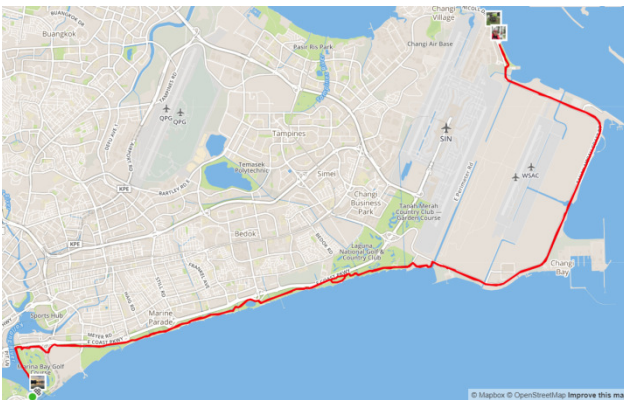




Fellowship of the brothers

2018

Recently, Alvin has picked up long distance cycling, logging his trips with an app (Strava) and posting his thoughts regarding equipment on Facebook. Matthew from the Chinese Congregation, a veteran long-distance cyclist, decided to bring him along for a ride together at the long stretch of PCN starting from Marina Barrage along East Coast Park to Aviation Park Road after Tanah Merah Coast Road before heading back to where they



Their cycling route

started. Before Alvin set off, I told him to snap some photos. Apparently, Matthew was aware of the article I wrote last issue about Admond and Jason's weekly exercising routine so he was not surprised by my re-

quest for photos. It was nice to catch up with things about Matthew and that my introvert husband is fellowshipping with one of the brothers in church.



While long-distance cycling is the latest thing Alvin has been doing, the love of cycling started after we married and moved to Taman Jurong. Being new to the community, we joined Freddy's weekend cycling group (now defunct) and cycled up to West Coast Park. Subsequently, we made our own cycling trips to West Coast Park Dog Run with an occasional one to Sentosa Tanjong Beach.

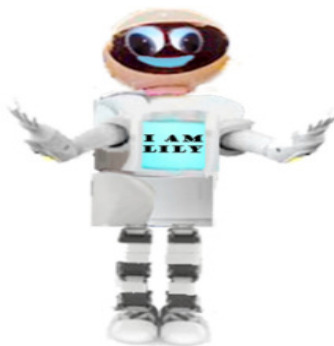
Anyway, if any of you are long-distance cyclist, do add Alvin into your Strava friends list!

<https://www.strava.com/athletes/alvinsiwei>

Alicia Wong

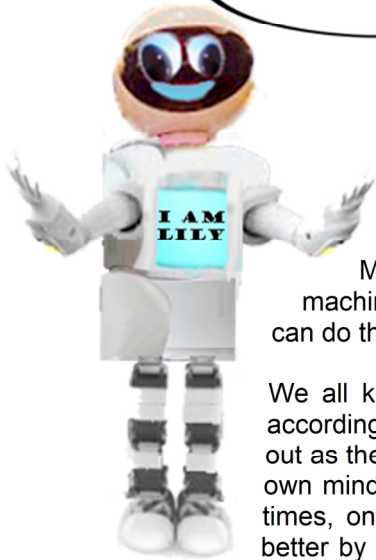
In the year 2020, Thomas & Peter visit a restaurant.

At the entrance, Lily the waitress (a robot) welcomes them.



It is a surreal experience without human interaction in a modern, progressive restaurant.

WELCOME TO MY WORLD!



The world is chasing after Artificial Intelligence. Indirectly, people are admitting that their human intelligence is not good enough to pursue goals to satiate themselves with what life should offer them. The rise of robots to take over human work is an attestation to the propensity for Man to subordinate their human abilities to those of machines. Robots are “revered” as superior “beings” that can do things faster and better than efforts of human hands.

We all know that when employers employ workers to work according to their paymasters’ bidding, it does not always work out as the employers desire. The human employees have their own minds that might go against the inputs of instructions. At times, on hindsight, many tasks could have been performed better by the paymasters themselves instead of relying on the paid labour that brings with it a host of unwanted repercussions. Sometimes, bad effects arise not due to the workers’ fault, but because of unwise or inappropriate calls by the masters.

If we replace the human employees by workers that are machines, there is no guarantee that the workers (robots) do not play truant or dissident because of their own independent minds of artificial intelligence (formidable system process) or because of their human masters’ improper calls. There are hazards of faulty programming or misconceived expectations of what machines can be empowered to do whereby humans just sit back and admire the machine prowess. In the example of AI in chess playing, we see the possibility of one robot challenging another to become ever more powerful in its absolute strength to overwhelm all human masters of the game.

Will armies of drones in battlefields resist timely human interventions when they run amok? Even in the civilian space, major disasters can happen with machines simply because of a single critical code, of a single press of a wrong switch or because the AI grows too powerful on its own autonomous capability development to surpass Man’s abilities to bridle it. It could be a dilemma for Man because on one hand, dependency on the machines has become an enslavement that Man simply cannot forgo; and on the other hand, letting the AI

system continues on its programmed trajectory of evolvment carries serious implications of the master losing control of the potentially serious detriments. Everything has pros and cons; so is chasing after higher and higher technologies. It is not that Man should absolutely eschew developing new tools and methods of doing things more efficiently. However, there is ample evidence in the history of Man that human wisdom runs far behind human ego in going after everything that looks new and exciting in the horizon. After one horizon is passed, another one appears and the chasing game continues zealously without thinking about whether it is simply feeding wants rather than needs; that needs cannot be met by alternatives that are less classy hi-tech and profligate.

God tells us through Prophet Isaiah:

"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways," declares the LORD. As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts." – Isa. 55:8-9

"Progress is good!" people sing unquestioningly. Common sense would tell us that not all progress is good. Not all progress that is intrinsically useful turns out to be good in the hands of foolish Man who follows his egoistic ways instead of the higher ways and purpose of God.

*The world has progressed
From clubs to spears
From spears to bows and arrows
From bows and arrows to handguns
From handguns to big guns
From big guns to ... atomic bombs to hydrogen bombs ...
What comes next?
Apocalypse, Armageddon ... human extinction???*

Advancement in AI and robotics is progress, with potential of a more dangerous world when its utility is hijacked for nefarious purposes – such as power abuse of big data in civilian domains or the heightening of the arms race between countries.

One cardinal rule for the progress of AI and robotics to be good is that it should be beneficial and not harmful; it should be Man's servants and not his master. Can anyone guarantee the harmlessness? The obvious answer to this question means one thing – we cannot over-rely on it and ought to apply wisdom to choose needs over wants. That is to say, we must apply due diligence to be cautious in the chase after it.

Improvement in quality of life (better health, greater peace, lesser air pollutants from industries, etc.) is PROGRESS – which raises the Happiness Index, is good and desirable.

Are leaders of the world chasing after the PROGRESS that is good and desirable more zealously than the progress of AI and robotics? The big problem of humans is that they are putting their energies unbalanced between the good PROGRESS and the pride-based or fiscally-justified chase after unparalleled advancements that correspond with unparalleled evils, not limited to the evil of displacing the human spirit everywhere with the proliferation of cold and non-emotional but super-mechanically-efficient beings.

This is what the Lord says: ‘You say about this place, “It is a desolate waste, without people or animals.” – Jer. 33:10

The immense potential of humans wreaking destruction on themselves (without salvation) with their infatuation with technologies that they know least to handle responsibly is understandable from Biblical warnings about the end days. God tells us through Prophet Isaiah:

“so is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.” – Isa. 55:11

John Lee



While waiting for the AGM to start, Bishop Kee told me a story from his Thailand days. It was about a Thai Christian woman who only had a son. She had prayed for the salvation of her father for many years and in her desperation, she offered anything for her father’s salvation.

One day while playing in the fields, her son ate some poisonous berries and died. Bishop Terry and his wife Sally were very sad because this lady was a very good help to them. During the funeral services held over a few days, her father attended and he heard the messages. By God’s grace, he came to believe in Jesus.

Bishop drew a parallel, this lady offered her only son for the salvation of her father.

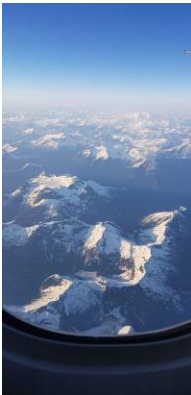


NATURE CALLS! *God is an awesome god*

Do you realise that most of the beautiful things in life are not just things? They are the people and memories of the time we spend with them; the joys and sorrows that we do not forget for a long time. Thank God for it!
☺

Nature helps to bring back the sanity of life just by looking at it. Teck Chai and I had the opportunity to visit Alaska through Vancouver and we returned from Alaska to Singapore from Seattle recently. This is a trip on my “bucket list” and you can never imagine what we saw. I wish we could share our videos as well. The beauty of nature from the other side of the globe is just amazing.

First, let me show you the view through our flight before we arrived in Vancouver airport.



The mountainous view was magnificent! Look at the snow-cap peaks standing aloof from the skyline, blending into the wonderful colours of the daylight!

Our journey began with awe in the face of the wonders from God! What a sight!

As we boarded the cruise from Vancouver, the scenery started changing as the days were longer in Summer and the nights fell just before waking up to an early start. Sometimes, the stars did not even appear before the days started again.

“In the beginning God created the heavens and earth. Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.

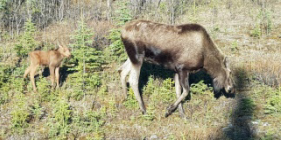
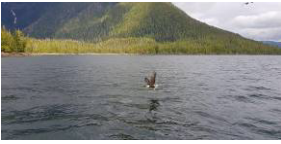
And God said, Let there be light, and there was light. God saw that the light was good and he separated the light from the darkness. God called the light day and the darkness he called night. And there was morning – first day.

And God said, Let there be a vault between the waters to separate water from water. So God made the vault and separated the water under the vault from water above it. And it was so. God called the vault sky. And there was evening, and there was morning – second day.

And God said, Let the water under the sky be gathered to one place, and let dry ground appear. And it was so. God called the dry ground land, and the gathered waters he called seas. And God saw that it was good.

~ Genesis 1:1-10~

We marveled at the creatures in the sea when we went for crab catching and whale watching in cold and rainy weather. Yes, it was summer at 2 to 9 degree Celsius at Ketchikan, Icy Straits and Juneau.



Have you heard of the “mid-night” sun? I learnt about it when we were heading through the various spots in Alaska such as Skagway, Talkeetna and Denali. The sun was still shining at 11 p.m. We had an average of 18 hours of daylight.

It was a learning experience for us as we ventured deeper into Alaska from the sea to the land by coach, train and All Terrain Vehicle (ATV) into the mountains; cross rivers on a jet-boat and visited the habitats of Alaskans; trying to understand the history that we

would not have known if we had not been there. God provided all means of survival from food sources, vegetation to the early tribes through the nature that he created.

The beauty of nature just got better when we visited the Wilderness and explored the sights that sent our being into another dimension of the Universe.

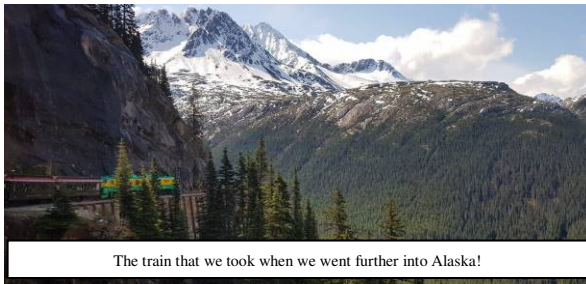




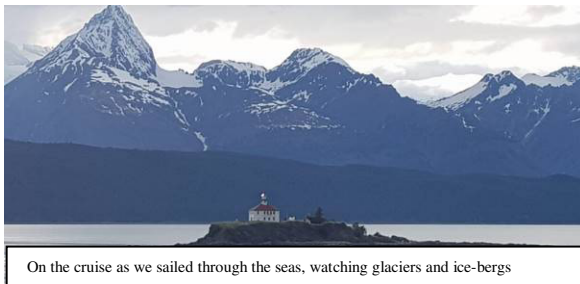
At this point, allow us to show you more pictures which will complete



this article as Teck Chai and I hold these memories close to our hearts; remembering God's love and how He first loved us.



The train that we took when we went further into Alaska!



On the cruise as we sailed through the seas, watching glaciers and ice-bergs

Because He first loved us, Jesus gave himself to us by dying on the cross for us. Give thanks to God!

Joyce Tan

semi-working THE DLT RETREAT

Empowered and Blessed to be a Blessing

The Dialect Leadership Team (DLT) held a retreat at YWCA Fort Canning from 15 – 16 June. Altogether, 14 persons joined the retreat.

After a lunch fellowship at the Café Lodge (YWCA restaurant) and checking into the hotel, we had a half hour of praise and worship in the comfy room of our deacon, Peter Cheong.



Knowing the team as a **Dedicated Lot of Talents** serving the Lord in the Dialect Ministry week after week without fail, it was no surprise that they would not be satisfied with a simple relaxing retreat. So, the retreat was carefully planned to be a semi-working one with the theme *“Empowered and Blessed to be a Blessing”* and incorporating a solid 2 hours of serious-minded meeting with an intense discussion on the ministry work in serving the dialect congregation, including the steps to further improve the worship experience every Sunday.

Praise God that JCC is blessed with such a **Dedicated Lot of Talents** in the Lord’s service via the Dialect Ministry.

Apart from the bonding fellowship of brothers and sisters in Christ, the retreat was also a great time for spiritual refreshing with several group sessions over the 2 days listening to succinct and greatly edifying messages by Rev. Oh Beng Kee via video. The topics of the messages were:

- Ancestor Worship – joining issues with filial piety and culture
- Chinese Customs and Persecutions
- Trials and Death
- Despair and Hope
- Idol Removal and Water Baptism



- Sin and Forgiveness

The messages were in Hokkien with precise subtitles in English, and were therefore very easily comprehensible to all.

We had good meals, a good meeting discussing the dialect ministry, good and empowering spiritual messages, a good night's sleep giving us a good rest ... what else?

It was good fresh air for us enjoying an invigorating morning prayer walk in Fort Canning Park. It was good sweating our body out, followed by a satisfying buffet breakfast and another spiritually uplifting session with Rev. Oh Beng Kee ... and then it was time to bid one another farewell.



Before the next retreat, the Dedicated Lot of Talents (a.k.a. Dialect Leadership Team) will be back in church rendering their perspiration in faithful service in the Dialect Ministry.

Let us all join prayers that the DLT will ceaselessly be *Empowered and Blessed to be a Blessing* – all glory be to Christ, our Lord!

John Lee



In the markets, at the malls and around busy street corners, you will find many people in uniforms, asking you to change from one power to another power.

They are so convinced that theirs is the best power source and try to make you change yours.

How to stop from being harassed?

Just say, “I have converted!”

My Testimony

My father is a Buddhist and my mother a Christian. Nevertheless, I did not have a religious upbringing. Growing up, I would follow my father to pray at temples on special occasions or attend Kids' Church whenever my mother brought me there, which would usually be Christmas or Easter events. I could grasp neither worldview and understood little. As a result, I had this idea that religion was simply about choosing your own flavour of truth. Since Kids' Church had catchy music I naturally preferred Christianity and thought of myself as Christian. However, I did not know Jesus or what the gospel was.



In primary school, my friend introduced me to Wicca and New Age Mysticism. I would try various 'healing meditations' on the internet. I did not really think much about it and my worldview took a secular turn when I entered secondary school.

I began to hold to the belief that the human race was a product of macroevolution, an accident that happened out of mere chance. I was influenced mostly by existentialism and humanist thinking. Somehow, I still thought of myself as 'Christian' even though I was an existentialist in practice.

The implications of a meaningless reality that my worldview demanded did not sink in until I was faced with despair.

The Bad News

When I was 14, I had strong feelings for a girl in my class. She eventually became everything to me and it turned into an obsession. When she rejected me

after I confessed to her, it brought me great sorrow and my world began to crumble. I began to look at myself in a negative light.

My season of depression actually helped me to see myself as I truly am. I am a horrible person. I would always get in trouble for the things I said, and it was during these dark times of contemplation that I realised this was because of a problem with my very nature. I am by nature, evil; sinful and unclean. If I was judged by the ultimate standard of justice, I knew that I truly deserved to be tormented for eternity. No good dwells within me.

This then led me to question, does this even matter to begin with? Is there a God who will judge me for my deeds? Is life in this world truly all there is? Am I a product of chance, or was I created for a purpose? If I had a purpose, what was it?

To find the answers to these questions, as well as to find a solution to the problem with myself, I started going to church. I went to a church that talked about becoming a better person. I tried following whatever that would be preached in the sermons, hoping that it could maybe solve my problems and make me a better person, but whatever I did would always fall short. I could not find much meaning in anything that I did. I soon learnt that no matter what I do, I could never make myself right with God.

The Good News

That was until I heard the good news for the first time in another church. I soon learnt that while I was completely helpless to change my own plight, God Himself (Jesus Christ), out of His great love for me, broke into His own creation, took on the form of a man, lived the perfect life that I should have lived, and paid the punishment that I deserved by hanging on a cross, abandoned by His own disciples.

The Small Catechism describes this perfectly. By His blood, He has purchased and won me from all sins, from death and the power of the devil that I may be His own and live under Him in His kingdom and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness, just as He is risen from the dead, lives and reigns to all eternity.

The thing that changed everything for me was knowing that being right with God did not rest on my own works. This one truth: that I have sinned, and nothing good is in me but I am made right with God freely by His grace as a gift, through Jesus Christ who paid the price for me.

As the days passed, Jesus healed the pain that had been lingering in my heart. It was His great love for me that led me out of that dark season.

While I am unable to recall a specific time when I believed, my life gradually transformed from a life in great darkness to one filled with hope. Back then, my mind would be filled with suicidal thoughts. Thanks be to God that He gave me a purpose for living and that He has delivered me from those thoughts by His grace.

On September 9, 2017, I was buried with Christ through my baptism into death and raised to live a new life in Christ Jesus.

I thank God that He has called me out of darkness into His marvellous light.

As the Small Catechism on Third Article of the Creed puts it, I could not by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him; but the Holy Spirit had called me by the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, made me holy and kept me in the true faith. May this glorious gospel continue to be proclaimed and His name, glorified.



Jonathan Teo



On 3rd June, Cassidy Yam took the role of worship leader for the Dialect Service for the first time.

He pleasantly surprised everyone with his good voice and confidence. Someone said he was like Elvis Presley.

Thank God for providing new people to take up new roles in His Ministries.

My Experience as a Christian

I was a Christian before I came to Jurong Christian Church. However, an unfortunate incident with a member in my previous church had caused me to backslide from my faith. The incident (partly my fault) was like this:

I accidentally used a word that I didn't know had hurt my friend. After she told me about it, I thought we came to an understanding between us whereby she then felt ok. Regrettably, when my ex-cell leader asked about it and I mentioned that matter, the friend got furious. It stunned me to realize that she had actually not got over with it although we were hanging out together. The cell leader invited us to talk over the matter after church. I agreed on the condition that we were not going to quarrel; if we quarrel, then I would leave. So, it happened; but worse than I expected. During the talk after church, she hit me with her fist. I didn't return mine, although I was furious. Thereafter, I left.

I questioned my faith in God because of the happening and I asked myself, "Is this how a Christian is supposed to be?"

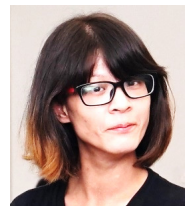
I also have problems with my marriage, and my job was a disaster. So, I felt hopeless. Sometimes, I felt like ending my own life, but didn't know how to.

It was then that I found a job as a laundry assistant when I met Peggy. She brought me to Jurong Christian Church. I attended this church for 3 weeks, then stopped because my remembrance of what I did to that friend whom I had hurt and what she did to me made me feel inappropriate for me to go to church. I still had my own issues (created by myself) that kept me thinking of ending my life. This time, I went to the window. However, I held back at the thought of how upset my family would be if I died just like that. I didn't really know what to do ... all I could do was to cry.

I cried every day and night, until I didn't want to cry anymore. I dwelled in fantasy by watching shows because if I were not to do that, I would still cry.

One Friday, Peggy called me to meet her for a chat. I went because I didn't want to be at home anymore. That was when I poured out all my feelings. I told Peggy everything and she prayed for me.

It was amazing that after Peggy prayed, I felt energized. I felt the presence of God with Peggy, and she followed me home. After reaching home, I went into my room and started praying. That week onwards, I returned to church. My life, and my relationship with my husband, started to change. My husband said that he could see the changes in me and liked my changes.



Praise be to God!

TRACY TENG

Cell Group Celebration Night

23rd June @ MPH1. Attendance around 80 pax.



Speaker:
Rev Dr John Tay



MC (HOM-CG):
Ronnie Lim





Great Retreat, hope you all had a good time in Malaysia.

20th May 2018

Baptisms & Transfers



Tracy Teng Li May



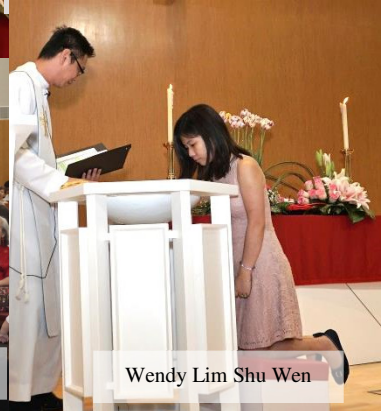
Asher Tay Yi Cheng



Charlotte Harper Zhang



Caleb Lee – Ruth Lee – Marcus Liang - Jonathan Teo



Wendy Lim Shu Wen