

## **FROM US TO U!**

*Pastors' appreciation night*



13 October 2018 – PTL! Praise the Lord for the opportunity to fellowship and encourage one another! As everyone got together at Roy and Juria's place, the function room was filled with echoes of laughter and chatter. As we gathered, Tony started the session with a welcome speech and shared how the Abundance Cell Group (ABCG) grew with stories that brought fond memories back to many around the room.



*"It is not about the quantity of the food, but the quality of it and the importance everyone coming together!  
No pressure.  
Let's pray and give thanks for the food! Amen.*

Tony also introduced the new members who have been joining the ABCG for the last year and gave thanks for our guests (Reverend Anthony, Reverend Martin Yee and Betsy, Pastor Andrew and Grace, Deacon Peter and Jessie) that they were able to attend this event.



After Patrick led the group in songs of worship, we indulged in the food and continued the fellowship with one another.

Let us recap what we did the last year for the Pastors' Appreciation. If you can recall, the ABCG posed questions to the Pastors and their wives. The episode was the highlight of that night because we got to know our pastoral team better with questions about their personal lives and heart-felt sharing on their service to God.

For this round, the Pastors were asked to prepare two questions for ABCG. The questions were not shared in advance so that we can achieve the most transparent and candid responses from the ABCG members. Wow! The questions were tough ranging from changes to educational system, Christian living and sharing about ABCG.

This segment had four teams headed by the Pastors respectively. The teams had to draw two questions each to discuss and share after 25 minutes. The Pastors played "Scissors, Paper, Stone" to decide who should start first. ☺

**Question 1 – Rev Anthony**

Share two lessons that you think the Lord has taught you in 2018. Why you say so?

**Question 2 – Rev Anthony**

Imagine you meet/ bump into new comers at JCC on Sunday. If you have two things to share with all the new comers in JCC, what will that be and why?

**Question 1 – Rev Martin Yee**

Fast forward what do you want to see your Christian life in 10 years time?

**Question 2 – Rev Martin Yee**

What do you wish to hear from the pastor/ preacher in their sermons?

Question 1 – Pastor Andrew

What makes you to take time and trouble to attend Abundance Cell Group? What is the strength of Abundance Cell Group?

Question 2 – Pastor Andrew

What is the most important aspect of Christian living to you? What is life all about?

Question 1 – Deacon Peter

What is Abundance Cell Group's view concerning MOE newly revised educational system i.e. reduction of term tests and less emphasis on exam performance/ marks?

Question 2 – Deacon Peter

What would be possible life challenges facing our nation's Merdeka generation in the 10 to 20 years ahead to stay relevant and alive (heart, mind, body, soul and spirit as Singapore enters the ICT (Information Communication Technology), AI (Artificial Intelligence) and super-duper age?



Thought we should share the questions with all of you. Phew! Not easy right?

This session gave us the opportunity to get to know each other better and how we feel about the things around us. Some of the sharing was personal such as lessons that the Lord had taught us in 2018. Other comments included what we would like to hear from the preaching on Sundays; what would we do if we meet new comers and how we could reach out to them besides welcoming them.

Also, candid answers flowed on the reduction of tests as we focus less on academic performance which many felt that it was just prolonged agony as the tests will still have to be taken the following year. The team knows that it was still important to respect the change which will benefit the students/ children in the short run. So, is learning just having tests or is it about the disciplining of the mind and heart to pace ourselves to think and grow in other aspects such as on the behaviours and values while knowledge is key to the educational system? A few of

us felt that tests may actually help instil that discipline to learn and after all we are all products of the educational system.

On the ABCG, it was good to hear of the unity and care that the group bring to people around us. This draws people to want to be in the CG and to know God better. We give thanks to God!

One particular comment caught my attention during the group discussion and tickled my thoughts. It was nice to know that the appreciation night allowed the mingling of the hearts with one another especially with the Pastoral team and their families. It was a wish that such events could be held more often. It struck me that efforts on such events is also a gift from God as it goes beyond words that brought insight to the work that God has done through His Love and will continue to do in ways that we cannot imagine through the fellowship with Him and one another.

“For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them.” Matt 18:20

It was heart-warming to know that we should rely on God and pray in the face of changes and challenges for our nation. All the discussions brought out an important aspect i.e. it takes us back to God.

On hindsight, how does the love of the God propel all of us to do what we need to do in our lives? You will know as we continue to pray for wisdom and direction from God. As a few of the ladies put it, it is important to “Grow, Glow and Go” in our Christian lives no matter what we want to do in the many years to come.

“God’s purpose is greater than our problems, our pain and even our sin.” Rick Warren

God’s grace, love and mercy will be the same forever. We closed the night with another song in awe to God and prayed before we left. Let us continue to remember our Pastoral team; giving thanks to God for them and their families as they need our prayers and encouragement too.

*Joyce Tan*