

THE WINEPRESS

O taste and see that God is good



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PRAYER FOCUS FOR MARCH

What should you pray for in this brand new month?

Seek the Lord to empower our ministries, give us renewal of faith in tough times and to move JCC forward through 2022 and beyond.

Prayer pointers can be found on page 3.

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LENT SEASON BY REV ANTHONY LOH

We will celebrate the Lent season of 2022 on the 2nd of March.

In most western churches, Lent is the 40 days (not counting Sundays) before Easter. The word "Lent" comes from the Anglo-Saxon word "lencten," which means "spring." In 325, the Council of Nicaea discussed the Lenten season, but it wasn't until the time of Gregory the Great that the start of the season was established on a Wednesday.

The 40 days is symbolic of the 40 days Christ was in the desert and the 40 years Moses had to endure before reaching the Promised Land.

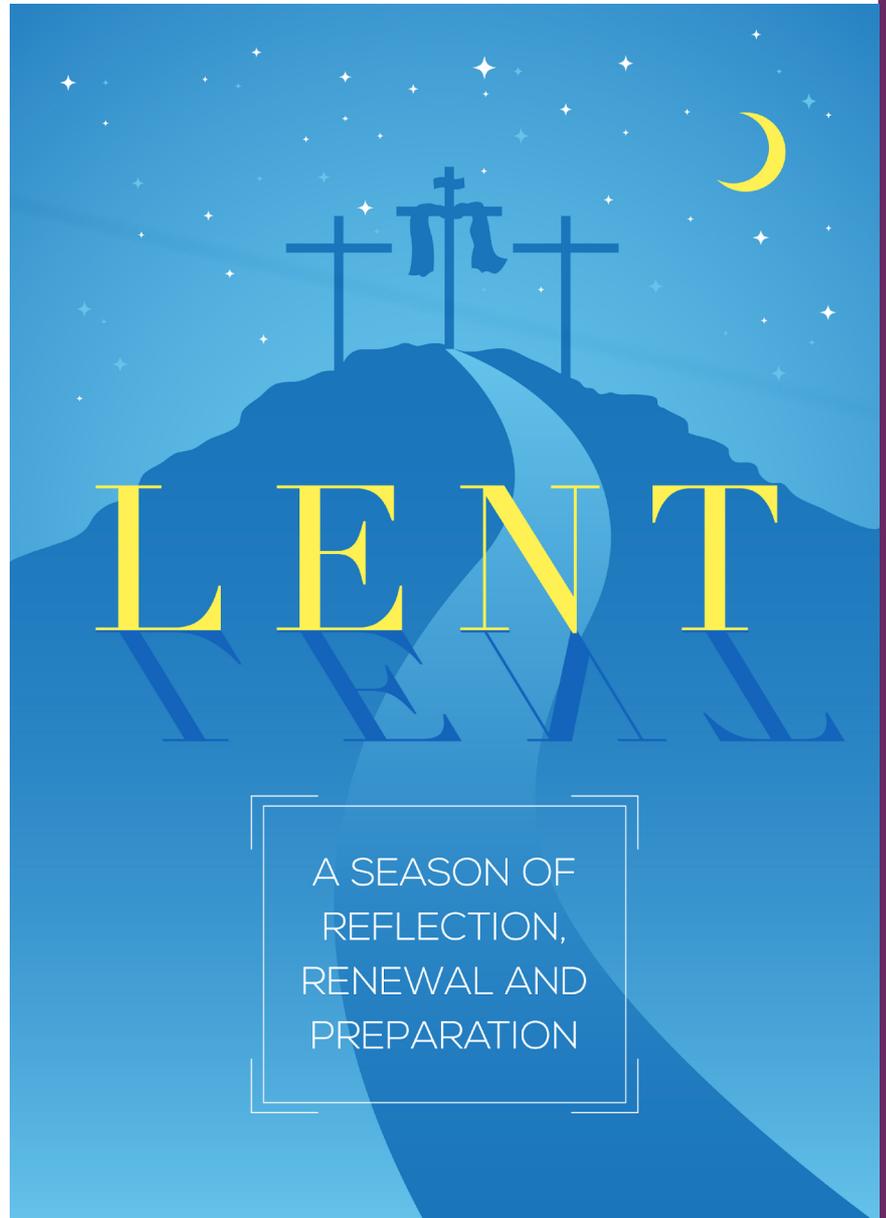
Lent begins with Ash Wednesday. On this day, during church services, the ashes from burnt palm leaves are used to place a mark of the cross on the foreheads of worshippers as a symbolic reminder that all of us come from dust; and upon our natural death, all of us return to dust. (Gen 3:19; Ecc 3:20)

It is worth noting that throughout the Old Testament, ashes signify sorrow and mourning. The start of Lent (Ash Wednesday) sets our minds to repent of our sins. "The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." (1 Cor 15:56-57)

How can we make the most of these 40 days of the Lent season?

I. TIME FOR REPENTENCE AND SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINE

We can intentionally set aside time to self-examine our lives and receive instructions through our study of the Bible.



Galatians 6:3-5 says, "For if anyone thinks himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself. But let each one examine his own work, and then he will have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another. For each one shall bear his own load."

Many Christians devote extra time to personal and public prayers. Some perform fasting as a spiritual discipline, with introspection and self-denial. In doing so, they sharpen their focus on God as things which clutter their life or impede their relationship with God are stripped away. With a repentant spirit, they reflect on the sufferings of Jesus in light of their personal sins and unrighteousness.

II. TIME FOR SPIRITUAL RENEWAL AND GROWTH

As we reflect on the sufferings of Jesus and repent of our sins, how are we spiritually renewed?

When Jesus foretold His death, He said to all, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me." (Luke 9:23)

Just thinking of Jesus fasting and praying in the desert for 40 days, let alone contemplating His Passion, we know that following Jesus implies an extremely high standard by which we must live our lives, to put our wants last for the sake of God's kingdom.

Without doubt, no matter how our response and fervour is, we will always fall short. However, our real goal for spiritual renewal and growth is progress, NOT perfection.

Someone says that "First steps are always the hardest but until they are taken, the notion of progress remains only a notion and not an achievement."

Our Lenten observance evokes our spirit of repentance with a developing spiritual discipline (in Bible study, meditation, prayers, service and Christian fellowship). They are the first steps which will support our spiritual renewal and progress.

III. TIME OF PREPARATION FOR EASTER

Advent season is a season of reflection and preparation for Christmas. On Christmas Day, Jesus comes as a baby born to be the Saviour of the world. Sadly, sinners reject Him and send Him to die on the Cross. In the season of Lent, we recognize our sinful nature and our need for a Saviour. Who can He be if not Jesus?

As we embark on our spiritual journey through the 40 days, seeking God's will through fasting and prayers, we ready our hearts for Easter. With our repentance, we have a complete change of heart about who Jesus is – the Christ who saves us from our sins by His death and resurrection.

Let us not waste the Lent Season as an excellent opportunity to renew our faith in Christ.



PRAYER FOCUS FOR MARCH 2022

1. **A heart that seeks God passionately in this Lent Season.**
2. **A heart ready to introduce the compassionate Christ to the world wherever we are.**
3. **A heart united among the partner churches in the Life Shine Community Services** – a collaborative effort with the Ministry of Social & Family Development to bring warmth and comfort to the VIC (Vulnerable in Community) Group.
4. **A heart of service in every JCCian to serve God faithfully through the ministries in JCC and be an encourager to one another.**

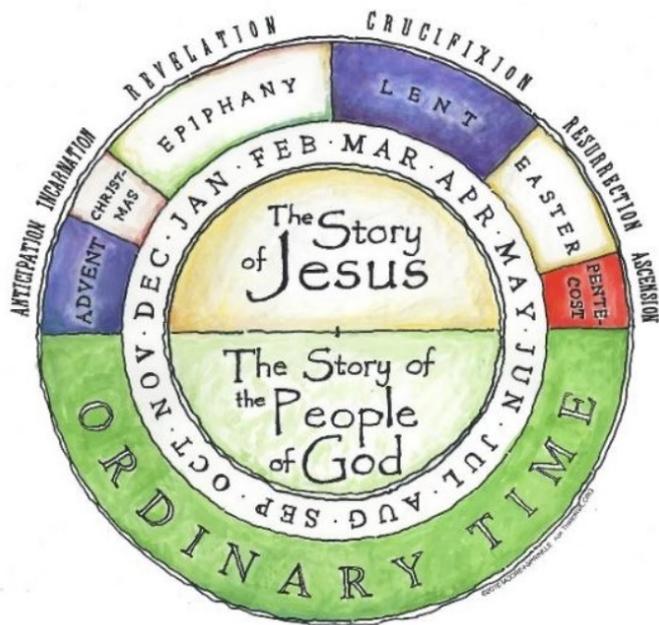


THE EPIPHANY OF OUR LORD

BY JIM LEE

As the chart shows, the Epiphany closely follows Christmas and is an inherent part of The Story of Jesus.

the Jews.” Next, the light of nature (the bright, shining star) led them to baby Jesus. They immediately bowed down to the child and worshipped him.



The celebration of Epiphany reminds us of the revelation of Christ to the Gentiles as revealed by the story of the Magi.

The Epiphany is also a celebration of the baptism of Jesus where He was revealed as God’s Son by a voice from heaven. (Mark 1:9-11)

MY REFLECTION ON JESUS' 1ST MIRACLE

John 2:1-11 recounts the first miracle that Jesus performed; i.e., changing water into wine.

Jesus did not stop at this miracle that revealed His glory. He performed many more miracles. Each miracle was an instance of Epiphany that revealed His identity. Each was an Aha moment (a flash of sudden insight or realisation) to the witnesses. Did they not change their views of Jesus?

The word “Epiphany” means a moment of sudden and great revelation or realisation.

In Matthew 2:1-12, the Magi were guided by a star to find baby Jesus.

First, the light of Scripture informed the Magi to go in search for “the one who has been born king of

If you wish to have your Aha moments of seeing Jesus as His disciples had theirs, then you must also contemplate following the disciples’ devotion. Besides miraculous epiphanies, it is possible to see Jesus in everyday events if you “devote yourselves to

*prayer, being watchful and thankful;" (Colossians 4:2)
"never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord." (Romans 12:11)*

On this point, the writer of Hebrews gives this advice:

"And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near." (Hebrews 10:24-25)

"Day drawing near" refers to the coming Day of the Lord when Christ will return to free His people and condemn evil. By faith, with prompting by the Holy Spirit, our mutual encouragements will see us safely through the challenging days ahead.

THE 3Rs

The water-to-wine miracle inspires us to recognize Jesus' power and glory in our daily relationship with Him. My personal reflection brings to light several points:

1. God reveals His truth in His time

Jesus did not perform the miracle immediately when told that the wine had run out. His reply to His mother was, "My hour has not yet come." (John 2:4) Similar words appear in John 7:6, 8, 30; 8:20.

"The hour has come" are mentioned in John 12:23; 13:1; 17:1.

God always pays attention to Kairos time: a time

when conditions are right for the accomplishment of a crucial action.

2. God refreshes us with a lesson on obedient faith

Jesus told the servants, "Fill the jars with water." When the jars had been filled, he said, "Now dip some out, and take it to the master of ceremonies." So, the servants followed his instructions. (John 2:7-8)

Despite knowing that they had just filled the jars with water, the servants obeyed Jesus' instruction to serve the jars' content to the master of ceremonies.

We see that the disciples' faith grew (John 2:11). We also see how the transforming power of the Holy Spirit was effected through the servants' acting in faith as what God requires of His followers.

God's transforming power and divine provision for our life will be revealed and received by us through our obedient faith.

This refreshing lesson should inspire us to heed what Jesus says, "Very truly I tell you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be judged but has crossed over from death to life." (John 5:24)

3. God revives our faith

At first thought, the miracle seems to be unplanned. However, it was all along in God's plan to reveal Jesus' glory with the purpose of building up people's faith in Him.

When Jesus' mother turned to him for help, the latter rebuffed her with the answer, "Woman, why do you involve me?" (John 2:4a)

However, God had a plan in the works. And it turned out fine for the wedding guests who were all joyfully filled with good wine.

Often, we become discouraged by misplaced feelings of being cold-shouldered by God.

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However, God has a work plan for us and through us in Kairos time – just like He had a plan to solve the problem at the wedding feast with the engagement of humble and obedient hearts.

Starting off with humble obedience through faith, the glory of God was manifested. This was followed by a growth in the number of people who put their trust in Jesus.

We see the hallmarks of a faith revival by the working of the Holy Spirit.

Our understanding of the 3Rs (REVEALS, REFRESHES, REVIVES) has a directing purpose that is synchronized with God's plan for us.

The Holy Spirit can lead us to our own Aha moments in our relationship with Jesus, as we give our heart to God in worship, prayer and praise, and in service, and in devotion to His Word.

Open your heart to God's presence. Allow God to transform it into a devotional heart.



BE WISE ABOUT THE APOCALYPSE

BY JOHN LEE

DOOMSDAY CLOCK

The Doomsday Clock is an iconic symbol of the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, a news agency established in 1947 (after WW II) that seeks to warn the world about existential threats. Midnight on the metaphorical clock signifies the end. The clock is set annually to show how close the world is to doomsday.

In 1947, the clock was set at 7 minutes to midnight. Factors affecting the clock's movement are the risks of nuclear disaster, global warming and consequences of biotechnology. The maximum distance from midnight was 17 minutes in 1991. Here is the latest portentous warning from the Bulletin:

To: Leaders and citizens of the world
Re: At doom's doorstep - It is 100 seconds to midnight
Date: January 20, 2022

DOOMED DOOMSDAY PREDICTIONS

Those of us who were old enough in the year 1999 can recall the global frenzy over the arrival of a new millennium. There was the fear of worldwide breakdowns of systems due to the Y2K computer bug. "Wisemen" proclaimed an approaching apocalypse with their interpretations of prophecies. In the end, there was no Y2K bug wreaking havoc; and now in Year 2022, we are well into the "new millennium".

A simple Google search will reveal that for every failed doomsday prediction, a new one would rise.

STILL CURIOUS?

We need not be too defensive for being curious. Even when Jesus was sitting on Mount Olivet, his disciples came to him privately to ask for the sign of his coming and of the end of the age. (Matthew 24:3)

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The warning (Matthew 24:4-6) that Jesus gave in his Olivet Discourse essentially tells us not to be alarmed that the end is nigh when we hear of wars and natural disasters.

Doomsday preppers and doomsday “prophets” should have enough fun with their doomed attempts at reading the “signs”. The misplaced alarm over a Y2K millennium apocalypse was based partly on the erroneous imagination that the Y2K bug would trigger the *“abomination that causes desolation”* referred to in Daniel 9:27, 11:31 and 12:11 (NIV).

Curiosity may be useful if it stirs inquiry that leads us to develop a healthy spiritual vista. However, like a useful knife, it can cut the wrong way. The idiom “Curiosity killed the cat” cautions us against the peril of being too curious beyond necessity.

PROPHECIES IN DANIEL & REVELATION

Christians quote the Books of Daniel and Revelation on warnings from special visions or dreams of their authors. There are also allusions to apocalypse in other prophetic books such as Ezekiel and Isaiah. Unfortunately, apocalyptic prophecies are notoriously confounding due to the mysteries of many signs and symbols. Even numbers can be symbolic. When metaphorical images are subjected to a motley of interpretations, some people may get overwhelmed.



Yet, we don’t need to be experts on Biblical symbolism to perceive the keynotes of God’s message for us in the revelations:

- These revelations emphasize God’s sovereignty and transcendence. In the struggle between God and Satan, angels and evil spirits, light and darkness, Christians are in no position to fight on their own. A divine pattern is at work from the past through the present and into the future. God’s people who are faithful to the end in resisting the dark power will taste the final victory with their salvation.
- The end of the world is connected to Christ before and after his return. Our present sufferings are temporary. The vision of Christ’s exaltation (Revelations 3:21) as a conqueror sharing a throne with His Father reveals the profoundness of the power that He represents and gives us hope in the face of apparent hopelessness.

LAST THINGS

Related to the Second Advent, the Doctrine of the Last Things is fraught with a host of arguable points. Bible scholars debate on the interpretations of the phrase *“end of the age”* (Matthew 24:3 NIV) and the word *“generation”* (Matthew 24:34 NIV). Erudite opinions are aplenty for us to explore. However, if we are not ready for the depth but still insist on diving in, we may end

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up far from shore and losing a proper sense of spiritual direction with the risk of drowning. Getting back to shore is to be safely grounded in the plain truths that ensure our spiritual serenity.

PURPOSES OF THE PROPHECIES

Prophecies in the Bible about the second coming of Christ do have useful purposes. Consider the following:

1. Believers have the knowledge of the blessed hope and can encourage one another with this knowledge. (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Titus 2:13)
2. Motivating children of God to abide in Christ. (1 John 2:28)

3. Warning Christians to be alert with Godly living. (Luke 21:34-36)
4. Christians are spurred on to purify themselves. (1 John 3:2-3)
5. ~~For speculation.~~ X (This is not one of the purposes.)

Christians are wise to be always prepared with oil savings for their lamps (ref. Parable of the 10 Virgins – Matthew 25:1-13) even if we do not know when the Day of the Lord will be. (1 Thessalonians 5:2-3).

Worth emphasizing is this point: “even if we do not know when the Day of the Lord will be.” (For us to avoid being drawn into the dangers of human speculation in popular culture.)



SAFE IN HIS FATHER'S ARMS

BY DR ALBERT ONG



Oliver, my grandson
Born 8th December, 2021.
He is a big baby,
Weighing 9 and half pounds.
Sleeping peacefully,
Secured in his father's arms.

We should be the same in 2022.
Safe and secure all around!
Nothing is better than as God's
daughters and sons.
Safe in our Father's arms.

On the 1st Christmas Day,
Joseph and Mary gave birth,
Baby Jesus, God's Son.
They came to an inn,
Inn keeper said, "No room, no
room," for your son.

For how on Christmas Day,
God's Son was born.
In a stable all forlorn
Besides horses, donkey and cow
dung.
Baby Jesus slept so quietly,
In His father's arms.

No money to buy a crib,
A manger was used instead,
To lay His sweet head.
No baby clothes no polo shirt,
A piece of cloth was cut as
swaddling clothes.

How the angels herald, "Christ
the Saviour is born!"
The shepherds and wisemen
came to adore the Child.
He was sleeping soundly
Safe and secure all around.

How can the child sleeps so well
while King Herod sought His life?
Joseph, Mary and baby Jesus fled
to Egypt till Herod died
They were safe in His Father's
arms.

The Lord bless and keeps you,
Healthy, strong and safe in 2022
As He kept us safe in 2021
May He always keep and
strengthen you from Covid-19,
Till the Lord comes!



D ECLARE HIS GOODNESS

Let them sacrifice thank offerings and tell of his works with songs of joy.

Psalms 107:22 (NIV)

God is good all the time. He has said that He will never leave us nor forsake us. He is a faithful God, full of compassion and slow to anger. His love is steadfast and His mercies endure forever. We see His wondrous works in nature around us. We see His hand of protection in our lives. We see His timely intervention in our times of need. We may have unwittingly brushed some of these occasions aside as “coincidences”. They are not! Even when we cast lots, the final result is determined by Him.

He deserves our praise. His works deserve to be made known from generation to generation. He is good to all His creation. He keeps the whole earth in order, providing the four seasons, day and night, sunlight and moonlight, rain and wind. Most of all, He gave us the Gospel, which is the power of salvation to those who believe, for Jews and Gentiles alike.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR PRACTICAL LIVING?

We must declare God's goodness to people around us so that they know that He is good, He is alive and He is relevant in our lives today and

forever. We can learn about God's goodness and experience it through different means. Study His Word. The Bible contains many accounts that demonstrate how God protects, saves, heals, delivers, leads, and fights for His people. Fill our hearts and minds with thoughts and memories of His goodness.

In our daily lives, He provides us with food, shelter, clothing, family, companionship and love within the body of Christ. We need to open our mouths to declare His goodness. How would people know unless we tell them? It is strange that while we are not shy to speak about how good a person or friend has been, we remain shy or perhaps somewhat ashamed to speak about how good our God is. Remember Jesus' caution: If we are ashamed of Him and His Word in front of others,

He will also be ashamed of us when He returns.

WHAT DOES GOD SAY?

Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows.

James 1:17 (NIV)

Let them give thanks to the Lord for his unfailing love and his wonderful deeds for mankind, for he satisfies the thirsty and fills the hungry with good things.
Psalms 107: 8,9 (NIV)

Whoever is ashamed of me and my words, the Son of Man will be ashamed of them when he comes in his glory and in the glory of the Father and of the holy angels.
Luke 9:26 (NIV)

REFLECT AND RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD

- Recall a specific situation in which God has been good to you. Prepare a concise script and use it as a conversational lead to share the gospel anytime, anywhere.
- What are the reasons that make you shy or somewhat reserved to declare God's goodness in public?
- Identify opportunities in your daily life activities where you can declare God's goodness to others, in conversation or in deed.



LET'S THINK AND TALK STRAIGHT

BY BRYAN TAY

*"A son honors his father, and a slave his master.
If I am a father, where is the honor due me?
If I am a master, where is the respect due me?" says the LORD Almighty.*
Malachi 1:6



Our God is a God of ABUNDANCE! He has promised to supply all our needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus. But does this just sound like a statement that simply blows past our ears, leaving no impression in our heart and spirit? Or at the back of our minds, are we somehow secretly thinking like the people who join long queues to buy TOTO or 4D tickets, hoping to strike the jackpot? And if we really do strike the jackpot, then perhaps that is a more real and tangible source of riches to meet our needs for a lifetime, compared to a statement of God's promise of provision according to His riches, which is harder to grasp.

ARE WE MOCKING GOD AND FOOLING OURSELVES?

God's Word is clear. We reap what we sow (Galatians 6:7). We strive and fight because we do not have. We do not have because we do not ask God. We ask and do not get because we ask for the wrong motives, to spend it on our own pleasures (James 4:3). God is not a spoil sport who is out to deny our lives of joy and fun. He knows what we need even before we open our

mouths. But you and I know that there are lines we should not cross, and we know it when we crossed the line. We know we deserve God's rejection of our requests on those occasions. The good news is: He is still our Father. There are far more riches and honour that He has prepared for us to enjoy than we can ever imagine, if we will align ourselves with His will.

God is asking:

Are you really serious about wanting to be called My child?

Do you really believe the promises I gave you?

If you mean it, try asking for things according to my will. Don't live like a pauper and dishonour My Name.

I welcome your comments, thoughts and sharing on this reflection.

Write to jccwinepress@gmail.com. We will publish your contribution in the next issue.



URBAN FARMING

Every Saturday @ Jurong Christian Church Level 1

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Contact peggytan@lutheran.org.sg or register your interest at jcc.sg/goshen



ALPHA TO OMEGA

BY SAMUEL CHONG



AΩ

Through this series, we hope to bring readers through the history of Christianity using the 26 letters of the English alphabet.

H

is for... HYMNS

"When they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives" – Matthew 26:30

HYMNS, HYMNIST, HYMNODY, HYMNALS: DO YOU KNOW THE DIFFERENCE?

A hymn is a religious song written for the purpose of adoration or prayer, and typically addressed to a deity or deities. The word "hymn" derives from the Greek "hymnos" which means "song of praise". A writer of hymns is known as a hymnist while the singing or composition of hymns is called hymnody. Collections of hymns are known as hymnals.

Hymns are not unique to Christianity and have existed for as long as religious worship existed. The Egyptians composed the Great Hymn to the Aten in the 14th century BC while the Indians composed the Rigveda in the 10th century BC.

JESUS SANG HYMNS TOO!

The Israelites composed many songs of praise,

such as the Song of Moses and Miriam (Exodus 15:1-21) and the Psalms. When the Angel Gabriel announced to Mary that she would bear the Messiah, she responded with a song, also known as the Magnificat (Luke 1:46-55). Jesus was noted to have sung a hymn with His disciples after the Last Supper (Matthew 26:30). Paul and Silas sang hymns while in prison (Acts 16:25) and in several epistles Paul advocated singing hymns as a communal habit to build up the Church and Body of Christ (e.g. Ephesians 5:19).

WHY SING HYMNS IN THE CHURCH?

The Early Church Fathers began applying the term "hymn" to Christian songs of praise and used it interchangeably with "psalm". Christian hymns were originally modelled on the Psalms and other poetic passages found in the Bible known as canticles, which include The Song of Isaiah (Isaiah 12:1-6). Nonetheless, there were also hymns that were not quotations from Scripture, such as "Te Deum" ("Thee, O God, we praise"), composed in 387 AD.

Hymns were often written for seasonal themes (e.g. Lent) or for holy days (e.g. Christmas). Hymns were also used to encourage reverence for the Bible or celebrate Christian Sacraments like Baptism. Some hymns were addressed to individual saints, particularly the Virgin Mary – a prevalent practice in Catholicism and Eastern Orthodoxy.

Hymns also reflected and reiterated theological positions. "The Church's One Foundation" was written in 1866 by Samuel John Stone (1839-1900) as a direct response to debates over biblical fallibility within the Church of England.



"Man Singing Hymn" by Arvid Lijelund, 1884.

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THE REFORMATION AND HYMNS

The Protestant Reformation resulted in two conflicting attitudes towards hymns:

Regulative principle of worship

Favoured by: Many Zwinglians and Calvinists

Principles: Only those practices and elements which were specifically commanded or modelled in Scripture could be permitted in worship services.

Any hymns that were not direct quotations from the Bible were hence banned, along with any form of instrumental musical accompaniment. Instead of hymns, biblical psalms were chanted to basic melodies.

Normative principle of worship

Favoured by: Luther

Principles: Practices and elements that were not prohibited by Scripture were permitted in worship, as long as they were agreeable to the peace and unity of the Church.

Luther was a prolific hymnist who believed that music and hymns were important means for the development of faith among lay people. He wrote over 40 hymns in German, covering occasions for the liturgical year, topics from the catechism, paraphrases of Psalms and adaptations from Latin hymns. "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God", published c.1529, is probably Luther's best-known work.

The first English hymn that was not directly quoted from Scripture was written by the English Calvinist minister Isaac Watts (1674-1748). Watts is credited with some 750 hymns including "When I Survey the Wondrous Cross", "Joy to the World" and "Our God, Our Help in Ages Past", giving him the

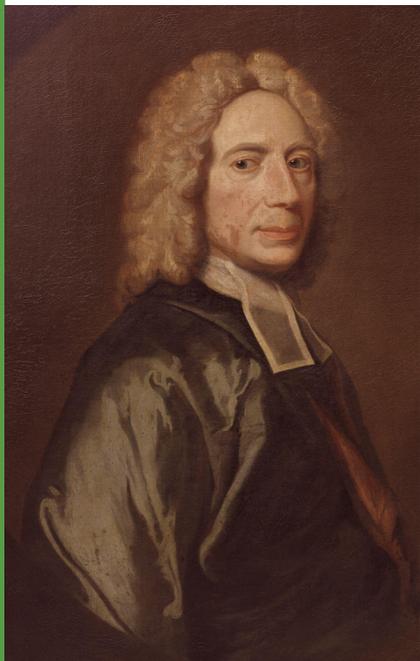
epithet of "The Father of English hymnody".

Building on Watts' legacy, Charles Wesley (1707-1788), younger brother of Methodism's founder John Wesley, wrote over 6,500 hymns. Wesley's hymns expressed one's personal feelings in the relationship with God, which was a new development in his era. Wesley's works include "And Can It Be", "Christ the Lord Is Risen Today", "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing", and "Lo! He Comes With Clouds Descending".

The Catholic Church also contributed to the collection of popular hymns. "Silent Night" and "Faith of Our Fathers" are examples of popular hymns sung in Protestant Churches but actually composed by Catholic priests. "Faith of Our Fathers" was written in 1849, in memory of the Catholic martyrs from the time of the establishment of the Church of England in 1534.



Organ of St Helen's Church in Bishopsgate, London. Image by Samuel Chong.



"Isaac Watts" by anonymous, date unknown.

MUSIC IN HYMNS

In ancient times, string instruments such as the harp and lyre accompanied psalms and hymns. David wrote several psalms with stringed instruments (e.g. Psalm 4). However, since these compositions lacked musical notation, the actual musical forms have been lost to history.

During the Middle Ages (5th to 15th centuries AD), a rich style of monophonic (i.e. without harmony), acapella singing known as the Gregorian chant developed in the Catholic Church. Later hymnody would introduce a

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four-part vocal harmony led by organ and choir. A typical traditional Protestant service would have hymns sung during the processional, communion, and recessional. The Doxology is also often sung after the tithes are brought up to the altar.

The marrying of music and lyrics required the use of the meter, which indicates the number of syllables for the lines in each stanza. This provided a means of identifying an appropriate hymn tune for singing a hymn's text. The meter is often denoted by a row of figures beside the name of the tune e.g. "87.87.87", meaning that each verse has six lines, and that the first line has eight syllables, the second has seven, the third line eight, etc.

As a hymn's text and music were often composed separately, there are hymns that can be sung to different melodies. "When I Survey The Wondrous Cross" is sung to the tune of "Rockingham" in British and Commonwealth hymnals, whereas it is paired with "Hamburg" in the United States; "Hamburg" is the version sung in JCC. A melody can also be paired with different hymns. "Aurelia" by Samuel Sebastian Wesley (Charles Wesley's grandson) is paired with "The Church's One Foundation" and "Another Year is Dawning".

GOSPEL MUSIC VS HYMNS

Charles Wesley's contributions, together with the Second Great Awakening (a Protestant religious revival in early 1800s America), led to the emergence of a new hymn style called gospel, used as testimonial music for revivals, camp meetings, and evangelistic crusades. Gospel songs were propagated by hymnists like the illustrious Fanny J. Crosby (1820-1915), who wrote over 8,000 hymns and gospel songs including "Blessed Assurance", "To God Be The Glory", and "Near the Cross".

The style of gospel is distinct from hymns, although the two are usually lumped together as "hymns" by congregations today. Gospel songs generally include a refrain/chorus and usually have a faster tempo than hymns. An example of the distinction is "Amazing Grace" – a hymn without refrain, and "How Great Thou Art" – a gospel song with a refrain.



Lyres are stringed instruments used in David's era to compose songs.

HYMNS IN WORSHIP TODAY

Hymns are collected and published within hymnals, either on a denominational basis (e.g. Evangelical Lutheran Worship, used by the ELCA) or inter-denominational basis. The "Red Hymnal" that JCC English uses (formally titled The Hymnal for Worship & Celebration) is an interdenominational hymnbook published in 1986, containing hymns and gospel songs from across time, denominations, and countries.

Many churches today pair contemporary worship music with hymns, utilising guitars and drum kits in styles associated with the popular music of the day. This has given rise to conflict between older

and younger congregants. In many Evangelical churches, traditional songs are classified as hymns while more contemporary worship songs are not considered hymns. The reason for this distinction is not clear and is a matter of debate even within a single congregation. Some suggest that the distinction is due to the radical shift of style and devotional thinking that began with the Jesus movement and Jesus music of the late 1960s and early 1970s.

Nonetheless, traditional hymns have seen a revival in recent years. Modern hymn writers have reset old lyrics to new melodies, added stanzas and refrains to existing hymns (e.g. Christ Tomlin's "Amazing Grace (My Chains are Gone)"), or written new songs in a hymn-like fashion (e.g.

Stuart Townend’s “How Deep The Father’s Love For Us”).

HYMNS IN CHURCH HISTORY

God’s people have worshipped Him using hymns throughout history. Hymns were used as a tool to teach the Scriptures to a largely illiterate population. Hymns also reflected the theological

issues of the day. God demands our worship and gave us a mouth to praise Him with. Music too is a gift from God which aids us in worship. As Paul writes, let us teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in our hearts (Colossians 3:16).

YE OLDE HYMNAL ENGLISH GUIDE

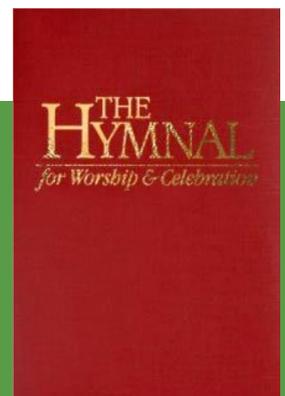
WORD	TRANSLATION	WHEN TO USE	EXAMPLE
Thou	You (singular)	When “you” is the <u>subject</u> of the sentence.	Be Thou my vision, O Lord of my heart
Thee	You (singular)	When “you” is the <u>object</u> of the sentence	Then sings my soul, my Saviour God to Thee
Thine	Your/Yours (singular)	Possessive form of you. Used when the next word is a vowel/ vowel sound	I am Thine O Lord, I have heard Thy voice, And it told Thy love to me
Thy	Your (singular)	Possessive form of you. Used when the next word is <u>not</u> a vowel/ vowel sound	Great is Thy faithfulness! Great is Thy faithfulness!
Ye	You (plural)	Plural form of “you” when addressing a group of people	O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant!
’Tis	It is (contraction)	To condense “it is” to one syllable for better rhythm	’Tis so sweet to trust in Jesus, And to take Him at His word

All information and images taken from the respective Wikipedia pages unless otherwise stated.



Let’s see what you remember!

Click on the hymn book to access the short quiz >>



For further reading, do check out the following Wikipedia articles:

[Martin Luther \(see "hymnodist" section\)](#)

[List of hymns by Martin Luther](#)

[Isaac Watts](#)

[Hymns](#)

[Charles Wesley](#)

[Fanny J Crosby](#)



THE JOY OF THE LORD IS MY STRENGTH

BY TONY, SUSAN, HANNAH, GABRIEL & PATRICK



Our dear Rev Andrew (former pastor at JCC and now pastoring QLC) needs no reminder of this as he constantly exudes an air of optimism in the Lord despite his recent kidney surgery due to cancer.

We were delighted to see him cheerful in recuperation, with ongoing therapy, when we visited him at home. We had a warm fellowship time and heartfelt prayers for one another. Apart from encouraging him on his recovery journey, we were also encouraged by his positive spirit with his devoted wife by his side as he exhorted us with God's Word:

To love and obey God. To live out the Christ-like life. Loving God and loving people with a forgiving spirit. Expressing our faith, love and hope in our

obedience to the Great Commission to make disciples of all nations.

Before seeing Rev Andrew in person, we were a little apprehensive about how he was faring post-surgery. However, despite his physical ailment, he has not lost his humorous personality which loosened us up for the great fellowship time.

We give thanks to God for healing Rev Andrew, and we wish him Godspeed in his onward journey to full recovery.



HAPPENINGS IN MY LIFE IN 2021 (PART 1)

BY BORIS KHOO



As I look back at my life in the year 2021, I could use two phrases to define it: "A rough emotive ride" and "An amazing experience of God's goodness."

A ROUGH EMOTIVE RIDE

I started the year anticipating a smooth sailing, working comfortably from home with quite manageable tasks. I got along well with friends and was preparing to enter into a relationship with someone.

Then it happened. I was deployed to Changi prison to support some maintenance work. On my first day there, it already dawned on me that I had entered the wrong place for work. Firstly, the job scope was vastly different. Secondly, it was so far from home and I had to spend a lot more travelling time. Thirdly, the environment was depressing to work in with the extremely strict rules. I became very discouraged and consumed by negative feelings.

continued on the next page

I was not able to focus on serving in my church ministries. I felt my freedom being robbed by the long hours of work and travel. I became very tired physically and emotionally. All this led me to withdraw into myself. Consequently, I lost many friends and my chance to get into a relationship.

I asked God many questions. Why would people treat me badly? Why did I deserve to be in such an environment having to feel constricted by all the strict rules? Why did I have to travel so far daily? Every day was stressful. It was difficult communicating with colleagues and very challenging to serve my clients. Craving for some respite to talk to someone else outside of the prison, I would be frustrated to realise my phone and smartwatch missing as they had been surrendered before entering the place. It was a daily struggle with disappointments, and with impatience to end work and go home.

In essence, I was painfully sore emotionally. I was gobsmacked that an expected smooth sailing in the new year had turned into an agonizing ordeal.

AN AMAZING EXPERIENCE OF GOD'S GOODNESS

Despite my struggles and doubts, God did not give up on me. He used different ways to encourage me.

Chapel time:

On Fridays after work, I would be drawn to the chapel. The chapel was dark as I chose not to turn on the lights. The surrounding calmness was the

right atmosphere for me to just sit down and talk to God. I started off very distracted by my problems and not able to hear what God wanted to tell me. Nevertheless, I was drawn to the chapel week after week. One night, a Bible verse came into my heart. It says, *"Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you."* (1 Peter 5:7).

Soon, I realised that my problems were distracting me from listening to God. So, I decided to surrender all my issues to God. My weekly time in the chapel soon became like a regular counselling session, with God as my counsellor. God cares for me. Pouring out my heart to Him unloaded a lot of my burden and I felt greatly comforted.

Song and Cards:

The song 'Goodness of God' from Bethel Music was played 8 times randomly on a YouTube channel that I listened to in one of the weeks and 16 times over 3 weeks when I was travelling. During the 7th time, I found myself tearing up in the train as the bridge of the song spoke to me:

*"Your goodness is running after
It's running after me
Your goodness is running after
It's running after me
With my life laid down, I'm surrendered now
I give you everything
Your goodness is running after
It's running after me"*

Sometimes after work, I would look at a card named 'Identity of Christ' inside my wallet. In the little card, there are the 20 Cans of Success from the book 'Victory over the Darkness' by Neil Anderson which reminded me that I can get through what I am facing because God says I can. On the other side of the card, there are Bible verses grouped under three categories serving as reminders to me that *"I am Accepted," "I am Secure" and "I am Significant"* - in Christ.

(To be continued)





UNANSWERED QUESTIONS - ANSWERED!

THANKSGIVING NIGHT TESTIMONY (31 DEC 2021) BY FONG S. L.

On this very special night. I'm sharing with you the goodness of our God. Praise the Lord, Hallelujah!

About 8 years ago, in 2013, life seemed to be OK. Suddenly, tragedy struck my family; my elder son passed away. My wife and I were devastated. After the funeral, after the emotional turmoil had settled a bit, I was left dealing with many unanswered questions. I asked God, "Why did you allow good people to die and why did you allow bad people to die as well?"

God, why everybody dies? Finally, a big question in everyone's mind, why, God, why did you allow September 11th? Are you not a God who is full of mercy?

With my questions, I was moved towards learning more about God. Somehow, the thought about a merciful God still occupied my mind.

One day, my wife, Loh Shan, started believing in Jesus Christ. So, we came to this church, JCC, with our youngest boy in tow. On Sundays, we listened to the sermons and sang hymns. Time healed the pain in our heart.

I moved on to join the Jurong West CG. JWCG leader, sisters and brothers encouraged me. At meetings, we discuss questions about the sermons of the previous week. We care for each other. We care about our spiritual well-being.

Our love for one another extended to include the community in Taman Jurong and people in Singapore. Of course, we pray for the world as well.

Spiritually I started with drinking milk and then progressed to trying some solid food.

Many of my unanswered questions became answered when I looked in the Bible and learnt more about Jesus Christ. Knowing God doesn't mean we will understand all things fully. Knowing God also comes with more challenges to make right choices in life, including difficult choices.

But through it all, I have found peace. Joy and gladness follow me because I know that we can find comfort in God only if we let Him in. Before 2013, I was the man with a lot of sinful nature. Just like most people I knew, I coveted money, I coveted fame and naturally I was attracted to 4D, TOTO and the Big Sweep. Fortunately, knowing God, I realised that my treasure is in heaven. Since then, no more queuing up for lotteries, thus saving me a lot of precious time.

Knowing God has transformed me in another way. Previously I got angry easily. Whenever someone cut into my lane, whether cycling or on a motorcycle or in his Mercedes-Benz, I would follow and try to take revenge, cutting back in sharper angles at higher speed. But now, I have greater patience and empathy for the mistakes of others.

Knowing God has healed emotions over the loss of my elder son. I think it helps my wife and my younger son too. So, as the head of my family and as one who has experienced Christ in my life, I urge you to try knowing God. It is not a one-day overnight thing that you will find positive progress in dealing with your unanswered questions, but you will certainly be blessed in your life.



ENDGAME OR NEW BUSINESS MODEL?

BY MARTIN CHEAH

The Multi-Media Ministry team has dwindled by THANOS (Thankless Harried Anxious Need Of Stories) with a click of his fingers as the new year opened with several members departed.

We will miss the following photographers: Isaac, Clifford, Henry, Freddie, Edwin and Jian Jing. They had no photo-taking opportunities during the last two years and probably felt it was time to move on.

Some of our great team members were involved in several ministries. Understandably, they felt the strain of spreading their energy thin. They decided to rejig their stewardship plans for 2022. We will miss Jonathan, Jinfay, Joyce and June. We will also miss our cartoonist, Judy, who is taking a long break beginning this year.

They have all been doing great in the MMM and will be missed. They have our warm wishes in their ministries, and we still look forward to opportunities of collaboration in the Lord's service.

I appreciate that Yiwon remains in the team because she is very much a talent we need to do the layout of The WinePRESS.

I am thankful to some writers who have committed

to submitting articles through 2022 although they have not indicated on the Stewardship Form to officially join the MMM.

With the change in the MMM team composition, we continue to keep faith in God's guidance, with our new "Business Model" supported by ad hoc contributors. Do you want to join the new Business Model as an ad hoc writer? You can commit to write relevant Christian-themed articles once every quarter (for example) within your ability to manage. The articles can be just one or two pages.

Writing can be a great way to reduce stress and anxiety, and help you communicate and encourage readers during the pandemic where the The WinePRESS can reach out to where you cannot physically go.





THE GOOD SAMARITAN

BY MARTIN CHEAH

All of us have heard the story of the good Samaritan from Luke 10:25-37. Even non-Christians have heard this story. So, there is no need to re-tell the story here. However, the application of the principles in this parable is seriously very difficult:

“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind”; and, ‘Love your neighbour as yourself.’”

“You have answered correctly,” Jesus replied. “Do this and you will live.”

How many of us can actually follow this law of love which Jesus says will give us life, if we do it?

Some of us will say there are no poor in Singapore. Who are they, you may ask? In our busyness, we may miss noticing the poor in front of us. They could be the tissue seller, the cardboard collector or the homeless who sleep on a park bench or void deck.

So, how can we practically be a good Samaritan in Singapore, in JCC?

Doing charity is not simply by giving handouts which may be more problematic than helpful. There are scammers or pretenders who appear as beggarly. Then there are those who collect donations to feed their smoking, drinking or gambling habits. With a loving heart, we want to be prudent in executing our help in beneficial ways.

For individual good Samaritans, deciding how to

help can be daunting as the range of assistance types needed is usually beyond one’s personal capabilities. One solution to the difficulty is in the idea of TEAM or NETWORK, which means that we don’t work alone.

One of our Goshen initiatives is to reach out to the vulnerable individuals in community (VIC Group), the poor and weak in our midst. We do so, plugged into the VIC Network which includes the MSF and other volunteer organisations.

Proverbs 19:17 - “Whoever is kind to the poor lends to the LORD, and he will reward them for what they have done.”

We have people in JCC with compassionate hearts but are not sure how to be meaningful and effective in their individual capacities.

Thankfully, as a good Samaritan, you don’t have to be alone. Join our JCC GOSHEN TEAM of volunteers who go out into the community seeking to help the vulnerable.

1 John 3:17 poses this question: *“if anyone has material possessions and sees a brother or sister in need but has no pity on them, how can the love of God be in that person?”*

The challenge is for us to apply our Christian love in practical everyday-life contexts which we frequently encounter. Each of us cannot do much, but the humble bits we contribute into a TEAM means a lot.



EPIPHANY QUIZ

- Epiphany commemorates:
 - The manifestation of Christ to humanity as represented by the Magi (Mt 2:1-12)
 - The baptism of Jesus by John the Baptist in the River Jordan (Mt 3:13-17)
 - The first miracle of Jesus, turning water into wine at a wedding (Jn 2:1-11)
 - All the above
- The Lutheran Church celebrates Epiphany on:
 - December 25
 - December 26
 - January 6
 - January 19
- Epiphany is one of the three principal festival days of the Christian Church. The other two are:
 - Advent and Lent
 - Good Friday and Easter
 - Christmas and Easter
 - Easter and Reformation Day
- “Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came _____ men from the east to Jerusalem...” (Mt 2:1 KJV)
 - three
 - old
 - eminent
 - wise
- Which of the following does not refer to Epiphany?
 - Three Kings’ Day (regarding the Magi)
 - Theophany (“manifestation of God”)
 - Theogony (account of divine origin)
 - Twelfth Day after Christmas
- The gifts that the Magi brought had the following significance:
 - Gold – signifying royalty
 - Frankincense (an incense) – signifying priesthood
 - Myrrh (embalming oil) – signifying death and resurrection
 - All the above
- In which Gospel/s do we read about the visit of the Magi?
 - Matthew
 - Mark
 - Luke
 - All the above
- Regarding Epiphany as a season, which of the following is incorrect?
 - The last Sunday of Epiphany falls on Feb 27, 2022 (Transfiguration Sunday).
 - The last day of Epiphany is Mar 1, 2022 (day before Ash Wednesday).
 - The number of days in the season is fixed from year to year.
 - It focuses our attention on the church mission to show Jesus as the Messiah who came to seek and save the lost.