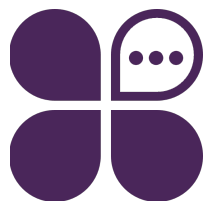


May 2022



THE WINEPRESS

O taste and see that God is good



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PRAYER FOCUS FOR JUNE

NEW COUNCILMEN

Pray that God will provide wisdom and guidance to our newly elected councilmen as they undertake the heavy responsibility of shepherding the flock in JCC.

Proverbs 11:25 says, "Whoever brings blessing will be enriched, and one who waters will himself be watered."

REVIVED OUTREACH SPIRIT

Pray that more JCCians will find encouragement from God's Word to be a blessing to the community by being involved in at least one activity of the Goshen Initiatives in the second half of this year (June – December 2022).

Matthew 28:19-20 commands, "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

DISCIPLESHIP AND MENTORING

Pray for more JCCians to be filled with boldness to step out of their comfort zones and join JC23 as disciple-makers as God has called them to be, so that the body of Christ may grow strong.

"The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few." (Mt 9:37b)

PRAY FOR LABOURERS

May JCCians be empowered by the Holy Spirit to serve one another and reach out to the community with the Good News.

"Pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest" (Mt 9:38).



Befrienders of Cyclists

Sundays 3-4pm

assist with bicycle care and making friends / sharing Christ with visitors



Urban Farming

Saturdays

curating church's herb garden and making friends / sharing Christ with other green fingers



Manna Bridge

Fridays 7.30pm on

distributing bread and making friendships / sharing Christ with needy residents



KidsREAD Programme

Saturdays 1-2pm

storytellers trained by NLB to conduct a 6-month reading programme with children



Vulnerable in Community

Weekly/bi-weekly

partnering with MSF to provide social / spiritual support for the less privileged in community



Support for Single Parents

Weekly/bi-weekly

partnering with Fei Yue to provide social / spiritual support for lone-parent families



WHEN BURDENS ARE HEAVY, WAIT FOR THE LORD!

BY REV ANTHONY LOH

With the conclusion of our AGM 2022, we are entering the 2nd half of 2022. We thank God for all the councilmen God has called into His service. Obviously, God's broader call is for all JCCians to rally behind the church leaders to chart a forward course as we seek to continue growing the congregation's spiritual life.

After two years of "semi-hibernating" due to Covid-19 constraints, we are glad that the pandemic restrictions are gradually being loosened. We are glad to see JCCians remaining steadfast in their faith as they flow back into the church with their physical attendance for worship services and other activities.

With our energies revived to come into the Lord's presence, let us allow Him to take us higher in soaring with Him as we look to the promise in Isa 40:31 (ESV):

"but they who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint."

Isa 40:31 is an appropriate encouragement for us that faith is our source of strength to overcome whatever challenges we face. We have waited upon the Lord for two pandemic years, and now we are seeing some light.

The Hebrew word for "wait" in the verse quoted is *qavah* (pronounced kaw-vaw') (Strong's #6960) which can mean "to bind together (perhaps by twisting)."

Those who wait for the LORD are in a sense stoically binding themselves to God's will, confidently expecting His plan to produce the best possible results.

Waiting for the LORD does not mean simply idling while watching the time until God delivers.

One definition of the English word "wait" is "to remain in readiness to render service." For example, waiters wait on tables in readiness to serve food or drink to the customers. Now, observe that the waiter does three things in a restaurant:

- Firstly, he prepares to serve you.
- Secondly, he seeks your will.
- Thirdly, he executes your will to your satisfaction.

The following are the results of waiting for God as we prepare ourselves to serve Him, seek His will and do His will to His satisfaction:

I. RENEWAL OF STRENGTH

We will be renewed spiritually, physically and mentally, growing stronger and stronger in faith, patience and fortitude.

continued on the next page

II. SOARING ABOVE STORMS (CHALLENGES)

The Eagle does more than fly amid the storm; it flies on top of the turbulent winds, out of the reach of all danger. So, like the eagle, we will rise above the challenges we encounter.

III. ABILITY TO FLY CONFIDENTLY AND TO SEE CLEARLY

Flying at its height, unmolested by the winds that whoosh by below it, the eagle enjoys a kind of peace that the yard birds of the church do not. The yard birds are those birds without strong wings to fly high.

Those who wait for the Lord are those with strong faith, with strong wings like the eagle, able to mount up high into the air confidently and clearly see the earthly issues with a proper perspective. The stronger one's faith, the higher one can fly confidently, the larger the

perspective and the smaller the earthly things become.

How then do we mount up with wings like eagles? We can do so with all of these in our spiritual life: Pray without ceasing (1 Thess 5:17), Meditate on the Word regularly (Joshua 1:8), Meet often for Godly fellowship (1 John 1:7).

The trials of life often drain us of vitality and cause us to faint. But God has promised that if we wait for Him, He will renew our strength whereby we shall run but not be weary; shall walk and not faint.

According to the saying of Paul:

"We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed." (2 Cor 4:8-9)



DAY OF PENTECOST

BY JOHN LEE

This year, the Day of Pentecost is observed on June 5, the 7th Sunday after Easter. To understand more, let us go through some relevant definitions.

DEFINITIONS

1. Passover (Exodus 12:12-13) – The event of the firstborn of Israel being passed over by God when He unleashed the 10th plague upon Egypt.
2. Passover (Exodus 12:14) – The annual Jewish festival commemorating the Passover (above definition).
3. Pentecost – Also called "Festival/Feast of

Weeks" (Ex 34:22), it was a harvest festival (Ex 23:16) celebrated on the 50th day after Passover.

4. Day of Pentecost (Acts 2) – For Christians, this points to the first Jewish Pentecost day after Christ's resurrection and ascension to heaven.

IMPORTANCE OF THE DAY OF PENTECOST

1) It reminds us that Jesus kept His promise to send the Holy Spirit:

When Jesus predicted His death a second time, His disciples were filled with grief. (Mt 17:22-33)

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No, Jesus did not abandon His disciples. He had promised to give His disciples the Holy Spirit, not leaving them as orphans. (John 14:16-18)

When the Holy Spirit came at Pentecost (Acts 2:1-13), the spectators were amazed and perplexed at the wonders before their eyes.



The Holy Spirit transformed the disciples from fearful and despondent wrecks into passionate preachers of the Gospel. Peter, the weakling in faith who denied Jesus three times following the latter's arrest, was emboldened to speak with unequivocal missionary zeal. (Acts 2:14-36)

"They were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?" (Acts 2:37)

"Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day." (Acts 2:41)

2) It marks the birth of the Church:

The Day of Pentecost marks the beginning of the age of the Church.

The Holy Spirit empowered the disciples to preach the Gospel. The response to Peter's sermon was fantastic:

Starting from that day, the fellowship of believers developed strongly, and the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved. (Acts 2:42-47)

3) It underscores the power of the Holy Spirit:

The power of the Holy Spirit is well attested to in the Bible. He leads His people in many ways to serve His purposes:

- He teaches (John 14:26), guides us (John 16:13) and intercedes for us. (Rom 8:26)
- He sends forth His servants (Acts 13:4),

including appointing shepherds of the church. (Acts 20:28)

- He invigorates our spiritual life. (John 6:63)
- He speaks through us, for our benefits (Mk 13:11); or to us, to set people apart for His work (Acts 13:2)

Regarding the last example above, it is interesting to note how, on the Day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit spoke through His disciples by bestowing on them the extraordinary ability to speak in other tongues* (Acts 2:4) As a result, the crowd was utterly amazed. (Acts 2:7-11)

[**"Or languages; also in verse 11" - Ref. footnote in NIV*]

BEING FILLED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT

The Holy Spirit is God, and there is only one Holy Spirit.

One should not make comparisons to imply that some can be more filled; and others, less filled; as if the Spirit can be contemplated in portions or quantitative measures.

In Acts 2:4, the disciples were "filled with the Holy Spirit." The miraculous uplifting of their witness and service in preaching the Gospel bore testimony of the filling, when the Spirit generously manifested His great power in serving His purpose.

RECEIVE THE HOLY SPIRIT, AND BE FILLED

Acts 2:38 (GNB) tells how a person can receive the Holy Spirit:

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“Each one of you must turn away from your sins and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ, so that your sins will be forgiven; and you will receive God’s gift, the Holy Spirit.”

Stephen, a man full of the Holy Spirit, performed great wonders and signs among the people. (Acts 6:5, 8) The Spirit gave him great wisdom when he spoke, whereby his opponents could not stand against him. (Acts 2:10)

Evidently, being filled with the Spirit can be manifested differently among Christians. When we see signs of fellow Christians being filled with the Spirit, empowered, reflecting God’s glory, we feel amazed. It does not necessarily mean that their witness and service testify in all the same ways as Stephen (with the wisdom for debates), or as the disciples on the Day of Pentecost. None

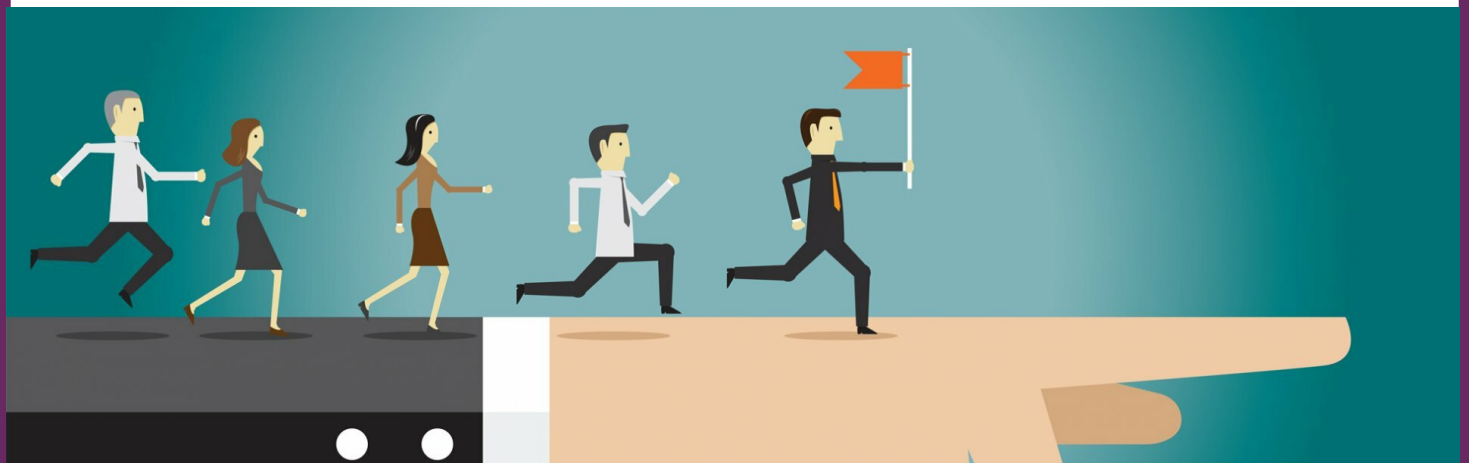
of them may show the ability to speak in other tongues (languages) like French or German that they are not normally able.

CONCLUSION

The Spirit came powerfully upon Samson to bless him with extraordinary strength. (Judg 14:6) Micah was filled with the Spirit to declare to Jacob his transgression, to Israel his sin. (Mic 3:8)

Scripture is replete with examples of how God’s people filled with the Spirit are blessed with exceptional and different forms of empowerment.

The power of the Holy Spirit is to be revered by all Christians. On the Day of Pentecost, we are reminded that Jesus has not left us when He ascended to heaven. He is with us always in the Person of the Holy Spirit.



LEADERSHIP VS. SERVANTHOOD

BY JOHN LEE

DON'T THINK OF BEING A LEADER

It seems not always positive to think of being a leader.

An American pastor said: “The church doesn’t need more people who think they’re leaders. It needs more people who know they’re servants.”

The late Steve Jobs, founder of Apple Inc, also vocalized from his experience: “If you want to make everyone happy, don’t be a leader.”

DON'T THINK OF BEING A SERVANT

The Greek word for “servant” is *diakonos*, which ordinarily means waiting at tables.

The Greek philosopher Plato posed this question, “How can a man be happy when he has to serve someone?”

Not surprisingly, people ordinarily have the notion that servanthood is debasing and undignified. Plato’s opinion represents the way of the world that most people choose to adopt.

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TREACHERY OF WORDS

The treachery of words in communicating ideas is common knowledge. For example, you may feel ok to join “a gang of gardeners” and not “a youth gang”. Also, you may encourage your children to go to the library (where books are borrowed) but not The Library (a bar where drinks are served.)

Let us evaluate the proper connotations of leadership and servanthood for Christians.

A LEADER IS A SERVANT

The office of deacon is a serving position. (1 Tim 3:10) Even Paul, an apostle, calls himself a servant of Christ Jesus (Rom 1:1), of the gospel (Eph 3:7) and of the church (2 Cor 4:5).

The title “leader” gives an idea of the gift that the person is equipped according to his calling to be an overseer in some areas of ministry.

The gifts he gave were that some would be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until all of us come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to maturity, to the measure of the full stature of Christ.” (Eph 4:11-13 NRSV)

When a servant of God thinks as a leader, he recognizes and seeks to do well in his area of overseer-responsibilities. He will not boast beyond measure, but within the limits of the sphere which God appointed him. (2 Cor 10:13)

2 Tim 2:24 asserts:

“And the Lord’s servant must not be quarrelsome but must be kind to everyone, able to teach, not resentful.”

The mention of the servant’s ability to teach suggests that the word “servant” here applies to one serving the Lord in some leadership capacity as a teacher (communicator of truth).

WHAT DID JESUS SAY?

Jesus taught His disciples the very concept of



leadership with the spirit of servanthood.

Luke 6:40 says, “The student is not above the teacher, but everyone who is fully trained will be like their teacher.”

The disciples’ coveting of greatness jeopardized their fellowship with one another and their following of Jesus. Therefore, Jesus had to put them in their place.

The term “servant leadership” may well express the idea of being a leader with the heart of a servant, unlike the rulers who lord it over their subjects. (Mt 20:25-26)

JUST A SERVANT

Some Christians see themselves as “just servants”. Without the prominence of a leadership badge, whether they are actually serving as leaders in some sphere as God has appointed them, they are still “equipped for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up.” (Eph 4:12)

The title “servant” gives an idea of the Christian using whatever gift he has received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God’s grace in its various forms. (1 Pet 4:10)

Sitting down, Jesus called the Twelve and said, “Anyone who wants to be first must be the very last, and the servant of all.” (Mk 9:35)

Might it also be said that one who is “just a

servant” is not above his servant-leader, but everyone can still aspire to be like a servant-leader?

CONCLUSION

Christians are leaders not because they must, but because they are willing as God wants them to be; and they are eager to serve. (1 Pet 5:2)

People who think they are leaders will be cognizant of the gifts they are equipped for the works of service (Eph 4:11-12) with the knowledge that they are servants of the Lord, so

that they faithfully discharge their responsibilities.

People who think they are servants should still maintain their spiritual fervour, never lacking in zeal in serving the Lord. (Rom 12:11).

Servanthood is central to both “leader” and “servant” in their obedience to God.

D. L. Moody said, “The measure of a man is not how many servants he has, but how many men he serves.”

What is your view?



GOD LETS YOU MAKE AMENDS IN FULL

BY BRYAN TAY

On 1 May, Reverend Anthony preached a sermon about how Jesus restored his trust and confidence in Peter even though Peter had denied Him three times. It was an interesting insight that Jesus chose a “fireplace” to offer a closure to Peter’s act of betrayal. When the disciples were hauling in the big catch of 153 fish (read John 21:1-17), Jesus was on land to start a **fire of burning coals** with fish on it and some bread, serving breakfast to Peter and the rest of the disciples. Remember that it was at the “**fireplace**” in the middle of the courtyard of the high priest’s house that Peter thrice denied that he knew Jesus.

What Jesus did reminded me of the Chinese proverb: “*Pick yourself up from the same spot where you fell.*” To overcome your guilt and fear, you must face the situation squarely. It must have been painful for Peter to be reminded of his wrongdoing when he saw the “fireplace”. Imagine the memory flashbacks of his “unholy” utterance

of denying Jesus flooding his poor mind again!

But I note that Jesus’ act of kindness and grace towards Peter did not stop there. After they had eaten, Jesus asked Peter three times: “Do you love Me?” And three times, Peter answered “Lord, you know that I love You.”

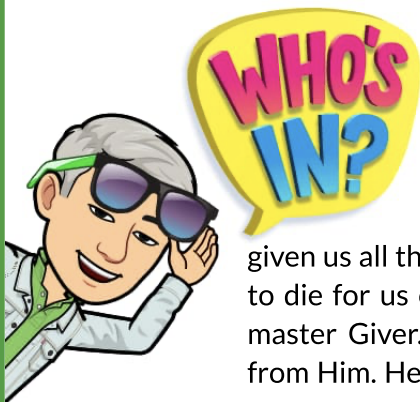
Jesus knew the guilt and burden that Peter could have borne since that fateful day when he denied Him three times. Now, Jesus is giving Peter the chance to make amends and reaffirm his love for Jesus three times by saying “Lord, I love You.” With Peter’s verbal response to each repeated question, it feels like a complete cancellation of Peter’s guilt and sin: Three Declarations to cancel out Three Denials.

I am sure Peter must have felt so relieved and light-hearted after that conversation with Jesus. He is finally set free to serve Jesus with joy! God is gracious. He sees our remorse and will give us the opportunity to make amends. In Full. Always.



GIVE CHEERFULLY TO GOD

"Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously." Galatians 9:6 (NIV)



God does not need our money. Neither does He desire our loose change. He owns cattle on a thousand hills. He has given us all things, even His own Son to die for us on the cross. He is the master Giver. All good things come from Him. He is the same yesterday,

today and forever. God has instituted the giving of tithes and offerings to help us show our gratitude to Him and remind us of our continual dependence on Him. For without Him, we have nothing and can do nothing.

When we give our tithes, do not think that we have only 90% left of what we have earned. We should be thanking God that He has entrusted us with 90% of what does not really belong to us. We are merely His stewards. He has placed resources in our hands to accomplish His will for our lives and to support His Kingdom work. Give to Him with a cheerful heart, not grudgingly.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN IN PRACTICAL LIVING?

It is natural and easy for us to think that we have worked hard to earn our keep. As such, we want to use our earnings to provide the best things for our family and ourselves. If we are a salaried worker, do we argue with God whether we should give a

What does God say about this?

Then Jesus said to them, "Give back to Caesar what is Caesar's and to God what is God's." And they were amazed at him.

- Mark 12:17 (NIV)

Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this," says the LORD Almighty, "and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that there will not be room enough to store it.

- Malachi 3:10 (NIV)

In everything I did, I showed you that by this kind of hard work we must help the weak, remembering the words the Lord Jesus himself said: 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'

- Acts 20:25 (NIV)

tenth of our gross salary or take-home pay? If we own a business, do we debate in our hearts whether we should give a tenth of our pre-tax or post-tax profits to God? These are wrong questions to engage in. Such thoughts hurt God and grieve the Holy Spirit.

What are the reasons that cause us to even think

those thoughts? A man's wants are never satisfied. The devil will have us always believe that we do not have enough yet, that we should give to God only out of our abundance, not pain or poverty. If we believe that God works all things for good in our lives according to His good timing and that every good thing comes from Him, should we not be thankful and offer the best and first fruits of what He has blessed us with? Stop reasoning and start giving. And perhaps not just tithes and offerings. How about tithing and

offering our time to serve Him and His people? God loves a cheerful giver.

REFLECT AND RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD

1. What are you giving to God: your first fruits or your crumbs? Why?
2. To enjoy God's promised blessings, what adjustments do you need to make in your giving to God? You might need to consider your spending habits too.
3. Determine to set aside an amount in your heart and give cheerfully to God.

LET'S THINK & 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*



As a Christian, we are generally expected to worship God as a congregation on Sundays, attend prayer meetings regularly, join a Cell Group and serve in whatever ways that we are able to. These are all legitimate and reasonable expectations. They also serve as essential "fertilisers and catalysts" to fuel and sustain our spiritual growth. Nobody will argue with that. But when we do not "do" all these and suspect that others will frown at us and judge our spiritual condition by our irregular/non-attendance, that's when our minds "go up in arms" to defend and justify our situation. We think: **"Who are they to judge me? Only God knows my heart."**

Should I feel guilty for not attending Sunday worship, prayer meetings and not joining a Cell Group?

That's the **wrong** question to ask. The **correct** question should be: **"Am I doing what I know is right to do? Have I even made an effort to understand why I am not obeying God's command to ...?"** God's Word says: **"Don't you know that when you offer yourselves to someone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one you obey—whether you are slaves to sin, which leads to death, or to obedience, which leads to righteousness?"** – Romans 6:16 (NIV)

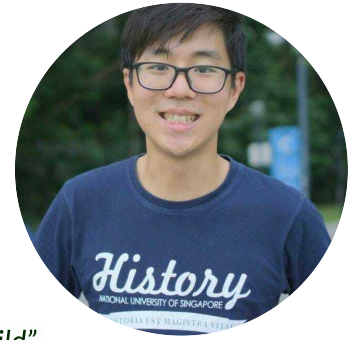
GOD IS ASKING

- To what/whom are you offering yourself as a slave? Sin or Obedience?
- Have you started asking yourself why you are not doing what is right in God's sight?

I welcome your comments, thoughts and sharing on this reflection. Write to jccwinepress@gmail.com and we'll publish your contribution in the next issue.

ΑΩ ALPHA TO THE OMEGA

BY SAMUEL CHONG

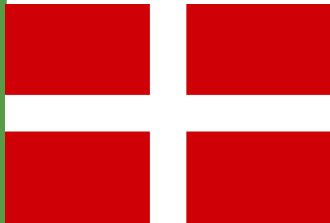


K is for KNIGHTS HOSPITALLER

"A time to kill and a time to heal, a time to tear down and a time to build"
(Ecclesiastes 3:3)

WHO WERE THE KNIGHTS HOSPITALLER?

The Knights Hospitaller (full name: The Order of Knights of the Hospital of Saint John of Jerusalem) was a medieval and early-modern Catholic military order headquartered in various places including Jerusalem, Malta, and Saint Petersburg. Several organisations continue the Hospitaller tradition today, such as the Most Venerable Order of Saint John, which oversees the international St John Ambulance organization.



Flag of the Order of St John, Wikimedia Commons

ORIGINS: THE CRUSADES

The Hospitallers were formed during the First Crusade (1096-1099), which aimed to bring the Holy Land (i.e. Palestine) back under Christian control. This was ostensibly in response to Christian pilgrims' reports of harassment by Muslim Caliphates over the years, but was more likely motivated by European anxieties stemming from the rise of Islam and the decline of the Byzantine Empire. The Crusaders successfully captured Jerusalem and established the Kingdom of Jerusalem (a Roman Catholic realm under Crusader control).

About five centuries earlier, Pope Gregory I had commissioned the building of a hospital in Jerusalem to serve Christian pilgrims in the Holy

Land. The hospital was destroyed by the Muslims but subsequently rebuilt in 1023 and dedicated to John the Baptist. After the capture of Jerusalem, several Crusaders formed a religious order to support the hospital. It was headed by Gerard de Martignes, a lay brother of the Benedictine Order who had been rector of the hospital since 1080. These Crusaders eventually started providing Christian pilgrims with an armed escort.

The Order received Papal recognition as a military religious order in 1113, charged with the care and defence of the Holy Land. This marked the formation of The Order of Saint John of Jerusalem, better known as the Knights Hospitaller, with Gerard as its founder and Grand Master.

As the Hospitallers participated in campaigns against the Muslims, its reputation as a formidable military force grew (alongside other religious military orders like the Knights Templar) and came to hold multiple forts and estates. In 1248, their standard battle dress received papal



The Knights Hospitaller in the 13th Century by "Ralph Hammann", Wikimedia Commons

approval – a red surcoat with a white cross emblazoned on it.

ISLAND LIFE

The Crusaders remained in Palestine for roughly 200 years until their last major stronghold at Acre fell in 1291. Now “homeless”, the Hospitallers besieged the island of Rhodes (located off the coast of Turkey) and seized it as a temporal domain. Ironically, the Hospitallers did not take Rhodes from the Muslims, but from the Byzantines – fellow Christians, albeit of the Orthodox faith. A siege in 1522 by Ottoman Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent eventually forced the Knights to withdraw from Rhodes.

Now “homeless” again, the Hospitallers moved around Europe until Pope Clement VII (himself a former Hospitaller) reached an agreement with Holy Roman Emperor Charles V to grant them permanent control over the island of Malta, where the Apostle Paul had once landed after being shipwrecked (Acts 27:27 – 28:10). The price was a single Maltese falcon, paid annually on All Saint’s Day (1 November) as tribute. When Suleiman besieged Malta, this time the Knights held on until the Ottomans’ morale collapsed. Having decisively repelled the Ottomans, the Hospitallers would remain on Malta for another two-and-a-half centuries, during which they built hospitals, fortresses, and churches.

Relations between the Hospitallers and the native Maltese were ambivalent at best. The Maltese saw the Knights as arrogant intruders who spoke French rather than Italian/Maltese and took advantage of the native women; the Hospitallers looked down on the Maltese and excluded them (even the nobility) from serving as Knights. Nonetheless, the two groups co-existed

rather peacefully since the Hospitallers boosted the economy (see the next section) and protected Malta from Muslim attacks.

PIRATES OF PENANCE

The Hospitallers’ relocation to distant Malta removed their *raison d’être* of fighting the Muslims in the Holy Land. European sponsors were now less willing to support a costly yet meaningless organisation. Facing dwindling revenues, the Hospitallers turned to policing the Mediterranean and protecting Christian merchant shipping from the Barbary Pirates (Ottoman-endorsed Muslim pirates and privateers).



Hospitaller Galley by Lorenzo A Castro (c.1680)

Many Knights went beyond their protective duties to raid Muslim ships for plunder to augment their finances. This sparked off a vicious cycle: Hospitaller raiding yielded plunder and luxurious living >> European states perceived that the Hospitallers were earning profits on the high seas and thus reduced their financial support to the Hospitallers >> The Hospitallers became even more dependent on raiding.

Many Knights also went on to serve in foreign navies for greater action and prospects, with the French Navy being the most popular destination. This was another great irony that went against the Hospitaller’s cardinal reason for existence, for these Knights faced the real possibility of

continued on the next page

fighting against another Roman Catholic power (e.g. France vs Spain). The biggest paradox was the fact that the Kingdom of France was usually on amicable terms with the Ottoman Empire – the Hospitallers’ greatest and bitterest foe.

THE REFORMATION

The precarious position of the Hospitallers was exacerbated by the Protestant Reformation and its resulting upheaval. In the preceding centuries, the Order had gained holdings (e.g. estates, assets) from supporters in Spain, France, England, Italy, and Germany. A number of these holdings were confiscated or lost during the Reformation. For example, the property of the English branch was confiscated in 1540 under the orders of King Henry VIII. Several German holdings were lost when local princes converted to Lutheranism.

NAPOLEON DYNAMITE

The Hospitallers continued to survive on Malta even as their European presence diminished. The Knights of Malta were nonetheless in a state of decline by the 1700s as their function of fighting the Muslims became outdated. As many of the Order’s members were French, it came to rely on France for political backing and revenue. Unfortunately, the French monarchy was overthrown in 1792 during the French Revolution and replaced by a fiercely anti-Church Revolutionary Government. Hospitaller holdings in France were quickly seized by the State, leading to serious financial difficulties.

The Order would eventually meet its end at the hands of Napoleon Bonaparte, later Emperor of the French. Napoleon rose to prominence during the Revolution as he led several successful campaigns that expanded French territory. One such

campaign was a military expedition to Egypt (1798-1801) to secure French trade interests and build its scientific enterprise.

Enroute to Egypt, Napoleon demanded for his ships to be allowed to land on Malta to take on water and supplies. When the Hospitaller Grand Master replied that only two foreign ships could be allowed to enter at a time, Napoleon moved to seize the island as any delays would leave his fleet vulnerable to the British.

Western Malta fell to the French after several hours of fierce fighting. Napoleon now opened negotiations with the Grand Master, who agreed to surrender the entire island in the face of a vastly superior foe.

SOVEREIGN WITHOUT LAND

After capitulating to Napoleon, the Grand Master and many Knights left Malta. The Order, again “homeless” but now dispersed across Europe, continued to exist in a diminished form and negotiated with European governments for a return to power.

As Tsar Paul I of Russia gave the Order shelter, many Knights regrouped in St Petersburg and elected him as their Grand Master out of gratitude. This established the Russian tradition of the Knights Hospitaller within the Imperial Orders of Russia.



Movement of the Knights Hospitaller

Paul I's election as Grand Master was not recognised by Rome since he was a Russian



Emperor Paul in the Crown of the Grand Master of the Order of Malta by Stepan Shchukin (1799)

Orthodox who had never belonged to the Order. Upon Paul I's death in 1801, his son Alexander I ended the irregularity by refusing to be Grand Master. In the meantime, the British had recaptured Malta and there were plans to re-establish the Order there. As the Order was dispersed and unable to convene, the election of

Grand Master was deferred to Pope Pius VII, who appointed the Italian nobleman Giovanni Battista

Tommasi to the office.

The Order settled in Rome in 1834, free from the strain of temporal power. Hospital work, the original purpose of the Order, now became its main concern. The Sovereign Military Order of Malta (SMOM), as the Order was now known, would see its hospital and welfare activities undertaken on a considerable scale in WWI, which were subsequently intensified and expanded during WWII. The SMOM still exists today and continues its charitable work around the world.

SUCCESSORS

Due to its complex history, the Knights Hospitaller has several successor entities that claim historical continuity from the original Order of Saint John. Along with the Roman Catholic SMOM, four Protestant "Alliance Orders" represent the legitimate heirs of the Knights Hospitaller. A short summary of the successor entities is as follows:

No.	Name (Year Established)	HQ	Quick Facts
1	Sovereign Military Order of Malta (1798)	Rome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roman Catholic lay religious order • Head: Prince and Grand Master • The world's oldest surviving order of chivalry • Sovereign entity of international law that possess no territory; maintains diplomatic relations with many countries • Maintains a mission in Malta and a military corps (under the Italian Army) • Largely focused on providing humanitarian assistance and assisting with international humanitarian relations
2	Most Venerable Order of Saint John (1831)	London	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • British royal order of chivalry • Head: British Monarch • Started by Constituted by royal charter by Queen Victoria in 1888 • Membership open to all faiths • Best known for the health organisations it founded and continues to run, including St John Ambulance.
3	Bailiwick of Brandenburg of the Chivalric Order of Saint John of the Hospital at Jerusalem (c.1550)	Berlin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • German Protestant order of chivalry • Head: Herrenmeister (Grand Master) • Formed from German Hospitaller holdings that converted to Lutheranism • Major provider of medical and rescue services in Germany

4	Order of Saint John in Sweden (1920)	Stockholm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Swedish Protestant order of chivalry • Head: Swedish Monarch • Affiliate of the German Bailiwick of Brandenburg • Works closely with hospitals, established aid organisations, schools, churches and Christian bodies
5	Order of Saint John in the Netherlands (1909)	Amsterdam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dutch knightly order • Head: Dutch Monarch • Membership limited to Protestant Dutch nobles

CONCLUSION: THE UGLY SIDE OF CHRISTIANITY'S HISTORY

War, politics, and economics, however ugly these can be, are part and parcel of the history of Christianity and exemplified through the history of the Knights Hospitaller. The Hospitallers originated from the First Crusade, which was a politically motivated campaign despite its religious overtones. The Crusades showed that Christian powers were willing to use war to advance their self-interests. Christendom was also not a united body, for Western Catholic and Eastern Orthodox powers often clashed, as evidenced by the Hospitallers' taking of Rhodes from the Byzantines.

Politics also dictated the Order's fate. The Reformation unleashed changes that fundamentally altered Europe's political landscape. As territories followed the religious

persuasion of their leaders, the Hospitallers lost their holdings in areas which turned Protestant, e.g. England. Economics also underpinned politics and war. The Knights' privateering at sea reflected how the growth of Christian powers was built on trade networks crisscrossing the Mediterranean.

Despite the Hospitallers' violent history and moral ambivalence (e.g. associating themselves with France, the ally of the Ottomans, their sworn enemies), we should nonetheless appreciate that the various Orders' ongoing hospital work today fulfil Jesus's commandments to love our neighbours – by attending to their medical needs.

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



Maltese Cross of the Knights Hospitaller, usually worn on black surcoats



Let's see what you remember!

[Click here or the image to take a short quiz.](#)

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

1. [Knights Hospitaller](#)
2. [Hospitaller Malta](#)
3. [Sovereign Military Order of Malta](#)
4. [Alliance of the Orders of Saint John of Jerusalem](#)
5. [Most Venerable Order of Saint John](#)
6. [St John Ambulance](#)

BACK 2 BASICS

Our BACK 2 BASIC8 theme contains the 'BB' letters and numbers '28'



THE 28TH SINGAPORE BOYS' BRIGADE COMPANY

BY CLEMENT TAN (BB 28TH COY)

ENROLMENT DAYS

The 28th Singapore Boys' Brigade Company held its Enrolment parades this year on 2 and 9 April for our Juniors and Seniors programmes respectively. We enrolled a total of 17 new Boys from Shuqun Primary and Yuhua Secondary Schools. The Principal of Yuhua Secondary School was present as our guest-of-honour for the Seniors' Enrolment parade.



Our juniors from Shuqun Primary (above) and our seniors from Yuhua Secondary (below).



FOCUSSING MORE ON 'BEING'

During the photo-taking, whenever Daniel Chong shouted out "BB", the group would vociferously respond with "TWO EIGHT". It reflected their pride as members of the BB 28th Company. To me, "BB" and "TWO EIGHT" uttered aloud and in sequence sounded like "BB TO AID." It prompted me to ponder this question, "How is the BB ministry aiding/helping the Boys?"

Our former Captain Chak Mun once shared with us, that the ministry is about the people we serve; it is less about DOING but more about BEING. In a sense, we should not be over-focussed on DOING many tasks whereby busyness gets in the way of meaningful efforts. We should be attentive to the Boys BEING who they are as we guide them forward to receive blessings as offspring of God.

EFFECTING CHANGE

Over the past few years, Mr Chin Yew Neng, Samuel Chong and I have been conducting study sessions for the Boys outside of BB parades. Currently, we are holding the sessions weekly on Saturday afternoons in JCC. I am happy to see that our reach has extended to friends and peers of the Boys who may not be in the BB or Yuhua Secondary School. We also have former Junior Boys and some church youths joining us to revise together.

This year, we showed the movie "Coach Carter" to the study group to motivate the Boys. It is a sports movie with inspiring locker room

continued on the next page



Movie screening for the study session students.

speeches and difficult moral decisions.

In the movie, the coach suspended the basketball team from training and matches until they improved their academic grades. When facing resistance from the community, he said “I took this job because I wanted to effect change in a special group of young men, and this is the only way that I know how to do that.”



BB Officers' KBBQ session.



These words of the coach resonated with me because BB programmes and the study sessions are the only ways I know how to connect with the Boys to effect change in them.

THE CHALLENGE FOR OUR A-TEAM

The BB ministry would not be effective without our faithful officers and men. I call them our A-Team; i.e., our Amazing Team.

Within our WhatsApp Group, our Chaplain, Rev. Anthony, often addresses us convivially as “BB gang”. This address hints at a spirit of toughness that we possess as a tight-knit band of survivors, the 28th Company, that has gone through thick and thin for the ministry, including roughing through the immense challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic season.

The 28th BB Company will turn 55 years old next year. Looking ahead, the journey will continue to be tough and filled with uncertainties. But I have no fear knowing that we are one A-Team. I am so grateful for all the Officers who serve sacrificially in the BB.

I thank JCC for its unwavering support over the years. We also thank the schools for their support and in allowing the BB to make an impact in the Boys’ lives.

The BB 28th Company will remain an important ministry of JCC. Our Great Captain, Jesus, will continue to guide this ministry and bless the Boys.

‘For in him we live and move and have our being.’ ...‘We are his offspring.’ (Acts 17:28 NIV)



Our great captain, Jesus, guiding us.



LIFE SHINE COMMUNITY SERVICES – VIC PARTNER BY PEGGY TAN

In November 2019, in a national effort to reach out to at-risk individuals in the community and providing them with appropriate assistance, the Vulnerable-In-Community Network (VIC Network) was formed, comprising the Ministry of Social and Family Development (MSF), Central Singapore Community Development Council and volunteer organisations.

It was a very timely effort as the Covid-19 storm loomed in the horizon.

At the height of the pandemic waves, our JCC's Goshen Initiative was also conceived to help the needy in our neighbourhood. Step by step, we set up several projects for providing assistance. One of the projects is the Life Shine Community Services (LSCS), which is a collaboration with our tenant churches in the JCC Hub (New Life Baptist Church, Renewal Christian Church, Jurong Tamil Methodist Church).

Our LSCS activities include regular community walks at Taman Jurong, Boon Lay Shopping Centre, and Yuhua Market Centre to engage with the vulnerable individuals such as lonely elderly people, tissue paper sellers, cardboard collectors and drinks cans scavengers.

All this while we have been partnering the MSF

in our outreach efforts to the VIC groups. Presently, we have more than 20 vulnerable elderly people in our list of contacts.

On 18 May 2022, at a two-hour evening engagement session with MSF, held at Bukit Merah Community Hub, LSCS was officially onboarded as a VIC partner. We were glad to receive the CERTIFICATE OF APPRECIATION



from Mr Eric Chua, Parliamentary Secretary of MSF.

The VIC Network is now 13-member strong, to whom Mr Eric Chua says: "A big THANK YOU to all our partners for your tireless effort in reaching out to and building relationships with the vulnerable ones in our midst!"

LSCS is pleased to be one among the 13. To be sure, a big THANK YOU also goes to all our loving hearts in JCC who contribute to the tireless effort of LSCS in serving God by way of impacting lives with our love as Christ loves us.



AROUND SINGAPORE IN 15 HOURS BY BICYCLE
 BY PATRICK LOW

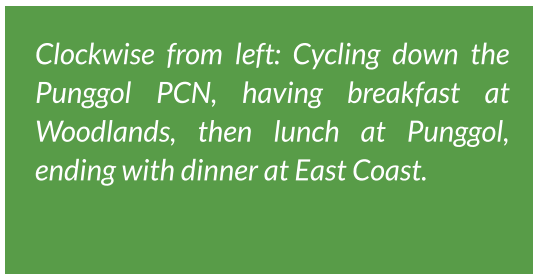


On 16th May 2022, a group of bike enthusiasts rode about 125 km (starting at 7am and returning by 10pm). We travelled up north then followed the track to the east and finally back to JCC. We had breakfast at Woodlands, lunch at Punggol and dinner at East Coast.

The 11 riders were (from left to right) me, Samantha, Mong, Danny, Freddie, Shermaine, Dylan, Daniel, Angie, Elson (the son of Angie and Daniel) and Pastor Michael.

There are plans afoot to organise another ride in the next quarter of this year, probably on another public holiday. This time it will be shorter, about 30 km.

The “Befrienders of Cyclists” is one of the programmes under JCC’s Goshen Initiatives. We assist with bicycle repairs, making friends and sharing Christ with visitors. Daniel, Freddie and I are actively involved. We encourage you to join us in church to serve in this programme every Sunday from 3 pm to 4 pm.



Clockwise from left: Cycling down the Punggol PCN, having breakfast at Woodlands, then lunch at Punggol, ending with dinner at East Coast.

BAPTISM BY JOHN LEE



Jesus tells us to baptize:

“Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit” (Matthew 28:19).

Our Lord also says in the last chapter of Mark:

“Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned.” (Mark 16:16)

On 1st May 2022, we praise God for the following persons who were baptized:

1. Samuel Lau Tzer Cher
2. Ael Chua Chuen Liang
3. Boris Khoo Yi Lin
4. Lucas Ng Jian Wei

We welcome these brothers into our fellowship and pray for them that God will help them to walk in newness of life.

Luther once said that every time you wash your face you should remember your baptism. This is good advice, for by remembering our baptism we remember all that the Lord has done for us:

“He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Saviour, so that, having been justified by His grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life. This is a trustworthy saying.” (Titus 3:5-8)



A BEAUTIFUL WEDDING

BY MARTIN CHEAH



7th May 2022 marks the first wedding in JCC after the COVID restrictions were downgraded to DORSCON yellow in late April.

JCC was filled with happy families and guests of the wedding couple, Boren and Xinyi.

Boren is the son of long-time JCC members, Roy Ang and Juria.

The birth of Boren was announced in the inaugural issue of The Vine. For nostalgia buffs, you can look up the article in page 12 of The Vine from this link: <https://tinyurl.com/4sdm2th5>

Now, Boren has grown up from a baby to a fine gentleman, and we are gladly reporting on his wedding.

We congratulate him and Xinyi on this happy occasion of their blessed union. May the love of Christ be their constant companion and guide as they continue to grow together in faith and Godly service.

