

Saltshaker

A Trinity Methodist Church Publication



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Discipling Relationships

- the way of life for a child of God



Richard Seng

Looking back on my life, I see one consistent theme throughout – the importance of Nurture in my life.

Many people have helped shape me.

From a school teacher who disciplined me, to my mother who embodied consistency and high standards, to my father who taught me life skills.

It is no different as a child of God.

I came to know the Lord through a friend when I was a teenager. I became involved in communities, learned the Word of God, read books, and grew as a Christian.

But where it really mattered – my heart and where I stood with and for God, and the life that I would live as a consequence of that - was someone intentionally taking time to connect with me personally.

Someone who took time to help me know my strengths, weaknesses, interests and life perspectives.

Someone who at various junctures in life, prayerfully discerned and shared what the Word of God might be saying, and then encouraged, comforted and even challenged or corrected me.

A Discipling Relationship may seem trivial, and even “normal” when observed from afar.

There is the usual “how have you been?”, “how is the family / work / that new phone / bike?” But that is then followed up with “how is God real / speaking to you in this instant / situation?”, followed by an intentional covenantal uniting of hearts, minds and spirits in prayer.

Over time, this ongoing intentional involvement of God in two lives, mutually shared and poured out from one life into the other, is what overcomes what could be considered the usual Christian pitfalls like:

- Knowing about God but not knowing Him
- Being involved in many activities in His name, but not involving Him in our activities
- Serving in one or multiple “ministries”, but not ministering in His Spirit



Ivan Tan (left), my first discipler



Albert Yeo (far right), my second discipler who got me into Oswald Chambers

Being in a Discippling Relationship (DR) means that the Word of God becomes real in my life, through someone else who intentionally and openly shares from their “Book of Life” with me. It stains me with the blood, power, grace, mercies and peace of God Almighty. It is the transfer of life, beyond mere knowledge or information.

We see the same picture and account in the life of our Lord Jesus.

“ Who, being in very nature God,
did not consider equality with God something
to be used to his own advantage;
rather, he made himself nothing
by taking the very nature of a servant,
being made in human likeness.”
- (Phil 2:5-7)

Jesus lived, travelled, prayed, cried and agonised with His disciples, teaching them everything that the Father had shown Him. And then, empowered by the Holy Spirit, these once fumbling, doubting and ill-qualified disciples went on to impact lives in obedience to the call to “go and make disciples of all nations, baptising 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.” (Matt 28:19-20)

So I go, with all the gifts and talents that God Almighty has bestowed upon me (Nature), and with the time invested in me by those who came before me (Nurture), to pour out the same God-filled areas of my life into others after me, one at a time.

Come (or rather, Go) and walk with someone, starting today.



Mentoring a married couple, Lincoln and Romona, with my wife, Jerrica



In a current DR relationship with Daryl Ong (right)



With my wife, Jerrica (far left), and some of the Sunday School girls I taught for about 5 years (L-R girls only: Con Nie, Melissa, Huey Chyi, Amanda)

#relationshipgoals

We've heard about Discipleship Relationships (DRs) from the pulpit, but what happens when real people decide to form real relationships with fellow disciples in Christ?

DRs may not always look the same, and each DR is likely to be at a different stage in its DR-journey. Let's read how these DRs were formed and how they have grown.

Jason, Jestyn, Daryl, Daniel and Ian

"I (Jason) would classify our DR as a DR-in-progress.

We met through our small group, Vineyard, and meet regularly after our fortnightly small group sessions. The DR has no formal leader. We take turns to lead one another.

It is good to have a small group of brothers-in-Christ to whom I can be accountable.



Apart from sharing our lives and prayers, we have found a book to study, 'When Men Think Private Thoughts', by Gordon MacDonald.

We are still working towards sharing more of our lives with one another. One challenge is that we are all so busy, and it is hard to find time to meet up. Some of us travel for work, and others have to work shifts. Hopefully, with time, we will find a rhythm that is suitable for us."

Sarah, Eliza, Angeline and Priscilla

“My (Sarah) small group, Vineyard, has the practice of splitting into gender-specific groups for sharing and fellowship after our regular small group sessions. When the girls’ group got too big for intimate conversations, we decided to form two smaller girls’ groups. That’s when the four of us found ourselves in the same DR.



It was not by coincidence that we were all from the same industry - Angeline, Priscilla and I are teachers. Eliza is a school counselor.

Our DR has grown over the years. At the Presence church retreat in June last year, we shared about how we could help one another to be accountable in our walk with God. We started a ‘nightly prayer at 10pm’ in our WhatsApp chat group. This kept us mutual accountable in our walk with God, and also gave us an opportunity to support one another in the challenges we were facing.

As teachers, we generally have similar peak seasons. If we are busy, we meet fortnightly, after our main small group sessions. During other seasons, we meet up more frequently over the week to just catch up over dinner, or do things together (e.g. celebrate one another’s birthdays, staycations, play card games at one another’s houses etc).

We text one another a lot more during the day nowadays, because we have got so comfortable with being transparent with one another. It helps me to know that I have a strong support system regardless of time and day.

To be in a tight community where you know you can truly be yourself, share transparently, and live life together – that is a blessing.



NEW BEGINNINGS – JAMES' STORY

An uninterested, non-believing churchgoer accompanies a friend to Alpha and ends up experiencing a series of life-changing events.

Growing up, I had many experiences going to church, attending cell groups and evangelistic events. However, I remained uninterested in pursuing the faith. Many years later, I met Esther and we started dating. She was from a Christian family and regularly attended church. She soon invited me to attend services with her and I followed, just to accompany her.

In 2012, I was invited by a friend to attend Alpha at Leng Kwang Baptist Church. I asked Esther, who was now my wife to come along as well for the sessions and she agreed. When I first heard the name “Alpha”, I would laugh because I thought it was a comical name. In the army, we commonly used the words Alpha, Bravo, Charlie as military alphabet codes, and so I jokingly referred to Alpha as the Alpha Bravo Charlie course.

I attended the first few weeks of Alpha, and after the Weekend Away in 2012, my wife and I were invited to join a cell group that was led by some of the Alpha facilitators. We then started meeting with this group regularly.

The following year, the church ran Alpha again and we decided to help out as befrienders, inviting people and building friendship with them. Around the same time however, Esther developed rheumatoid arthritis and had difficulty walking and sometimes even standing up.

Even though I was not a Christian then, I had been exposed to the concept of prayer through Alpha, and I started to pray for my wife's recovery. When there were no signs of improvement, I began to scold God, and questioned why He did not want to heal her. One day, I decided to barter with God, promising Him: “If you make her well, I will believe in You.”

That year, we went to the Lotus Desaru Resort in Malaysia for the Alpha Weekend Away. During a time of ministry, we were prayed over by the ministers and then decided to leave early to rest. Before we could leave, one of the pastors, Pastor Jeff called us back. He asked us to hold hands and prayed for us, saying that he sensed someone needed healing but only God knew who that person was. He continued, saying that someone had made a barter pact with God in order to receive healing.

Immediately, a chill ran down my spine. I had not told anyone about my bargain with God! How did he know? That was when I decided to receive Christ. I prayed silently in my heart for God to forgive me for ‘scolding’ Him as well as for the barter trade.

When we returned to the room, I decided to tell my wife what I had done; that I had been bargaining with God. I told her, “I need to be baptised.” On the 1st of December 2013, I was baptised. Esther's condition improved radically from that point, and she was even able to exercise again.

By then, we had been married for a few years but were unable to have children as a result of several medical issues that my wife had. In December 2014, she was required to undergo a number of operations. The attending gynaecologist advised 70-80% removal of her right ovary. After this operation, I thought to myself “perhaps it would be okay not to have any children”, thinking that there was little hope of conceiving anyway.

In 2015, a friend of mine challenged me to pray for three things throughout that year. At the time, our cell group was talking about the idea of fostering children, and so we began thinking about the possibility of becoming foster parents. Although we were content, we thought it would be good to seek God for direction.

The time for another Alpha Weekend Away came in May 2015. During the time of ministry on the first evening, Pastor Jeff asked us to hold hands and prayed for us once again.

A month later, on the 11th of June 2015, my wife found out that she was pregnant. We were overjoyed! On one of our early visits to our gynaecologist, my wife shared that she felt pain in the right side of her womb. The doctor explained that the reason for this could be that the egg which had been fertilised had come from Esther’s right ovary. We informed the doctor that Esther previously had 80% of her right ovary removed, so how could it still have been able to produce any eggs? The doctor, a Christian, replied, “What is impossible to man is possible to God!” I was left speechless.

Chloe was born on the 2nd of February 2016. Her name means “green shoots” representing a fresh beginning, just like how God has given us a new journey in Him. Chloe’s arrival has filled us with joy and thanksgiving. Even though our roles as new parents have been tiring, it has all been worth it. *“The nights are long, but the years are short.”* This is something we are keenly aware of and thank God every day for blessing us with this child.

At the start of 2016, it was time for another “prayer challenge”. My request for the year was for my parents to receive Christ. My mother had been brought up in a devout Taoist family and my paternal grandfather and grandaunt had been mediums. Even though I had always been close to my parents, I had never talked to them about religion and did not know where to begin.

In June 2016, I discussed with Esther, the possibility of inviting my parents to Alpha. She agreed that we should invite them and so I sent a simple message to my mother, inviting her to Alpha, saying it was an open platform to help people know more about Christianity. After just a few minutes she replied, “Okay.”

My wife and I were surprised by her quick reply. Thinking that we should provide her with more details, we sent her the topics that would be discussed at Alpha. This time, she took a longer time to reply and texted, “don’t expect us to change our religion immediately.”

I replied that, of course, I would not force them to change but just wanted to give them a better understanding of why I chose Christianity.

That run of Alpha began at the end of July. It was a Chinese Alpha run, and as the weeks went by, my parents began to ask more questions.

The Alpha Weekend Away was on the 10th of September, and I accompanied my parents to the retreat. To my delight, during the time of ministry, both my parents said the sinner's prayer. I was moved to tears. After they were ministered to, I had a long conversation with my parents and my mother confidently exclaimed, "Yes, I did say the sinner's prayer!".

She then revealed something that I had not previously known; in her youth, she was an avid reader, and after seeing someone reading a bible, decided to read it as well. However, she was caught by my grandfather, the medium. He was furious, reprimanding her and as a punishment, made her kneel in front of the altar of the gods to repent and seek forgiveness from them.

This incident scarred her so much that she had vowed to never have anything to do with religion. The only reason that our family had idol statues at home was because these were gifts from my grandfather; my mother had never been a devout Taoist.

After Alpha, my mother confided in me that after she had said the sinner's prayer, she felt liberated. Previously, she would have dizzy spells, headaches and feelings of oppression when she went to temples. Because of this, she hardly visited these places.

She added that it was a totally different experience during her visit to church – she felt peace and comfort! I was very encouraged hearing that. After this conversation with my mother, my father asked a friend to help remove the idol statues from their home, and a few days later, I asked Pastor Jeff and his team to help remove the ancestral tablets. My mother commented that she is now at ease, knowing that her "old life" was now behind her!

For the first time, my parents described feelings of liberation and being worry-free. My mother is more easy going and my father has become calmer and more positive. My parents are filled with so much joy and they love to pray! As a family, we pray before our meals. My parents' motto is just keep praying!

Esther and I have continued serving at Alpha because we want to do more for our Lord. We have been blessed with so much and want to continue to do what we can to bring people closer to God through Alpha.

This story is taken from <http://singapore.alpha.org> and reprinted with the permission of Alpha Singapore.



*TMC will be running the Alpha course every Sunday from 14 Jul to 1 Sep.
Do invite your friends who do not know Jesus to attend.
www.tmc.org.sg/witness.html*

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IN AND ABOUT TMC



Boys' and Girls'
Brigade Enrolment





IN AND ABOUT TMC



Children's Ministry
Workers' Dedication



BIBLIOTHEQUE



D1404
Hillsong - There Is More



D1405
Matt Redman
Glory Song



D1406
Ultimate Easter Worship
Collection



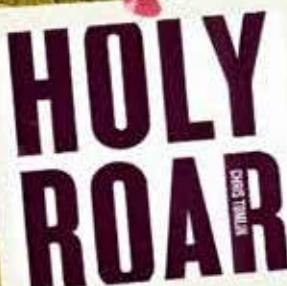
D1407
Lauren Daigle
Look Up Child



D1408
Here Be Lions
Only A Holy God



D1409
Mercyme
I Can Only Imagine



D1410
Chris Tomlin
Holy Roar



D1411
WOW Hits 2019
Deluxe Edition



D1412
Michael W Smith
A Million Lights



D1413
Our Daily Bread
Hymns of Gratitude & Service



D1414
Michael W Smith
Surrounded



D1415
Victory



D1416
WOW Gospel 2018



D1417
Lauren Daigle
How Can It Be



D1418
Everlasting Army



D1419
Gateway
Greater Than

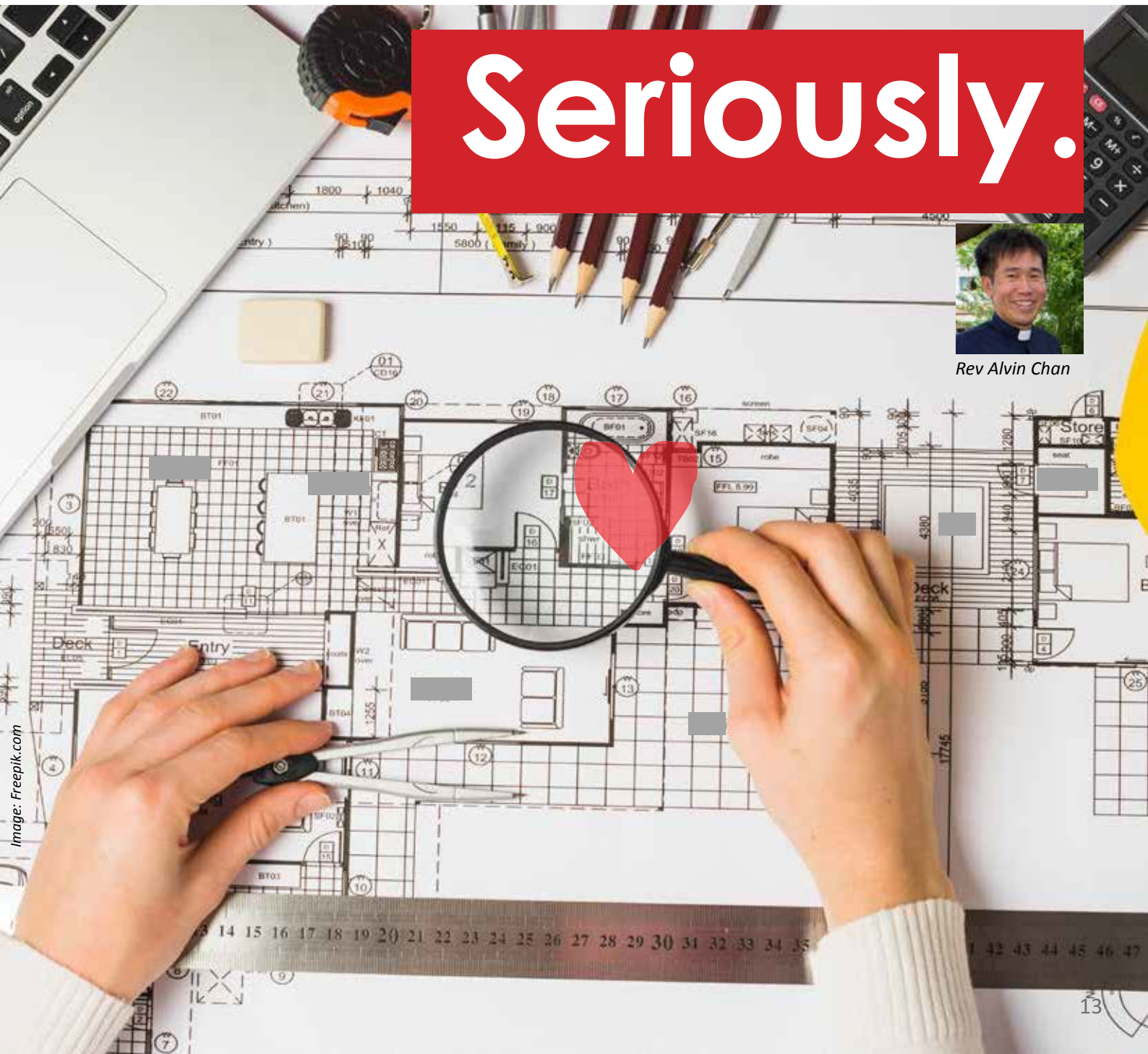
These recently released CDs and many other resources are available for borrowing from the TMC Resource Centre, situated at Benjamin Room on Level 2.

The Worship of God Must Be Taken

Seriously.



Rev Alvin Chan



In my article “Our Happy Problem” (Saltshaker, December 2018), I described our happy problem and hinted at how we intended to address it by upgrading and enhancing our worship facilities so as to establish meaningful and enriching worship experiences for everyone.

I shall now elaborate on some of the plans to do just that.

Sanctuary

All three congregations have now heard the new sound system in the Sanctuary.

Over the course of two weeks, our appointed audio-visual (AV) vendor worked hard (sometimes until 1am in the morning) to strip down our old 14-year old sound system, replacing all the cables, and installing the new speakers and system, whilst ensuring that there would be as little disruption to our normal Sunday services as possible.

We were able to first hear the effects of the new AV system on 17 Mar at the 8.45am service. On that single Sunday alone, we received feedback after both the 8.45am service and Mandarin service on the difference the new sound system makes. We considered this “mission accomplished” in enhancing and enriching the worship experience in the Sanctuary.

Emmanuel Hall

In May, extensive renovation work will commence in the Emmanuel Hall.

The Emmanuel Hall was initially called the “Worship Hall”. At the first service after Trinity Methodist Church’s (TMC) return to Serangoon Garden Way on 12 Dec 04, the Worship Hall was used as an overflow space.

On TMC’s 54th Anniversary in 2010, the Worship Hall was dedicated together with the rest of the complex, and renamed the “Emmanuel Hall” to remind us that God is with us – in the past, present and future.

Since then, it has held worship services in the contemporary style every Sunday and hosted many milestone events, such as ukelele concerts, evangelistic events, etc. Many of those who have passed through our Youth Ministry would have



Sanctuary

fond memories of the countless Worship Nights and Youth Camps held there, where they were able to experience God deeply.

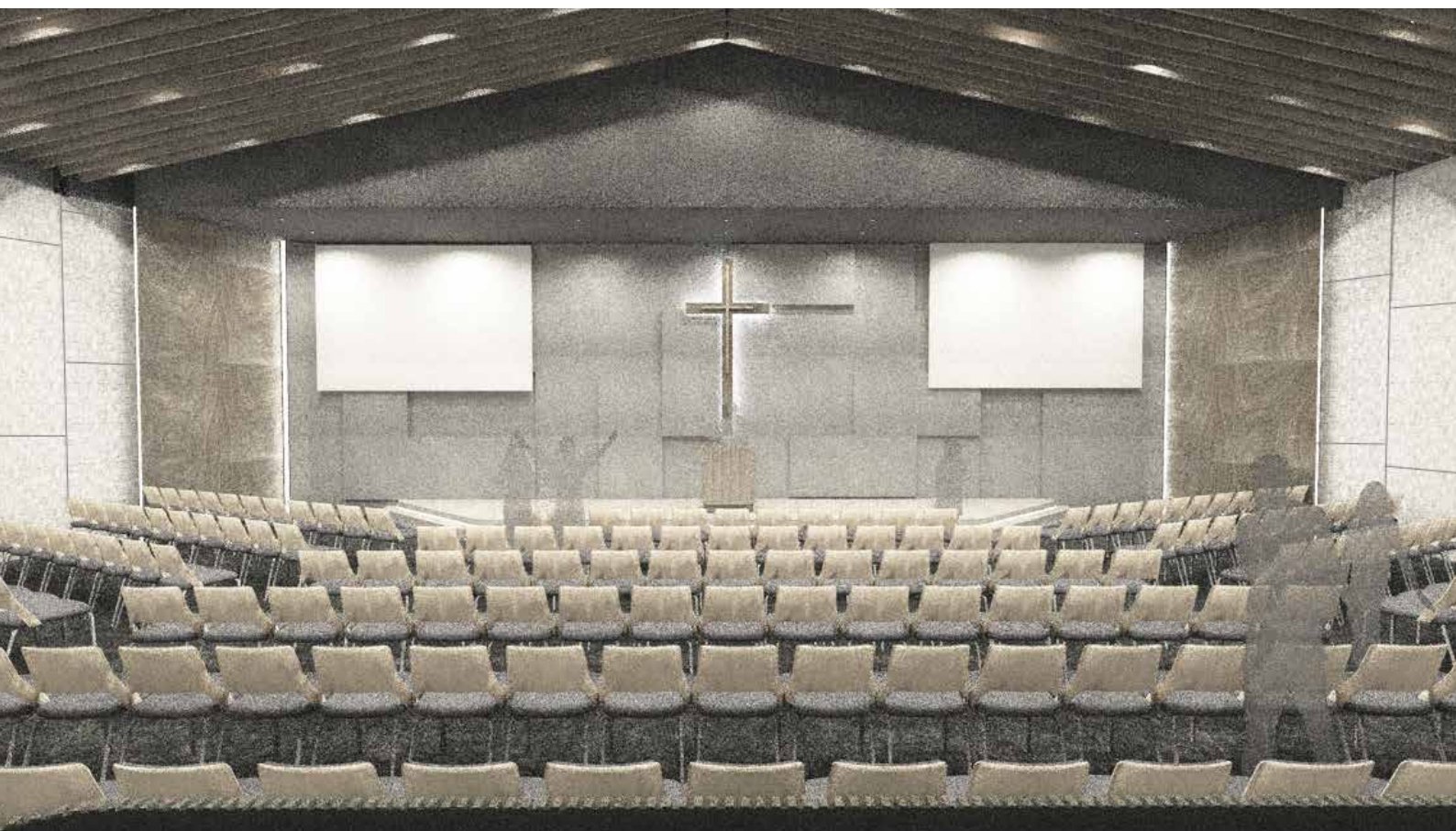
In recent years, we have come to recognise that with the increased permanent usage of the space as well as growing congregation size, the Hall environment has to be made more conducive for generations to worship in.

More importantly, we want to highlight that the worship of God is to be taken seriously, and the space should reflect the values that we believe are essential for a worshipping community.

This led us towards considering a renovation of the Emmanuel Hall. The leaders worked around the premise that the newly-renovated Hall should meet the growing needs of both the current worship service as well as the Youth Ministry.

How do we go about enriching the worship experience of our congregation in the Emmanuel Hall?

We did not have to look too far. Our interior designer took inspiration from the Sanctuary, and expressed how certain features there can be replicated to evoke



Impression of the New Emmanuel Hall

the same sense of reverence and worship in the Emmanuel Hall. This would not only help to enhance the worship experience of our congregation, but also create a sense of symmetry between the two main worship facilities of TMC to emphasise that we are one Church.

Here are some features of the new Emmanuel Hall.

1. The 'Tent of Meeting' with stone and wood textures

One of the key features of our Sanctuary is its ceiling.

In some ways, such vernacular chapels are meant to reflect the Tent of Meeting in the Old Testament, where God would dwell among His people.

Similarly therefore, one of the key new features of the newly-renovated Emmanuel Hall will be the same-styled ceiling. Our prayer is that as worshippers step into this worship space, it will not only remind them of our Sanctuary, but also a Tent of Meeting – where God will meet and encounter His people.

2. Central Cross feature

Another key feature of our Sanctuary is the Cross and the stained glass which frames it.

There have been many occasions when the sight of the Cross greeting us as we begin worship has evoked a sense of reverence, gratefulness and awe all at once. The beauty of the Cross in the Sanctuary is but a mere reflection of the true beauty of the Cross and of what it means to us as God's people.

And so, it was thought that the Cross in the newly-renovated Emmanuel Hall should draw its inspiration from the Sanctuary's feature.

We have chosen to reuse the old wooden Cross from the Emmanuel Hall. This will remind us of our rich heritage and the sacrifice of the generations before us. The addition of stained glass around it will, hopefully, enhance its beauty.

Our prayer is that every worshipper will be drawn to the Cross as they step into the new worship space, and be reminded of the beautiful and finished work of the Cross. What better way to respond to this truth than to worship!



New 'landscape' layout

3. A New Layout

One of the major changes to the new Emmanuel Hall will be the change of its orientation.

The current "portrait" layout, will now be turned 90 degrees to form a "landscape" layout. This will result in a closer proximity to the worship ministers for all worshippers, which not only means a better line of sight, but also facilitates engagement between the preachers and worship leaders, and the worshippers.

The new orientation and design will also make it easier to accommodate congregations of different sizes as it will be possible to create discrete sections in the Hall.

In place of the old stage area will also be a brand new Cry Room.

There have been an increasing number of young families attending the current 11.15am service. From the



demographics of that service, we expect that number to continue increasing. The new Cry Room aims to make the service more inclusive and friendly to parents with young infants and toddlers.

4. New and improved Fellowship Hall

A larger and improved lobby area will cater to the congregations using the Emmanuel Hall.

Community is an essential value to a vibrant church, and our current lobby size is not large enough to accommodate the growing congregation size.

Although we had created a separate community space in the current hall, it was temporary. The new Fellowship Hall will serve as a more intentional and clearly-segmented space. It will be a welcoming and inviting space for regular worshippers and visitors to build community before and after the service, while ensuring that we clearly set apart what is intended and meant for worship.

We are intentionally using the features of the new Emmanuel Hall to bring across the message that the worship of God is to be taken seriously.

These features, however, remain a “hardware” change. It still remains for all of us now to rise up to the challenge to become the church that God wants us to be as we think beyond this renovation project.

The church is not a building - it is a people. The people of God must step up, to answer God’s calling for TMC. As we seek to expand the Church, may He expand our hearts for Him and for His people.



Impression of new Fellowship Hall

Spirit-Led Connected

This article is adapted from a sermon preached on Sunday, 31 Mar 19.



Rev Timothy Yong

Image: Freepik.com

How can we be filled with the Spirit?

As God's people, we have a great need to discover what it means to be filled with the Spirit, as it is a source of supernatural strength that can help us everyday.

I. Observations from the Text

"Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit" (Eph 5:18, NIV).

The paraphrase from "The Message" by Eugene Peterson is: "Don't drink too much wine. That cheapens your life. Drink the Spirit of God, huge draughts of him."

We can make five observations from the text.

1. The contrast between wine and the Spirit.

This is the most basic point of the verse.

There is a direct parallel between being drunk with wine and being

filled with the Spirit.

The issue is influence or control.

A person under the influence of wine experiences altered behaviour. He may say or do things that he would not ordinarily do. Emotions may be heightened for a brief period, causing the person to experience anger followed quickly by elation, and then by depression. If the person drinks enough wine, his mental processes will be affected and his decision-making ability will be radically altered—almost always with a negative result.

Likewise, the filling of the Holy Spirit produces a change in behaviour.

In the Book of Acts, once-timid disciples became flaming evangelists for Jesus Christ. In Ephesians 5, Paul mentions a number of practical things related to the filling of the Spirit:

Wisdom for living in this evil age (vv.15-16).
Understanding of God's will (v.17).

A joyful heart filled with singing to the Lord (v.19)

A heart filled with thanksgiving (v.20).

An attitude of mutual submission (v.21).

True submission is vital because it touches our need to be in control in every situation. When we submit from the heart, we are saying: "I don't have to have my way all the time." Only a heart touched by the Holy Spirit can maintain such an attitude in every relationship of life.

2. This is a command.

In Greek, this verb is in the imperative mode. The filling of the Spirit isn't an optional part of the Christian life. Every Christian is to be filled with the Spirit all the time. If you aren't, you are out of God's will.

3. It is in the present continuous tense.

The Greek present tense has the idea of continual action. It does not just take place once before

it stops. It signals a repeated process.

We could actually translate this verse this way: "Be continually filled with the Holy Spirit."

D L Moody was once asked why he urged Christians to be filled constantly with the Holy Spirit. "Well," he said, "I need a continual infilling because I leak."

4. It is in the passive voice.

This is a nuance that many people miss.

In both Greek and English, commands can be either active or passive.

We're much more used to active commands: "Go to the store and pick up some milk, please" or "Fill that hole with dirt".

Ephesians 5:18 doesn't say: "Fill yourself with the Spirit" but rather "Be filled with the Spirit." The filling of the Spirit is a work of God, not man.

Paul is not saying "fill yourself", but rather "be filled."

There are two important implications from this truth:

i. The Holy Spirit is ready and willing to fill us at any moment.

ii. We must make ourselves available to him.

When you go to a petrol station and say "fill it up to full", the person pumping the petrol knows that the statement means two things: 1) My fuel tank is empty, and 2) I want it to be filled with petrol. It is need and desire. When your need to be filled with the

Spirit becomes your great desire, you will be filled. Over and over again. Every time.

5. It is a plural command.

It is as if Paul were saying: "Let each and every one of you be filled with the Spirit."

On one hand, that means the command is for every Christian. God intends—and desires—that all his children be filled with the Holy Spirit.

But there is a sense in which this is also a corporate command. The church is to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

The filling of the Spirit is not something for one's own personal edification. God's Spirit imparts life-giving power that transforms the church from a religious gathering into a living body of Christ. We can see this in the following verses:

Speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs (v.19).

Submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ (v.21).

I am to be filled with the Spirit—but I am not to be filled alone. When the Holy Spirit fills each one of us, our corporate life will be transformed.

Perhaps this one factor accounts for the difference between a church that is "alive" and a church that is "dead." Two churches may have the same Bible, the same rituals, sing the same songs, even have the same programs and the same schedule of services. Outwardly, they may look very much alike.

But one is alive.

The other is dead.

What makes the difference? The Holy Spirit!

We need the filling of the Spirit not simply for ourselves but for the reformation and revival of local churches everywhere.

II. Application to Life

Here are three issues we need to think about relating to the filling of the Holy Spirit.

The issue of Control

Drunken and Spirit-filled people have one thing in common. They are both controlled people. Their lives and their behaviour are radically changed by that which fills them.

If a man is filled with anger, then anger controls his life.

If a man is filled with greed, then greed dominates his life.

If a man is filled with love, then love influences all he does.

When the Holy Spirit fills you, he will have the controlling interest in your life. It is "control by consent."

It is important to make a critical distinction. Being filled with the Holy Spirit doesn't mean I have more of the Spirit; it means the Spirit has more of me.

John the Baptist said: "God does not give the Spirit by measure" (John 3:34). God isn't stingy with some people and extra generous with others. When people claim to have more of the Holy Spirit than others, they're showing a

pride and ignorance of Scripture. You either have the Holy Spirit or you don't.

Eddie Rasnake says: "There is no place in Scripture that indicates we can receive more of the Holy Spirit. The real issue is the release of the already present Spirit to have free reign in our hearts. It isn't about us having more of Him, but of Him having more of us."

The issue of Cooperation

Every Christian is filled with the Spirit from the moment of the new birth.

Since the Holy Spirit indwells us from the moment we are saved, it only makes sense that new believers are filled with that same Spirit, which is why new believers often have so much joy and walk so closely with the Lord. For them, it's the natural thing to do.

The central issue is one of cooperation. Am I going to cooperate with the Holy Spirit and let him lead me, or I am going to keep on trying to do things my own way?

So many of us struggle at precisely this point. We fight the Lord because we want to do things our way. And God says: "Okay, we can do it your way for a while, but it's

not going to work."

If we won't cooperate with God, he'll cooperate with us by letting us do things in our own strength and by our own will. When we fail and cry out to the Lord, he says: "Are you willing to cooperate with me now?"

The issue of Contact

In one of his books F B Meyer explained the Spirit's filling this way: He said that most people think of the Spirit as a substance to fill us, like petrol filling up a tank. So we run out of the Spirit, and God fills us again. But that's not the best image to use.

Think about the elevated trains that you find in many large cities. Those trains run on three rails—two for the wheels and one for the electricity. The electricity is always there, but the train doesn't move unless there is contact with the third rail. Touch that rail and the train moves; pull away from that rail and it stops.

The third rail is like the Holy Spirit. His power is always available—there's never a power shortage and never a blackout. However, when we live out of contact with his power, our lives simply stop working the way God intended.

Our Greatest Need

The filling of the Spirit is that state in which the Holy Spirit is free to do all that he came into your life to do.

The key word is "state."

The filling of the Spirit is not primarily an emotional experience, and it is certainly not reserved for a few super-Christians. It's nothing more than the normal Christian life when the Holy Spirit is in control. That is why the command is in the present tense: We are continually to be controlled by the Spirit, cooperating with the Spirit, and in contact with the Spirit.

This, then, is God's moment-by-moment provision for vitality, strength, courage, boldness, victory and the abundant life. It's for you, it's a command, and it's God's plan for your life.

Emptiness and Openness

God is ready, willing and able to fill you. He's more willing to fill you than you are to be filled.

If for some reason you aren't filled with the Holy Spirit, it's not because of God's reluctance.

We do not have to beg God to do what he has already promised to do. Rather, he is asking us to

make the way clear so he can do what he promised to do.

Imagine trying to fill up a jar that is already full of something else. You can't fill what is already full. Or imagine an empty jar with the lid screwed on tight. You can't fill that jar either.

Some Christians are so full of themselves that they have no room for the Holy Spirit.



Some Christians have simply closed their heart to the work of the Holy Spirit.

We need two things to be filled by the Spirit—emptiness and openness.

There must be a sense of need—“Lord, I’m empty and I need to be filled by your Spirit.”

There must be a willingness—“Lord, I’m

open to you. Let your Spirit fill me now.”

The filling of the Spirit is really as simple as that. As long as we are conscious of our need and as long as we are willing to yield to the Lord, we can be filled with the Spirit because his power is available to us all day long.

The Holy Spirit is not given merely for our own

personal enjoyment. God sends his Spirit to enable us to live for Christ in the world.

There is a prayer which goes like this: “O Lord, change the world. Begin, I pray, with me.”

It’s not the people “out there” who need to be revived by God’s Spirit. It’s you and it’s me.

Do not wait for a feeling or an emotional

experience. Go and serve the Lord right where you are. As you walk in the Spirit, others will see Christ in you, and God will give you everything you need to do his will.

If we live another day without the Holy Spirit’s control in our lives, we have only ourselves to blame. God has made himself fully available to us. Have we made ourselves fully available to him?

“We need two things to be filled by the Spirit—emptiness and openness.”



Image: Freepik.com

在神凡事都能

With God, all things are possible



冯丽仪
Fong Lai Yee

我与妈妈同住。

因为我妈妈中风过而且也得了老人痴呆症，我又要工作，所以我请了一位佣人来照顾妈妈。

我的佣人名字叫Malini。

她住进我家后，我就跟她传福音，希望她会有感动相信主，接受主的救恩。我非常恳切的祷告，求主来动工，希望她得救。

刚来我家的第三天，Malini就被圣灵感动了。Malini说我的生命和我的见证感动了她。她说她愿意接受主耶稣做她的救主。我心里充满喜乐，感谢主的救恩临到Malini的身上。我那时也接手为了她救恩祷告。感谢主！Malini得到主的救恩，主的慈爱何等的美。

有了主，Malini的生命便改变了。每个星期天我会带着她一起上教堂，也让她参加小组。她每一次从小组回来都非常喜乐。感谢主耶稣，Malini也受洗了。她的生命充满了喜乐和盼望。

一个多月后的一天早上，我交代Malini带妈妈出去吃早餐和走石头按摩足。

十一点多时，我打电话问她们是否回到家了。她说她们刚到家。当时她的声音是很平静的。

可是下午一点多时，Malini突然打电话给我。她告诉我她觉得很辛苦，过后电话就断线了。我听了心里很不安，很担心她发生了什么事。

我急忙地赶回家。当时我一边跑一边呼求主耶稣保佑她平安没事。可当我回到家的时候，Malini已经死了。

在那一刻我伤心极了。我立刻就呼求主：“主啊！我要怎么样还回她妈妈一个女儿，我带她信主了，她又受洗了。我恳求祢主来医治她，求祢来救活她，不要让她走！”我一直呼喊耶稣救她。

我的传道在那最紧急的时候，打了电话给我。她本是想告诉我放工后她要和我上课。我哭着告诉她我的佣人暴毙死在我家了。传道说她会赶到我家，呼吁我赶紧打电话给救护车和警察。我过后就哭着照她的话做了。

传道带了牧师和医生来到我的家。传道开始摸油画了十字架在Malini的额头上，我们一起奉耶稣基督圣名祷告，恳求主救活她，让她复活起来。我们一直恳求主，拼命地祷告，拼命地呼求主。

奇迹出现了。Malini的心忽然又跳了起来，她的眼睛也睁开了。看到她终于醒过来了，我心里感到很无比的安慰。主救活她，让她复活起来了，没有把她带走。

Malini醒来之后告诉我们，她意识到自己其实已到一個很远的地方去了。她说是因为我哭得很伤心很难过，我的眼泪感动了耶稣，耶稣才把她带回来。主如此地爱我们，没有让我心痛欲绝。主医治的大能使到Malini复活起来，如果没有主，Malini就回不来了。

救护员和警察先生听说死的人复活了起来，觉得很不可思议。警察便为我录口供。他问我回到家第一件事做什么，我说我的心里只想到我的主耶稣。我知道我的主耶稣会有能力可以救活她。我告诉警察事情的经过，他听了也被感动了

主耶稣有这么大医治的能力，能让死人复活起来。主耶稣说：在人不能，在神凡事都能。我们的心如果时时刻刻都倚靠主，我们就会得着盼望。

因着Malini复活的见证，我带领了姐姐和姐夫还有姐姐的朋友信主。

感谢主的救恩，神的作为，在神没有难成的事。所有一切都是从神恩典来的，神的恩惠超过我们所求所想！



Malini和丽仪的女儿
Malini and Lai Yee's daughter

My mother lives with me. She suffers from dementia and the after-effects of stroke, so I employed a domestic helper to help me look after her.

Our helper is Malini. I shared the Gospel with Malini, hoping that she would be touched to believe and accept the salvation of our Lord. I prayed fervently, asking the Lord to move her, hoping that she would be saved.

Three days after Malini moved to my home, she was touched by our Lord Jesus Christ. Malini said that she was moved by my life and my testimony, and that she was willing to accept our Lord Jesus Christ as her Lord and Saviour. My heart was filled with joy and thanksgiving because of Malini's salvation. I also laid hands on her to lead her in a prayer of salvation. Praise God that Malini is now saved! God's love is truly awesome.

Because of our Lord, Malini's life is changed. I take her to church every Sunday. I also introduced her to a small group. She is always full of joy every time she comes back from a small group meeting. Thank God that Malini has also been baptised. Her life is now filled with joy and hope.

About a month after she first arrived, I instructed Malini to take my mother out for breakfast, as well as have a stroll on a pebble path.

At about 11am, I called to check if they had returned home. They had. At that time, Malini sounded very calm.

At about 1pm, Malini called to tell me that she was not feeling well. The phone line was suddenly cut off. I felt very uneasy. I was worried that something might have happened to her.

I rushed home immediately.

On the way home, I pleaded with our Lord Jesus to keep Malini safe and sound. But when I arrived home, she was not breathing. Her heart had stopped.

I was very upset and immediately called out to the Lord: "O Lord, how am I to return a daughter to her mother? I've already led her to Christ, and she was also baptised. I beseech You, O Lord, to heal her and bring her back to life. Don't let her leave us yet!"

I kept crying out for the Lord to save her.

Just then, the preacher from my church called to inform me that she would be giving me a bible lesson after work.

I was weeping as I told her that my helper had just passed away in my home. The preacher said that she would rush over immediately, and advised me to call for the ambulance and police. I was still sobbing as I called the ambulance and the police.

When she arrived at my home, the preacher was accompanied by a pastor and a doctor. The preacher drew a cross with anointed oil on Malini's forehead. We also prayed in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, asking Him to bring her back to life. We kept pleading with the Lord, and fervently calling out to Him.

Malini's heart suddenly started beating, and her eyes also gradually opened.

Seeing that she had awoken, I felt so heartened that our Lord had saved her and brought her back to life, and that He had not taken her away.

When she awoke, Malini told us that she had gone to a very faraway place. She also mentioned that it was because I had cried so sorrowfully that my tears had moved our Lord Jesus to bring her back to life.

When the ambulance and police came, they were astounded that a dead person had actually come back to life. A police officer interviewed me, to ask what I did when I first arrived home. I told him that Jesus was the only person in my mind. I knew that my Lord Jesus Christ had the power to bring her back to life. I described the whole incident to the police officer, and he was touched after hearing it as well.

Thank God for His amazing miracle, His salvation, and for His good works. I am deeply grateful to our Lord for saving Malini. Indeed, Jehovah loves us very much and cannot bear to let us drown in sorrow. God's healing power revived Malini. If not for our Lord, Malini would never have returned. He can bring the dead back to life.

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Jesus said: "With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible." (Matthew 19:26).

If we trust in the Lord continually with all our hearts, we will have hope.

As a result of this incident, I led my sister, my brother-in-law, and my sister's friend to Christ.

Everything comes from the grace of God. His mercy is beyond what we could ever imagine or even ask for.

Lai Yee attends TMC's Mandarin service at 11.00am.

Struck by Stroke but Stroked by Grace



Lim Khia Teck

I suffered a haemorrhagic stroke at home at 3am on 20 Feb this year.

The diagnosis was a ruptured blood vessel due to a congenital condition, arteriovenous malformation or AVM*, leading to a large blood clot in the right side of my brain. It was a life-threatening situation.

My condition stabilised in hospital and I underwent a resection of this AVM on 5 Mar.

Less than a week after this complex brain surgery, I walked out of hospital on my own on 11 Mar.

From the time I collapsed at home to my admission to Neurology A&E at Tan Tock Seng Hospital (TTSH) and then on to the Intensive Care Unit, my wife Daphne and I felt the amazing peace of God with us.

Daphne testified on TMC's Prayer Net later that it felt like being "carried in the arms of God all the way - from home (to the ambulance and then) through every corridor and ward (in TTSH)." This was the first miracle we experienced. God revealed His hand in such a real way to assure us that He was in absolute control.

At 6am on 20 Feb, the admitting doctor told Daphne that I "had been very lucky on many counts that morning already".

In the turmoil of the initial hours, we received a particularly Spirit-inspired prayer sent by Pastor Sng Chong Hui. He specifically prayed for God to "preserve [my] life and all [my] bodily functions". His message alerted us to the seriousness of my condition without panicking us, and also set our state of mind for the next 19 days. *"And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."* (Phil 4:7)

During the fortnight before the surgery, I was wonderfully blessed by brothers and sisters-in-Christ who prayed ceaselessly for me and sent us scripture verses to encourage Daphne and I, even when I could not receive many visitors.

God worked through His Word to sustain me. He also answered Pastor Sng's prayer. Although fatigued from a dull headache caused by the massive blood clot and brain trauma, I did not display any deficit due to the stroke. My condition was always stable and did not deteriorate.

* An arteriovenous malformation (AVM) is a congenital lesion which comprises an abnormal collection of blood vessels, where arterial blood flows directly into the draining veins without the normally intervening capillaries. AVMs appear as a "tangle" of blood vessels and most commonly occur in the brain or spinal cord. (Extracted from www.singhealth.org)

After surviving the first critical weekend, we grew bold and asked God to let me out of ICU into a normal ward to rest better before undergoing surgery. His answer was unbelievably swift. On day six, Daphne posted on Facebook to inform our friends that our prayers had been answered. As we seek God with all our hearts, our prayers are heard immediately, surely, and God always gives spectacular comfort and hope (Jer 29:11-13).

The most difficult time of testing of our faith was the period between the day before the surgery and the moments before the surgery team began their work.

It made us realise that no matter how many times God demonstrates in our lives that He is ever faithful, we are still prone to paralysing fear when we face trials and tests. Daphne and I have our own stories to tell of how our loving Father spoke to us individually in our time of most desperate need, through people whom He brought to us with specific words, to assure us beyond doubt that He would never forsake us.

At the height of my fear in the operating theatre, the Holy Spirit whispered to me the vision of the Apostle Peter sinking into the water out of fear while walking to Jesus on the lake (Matt 14:30-31). The Spirit reminded me of how Jesus reached out to Peter and caught Peter.

Likewise, I cried out with all my heart for Jesus to save me. Surely Jesus was there with me, holding me and telling me that He would not let me go, reminding me that He had died on the cross to redeem me, and prompting me to remember my faith.

It was no coincidence when I later learnt from Pastor Ivan Tan of Living Hope Methodist Church that around that time, one of their prayer warriors had seen a vision of a person surrounded by light. What Pastor Ivan shared further convinced me that Jesus was there with me throughout my nine hours of surgery and presiding over the work of the surgical team.

Jesus continues to heal me and protect me from the many possible complications which can still arise. I have escaped largely unscathed because of His protection. I share my testimony to encourage the church that indeed our God answers our prayers with lavish grace, favour and utmost faithfulness. He is my Rock, fortress, rescuer, refuge; my shield, my salvation's strength and my place of safety (Ps 18:2). Nothing separates us from His love (Rom 8:38-39).

I thank the merciful Saviour for this Easter miracle - that I am able to be among my TMC brothers and sisters at Easter to worship our Risen Lord. He is Risen indeed!



The Lim Family

EVENTS

Sat 4 May

3.00pm Memorial Service

Sat 4 May, 1 Jun, 6 Jul, 27 Jul

10.00am Youth Ave Leaders Captains' Development I
www.facebook.com/YouthAvenue123

Thurs 9 May and every Tues until 6 Jun

2.00pm Precept upon Precept – 1 and 2 Samuel
www.tmc.org.sg/d&n.html#pup

Sat 11 May, 8 Jun, 13 Jul, 27 Jul

10.00am Youth Ave Leaders Captains' Development II

Sat 18 May, 15 Jun, 20 Jul, 27 Jul

11.00am Youth Ave Leaders Captains' Development III

Sun 19 May

Reception of New Members

Sat 25 May

9.00am Talk on Stress and Anxiety

Sat 25 May, 22 Jun, 20 Jul, 27 Jul

1.00pm Youth Avenue Leaders Captains' Development IV

7 to 10 Jun

Church Camp
Melaka
tmc.churchretreat.com.sg

Tues 11, Tues 25 Jun, Fri 28 Jun

3.00pm Youth Avenue nerf games

Fri 14 Jun

1.00pm Youth Ave Kampung Fishing

Wed 19 Jun – Thurs 20 Jun

Mandarin Service mission trip
Pontian

Wed 19 Jun - Fri 21 Jun

Youth Avenue Leadership Camp

Thurs 4 Jul and every Thurs until 29 Aug

2.00pm Precept upon Precept – (Kings & Prophets Part I)
www.tmc.org.sg/d&n.html#pup

Sun 7 Jul

Pledge Sunday
www.tmc.org.sg/resources.html

Sun 21 Jul and every Sun till 1 Sep

1.00pm Alpha
www.tmc.org.sg/witness.html

Fri 26 Jul – Sun 28 Jul

Children's Ministry teachers and helpers retreat

Tues 30 Jul and every Tues until 22 Oct

7.30pm Precept upon Precept – Gospel of John (Part II)
www.tmc.org.sg/d&n.html#pup

Every Sun

9.30am Mandarin Service Prayer Meeting
After the 11.15am service Young Adults' Lunch Fellowship

Last Sun of the month

9.00am
Visit to Institute of Mental Health by Outreach & Social Concerns.
Contact Yvonne Tan at 9091 8589 / yvonnnetangb@gmail.com
www.tmc.org.sg/osc.html#imh

Every Wed (not 1 May, 5 Jun)

8.00pm Church Prayer Meeting
www.tmc.org.sg/prayer.html

Every 1st Wed (1 May and 5 Jun meetings postponed to 8 Feb and 12 Jun respectively)

10.00am-12.00pm
Yum Cha@10 is an opportunity for people to come together for fellowship, and serves as a platform for TMCers to meet one another as well as non-Christians in the community mid-week. Contact the church office / churchoffice@tmc.org.sg
www.tmc.org.sg/ministries.html#gym

1.00-3.00pm
Rummikub

Every Thurs

9.00am
A Tot-ful Morning
A time for caregivers and children aged 0-3 years old to enjoy songs, stories and other activity
www.tmc.org.sg/highlights.html#atm;
www.facebook.com/atotfulmorning

Last Thurs of the month

10.00am-12.00pm
St Luke's Eldercare Centre Devotions at Blk 217 Serangoon Ave 4. TMC's ministry to SLEC brings hope, help and the love of Christ to many needy elderly. If you wish to join in, contact Eddie from the church office / eddie@tmc.org.sg.
www.tmc.org.sg/osc.html#slec

Every Fri

8.00 – 10.00pm
Healing Ministry at the Prayer Chapel

Every 1st Fri

9.15am WSCS Bible Study (Acts)

2nd and 4th Sat

9.30am
Fellowship of Ukulelians
www.tmc.org.sg/regular.html#ukulele

Monthly

WSCS Visitation to Homebound. Those interested to bring the church into the homes of the homebound, please contact Emily Wilfred. Group leaves TMC at 10am.

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